

Planning
Neath Port Talbot Council
The Quays
Brunel Way
Neath
SA11 2GG

Date: 5 May 2022

Our ref: 64058/01/NW/Ali/20407216v1

Your ref:

Dear Sir/Madam,

Application for Change of Use: 37 Heol Cae Gurwen, Gwaun Cae Gurwen, Ammanford

We are pleased to submit on behalf of our client, an application at 37 Heol Cae Gurwen and outbuilding to the rear for:

“Change of use from former Bakery (Use Class A1) to garage/workshop incidental to existing dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) and proposed erection of single storey extension to rear of dwellinghouse, 1no. Polytunnel, sleeper wall, fencing and chicken coops”

The Application Site

The application site (the ‘site’) is located at 37 Heol Cae Gurwen, a residential dwelling. The site comprises of two buildings, the property facing onto Heol Cae Gurwen (A474) and the outbuilding accessed via the rear of the property and an access road off Gron Road.

The former bakery was located on the ground floor of the property whilst the outbuilding is located at west of the rear of the property. The property and outbuilding are both currently owned by our client, with the outbuilding used as a garage/workshop.

Planning History

The property does not have any planning history available. However, a notable application (ref. P2003/1237) at 43 Heol Cae Gurwen for the change of use from former offices/bank to 2no. flats was approved in September 2003.

The Proposed Development

The proposal comprises the change of use of a former Bakery at the ground floor rear of an existing dwellinghouse to be used as a living room in association with the existing dwellinghouse (Use Class C3). The proposal includes removing an internal wall that divides the former bakery and reception room to create one habitable living room. There are no proposed changes to the layout on the first or second floor.

The outbuilding to the rear is also proposed to be used as a garage/workshop, incidental to the enjoyment of the existing dwellinghouse. No building operations are required to facilitate the change.

The application also proposes the erection of a car port to the rear of the dwellinghouse, the erection of a polytunnel and chicken coops within the garage/workshop curtilage and timber sleepers along the northern boundary.

Planning Policy Assessment

The statutory development plan for Neath Port Talbot Council is currently comprised by:

- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan (2011-2026); and

Guidance which is a material consideration including:

- Planning Policy Wales; and
- Development Management Manual

We consider the proposals in the context of the relevant policies in the following sections.

The Principle of Development

In the Local Plan, Strategic Policy SP12 Retail outlines the protection, support and development of retail provision for Neath Port Talbot. Gwaun Cae Gurwen is described as a Local Centre in Table 5.4 Retail Hierarchy for Neath Port Talbot.

Given the location of the property and its outbuilding, it is thought that Heol Cae Gurwen is primarily residential and the limited access to parking is not suitable for the purposes of a Bakery. In addition, the limited and narrow access to the outbuilding is not suitable for a functioning commercial unit. It is therefore considered that 37 Heol Cae Gurwen and its outbuilding are better suited for residential purposes. Given the residential nature of the street and surrounding area, it is considered that the change of use to Class C3 will not cause conflict with the character of the surrounding area.

The change of use of the former bakery is not considered to negatively affect the economic and social viability of the area, given the proximity to local shops and services within Gwaun Cae Gurwen.

Design

The street elevation at 37 Heol Cae Gurwen will remain as existing other than the removal of any former bakery signage. The other external changes sought to the rear of the property will not be visible from street level. They are considered to have minimal impact on visual amenity given the nature of the works which would usually be considered under Permitted Development.

Residential Amenity

The scale of the proposed built operations are such that there would be no unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of the nearby properties. It is considered that the change of use from bakery to residential would have an overall positive impact on the residential amenity of nearby properties given the scale of vehicular traffic to the site would be lower than an active commercial unit. Separation distances between the Polytunnel at the rear of the proposed garage and nearby residential properties to the north, south and west are sufficient to ensure no loss of privacy, light, nor overbearing impact.

Access

The access to the property and its outbuilding remains the same as existing and is suitable for the proposed Use Class C3.

Trip generation to the site would be significantly lower as a dwellinghouse than an active commercial unit which is considered to be a benefit of the proposed development.

Noise

Given the change of use from Use Class A1 to Use Class C3, it is considered that less noise would be generated given trip generation and footfall from a residential use would be lower than that of a commercial unit.

The applicant proposes to keep chickens within the curtilage of the garage/workshop. The scale of the chicken sheds is not significant to give rise to an unacceptable impact on amenity.

Application Submission

The application is accompanied by the following:

- Covering Letter
- Completed Application Form
- Proposed Property Layout and Outbuilding Elevations (ref: 01 G)
- Existing Workshop Layout (ref: 02 A)
- Proposed Former Bakery Layout (ref: 02 G)
- Polytunnel Drawings (ref: 03 E)
- Existing Property Layout and Outbuilding Elevations (ref: 04 G)

The planning application fee of £460 has been paid as part of a previous planning application and this application is therefore exempt from the fee, given it relates to the same site, by the same applicant.

Conclusion

The proposed development would result in the loss of a commercial unit within a residential area, although its commercial use has ceased. Vehicular access to the site is poor, and it is considered that a residential use would better in-keeping with the surrounding land uses. No external alterations are required to facilitate the change of use to a garage/workshop in association with the existing dwellinghouse. The use of the building as a garage/workshop is therefore considered to result in an overall positive impact through reducing the traffic and general footfall generated.

The built development is of a scale which is predominantly barely visible from nearby sensitive receptors. The car port is the largest of the proposed structures and is a common feature with residential areas. It is of a scale which would not cause harm to visual amenity, nor result in an unacceptable impact on residential amenity through loss of privacy or light and it would not have an overbearing impact. The polytunnel is located within the most considerate location on the site, away from residential properties on all sides.

It is considered that, whilst the majority of the works would normally fall within the remit of Permitted Development, there is confusion over the lawful use of the site and therefore planning permission is sought for the works. The scale of the works and the change of use have been considered above and it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable.



We trust that this submission contains all the information you require to determine the application and look forward to receiving confirmation that the application has been registered and validated. We look forward to discussing the proposal with you in due course but if you have any questions in the meantime please do not hesitate to contact myself or my colleague Josh Woollard.

Yours sincerely

Josh Woollard
Senior Planner