

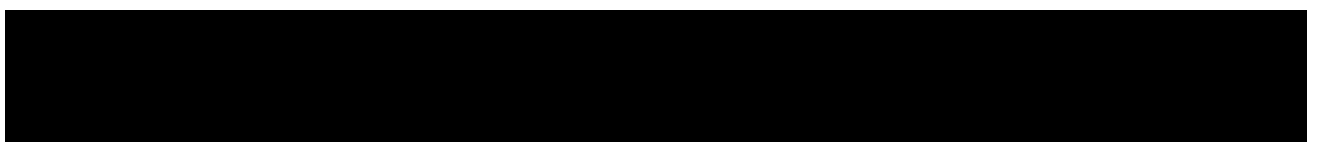


PLANNING STATEMENT

PROPOSED CONVERSION OF FIRST FLOOR FLAT AND STORAGE AREA TO TWO 3-BED HMOS AT 49 & 51 STATION ROAD, NEATH PORT TALBOT

on behalf of
Jonathan Morgan Properties Ltd

Our Ref: 1679.a
Date: January 2024
Prepared by: JDE/RDG



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Evans Banks Planning Ltd. has been instructed by Jonathan Morgan Properties Ltd, to prepare a full planning application for the conversion of an existing flat and a storage area to two 3-bed HMOs at 49 & 51 Station Road, Neath Port Talbot.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement therefore forms part of the submissions of the application to be considered by the Authority, and provides information on the following points:
- A brief description of the site and surrounding area
 - A description of the proposed development
 - Consideration of relevant local planning policy

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 THE SITE

- 2.1.1 The application site (pictured below) relates to a mixed-use property currently including on its first floor, one existing residential flat and one area being used for storage, located in the centre of Port Talbot. Photograph 2 shows the rear of the building in question.



Photograph 1 – 49/51 Station Road



Photograph 2 – The Rear of 49 and 51 Station Road

- 2.1.2 The application site has one 1-bed flat in its southern portion, and the remainder is currently being used for storage. The building is a terraced property, with the ground floor of the building being used for commercial purposes. The properties existing on both the same and opposite side of the road as the proposed development follow the same design (illustrated in Photograph 2).



Photograph 3 – Terraced Buildings on either Side of Station Road.

- 2.1.3 The current main pedestrian entrance to the building is via the eastern (front) elevation, which leads from Station Road. The direct vehicular access route to the property is gained via Station Road, with on street parking in front of the building. There is then off-street parking at the rear of the application site, which serves the commercial elements of the two buildings. There is parking to the rear of the building of 49 and 51 Station Road, but this is at present private parking for the commercial uses below the proposed flats. Directly to the rear of the property are two public car parks called 87 Station Road and Bethany Square car parks, as shown in photograph 3 below.

2.2 THE SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.2.1 As detailed above, the application site lies in Port Talbot Town Centre, between Penrycae to the east and Baglan Moor to the west as illustrated in Photograph 4.



Photograph 4 – Site identified by red perimeter.

- 2.2.2 Station Road, whilst uniform in its terraced properties, is mixed in its use, with varied businesses located near to the proposed site (Peacocks, The Lord Caradoc, Andrea's Floral Fancies, HSBC Bank and Peter Morgan Estate and Letting Agents.
- 2.2.3 Directly to the rear of the property are two public car parks, called 87 Station Road and Bethany Square car parks, as shown in Photograph 5.



**Photograph 5 – 87 Station Road Car Park to the South and
Bethany Square Car Park to the North**

2.2.4 The proposed development is located within walking distance (approx. 5mins) to Port Talbot Town Centre, where an abundance of amenities are available such as a convenience store, library, pharmacy, medical centre, and takeaway outlets. It is also located within 1.8km of Neath Port Talbot Hospital, and 2.9km of Port Talbot Beach.

2.2.5 In addition to the above, the area immediately surrounding the application site is very well served by public transport and other non-car modes of transport and links. With regards to train and bus travel, Port Talbot Parkway is located 0.2km away (5-minute walk) whilst Port Talbot Bus and Coach Station is located 0.6 miles away (9-minute walk) both providing regular access to the surrounding and wider areas of the County and beyond. The available bus services are as follows:

9	66	81	82	83	84	87	111	112	201
202	507	508	900	901	902	940	T1C	X1	X3

2.2.6. Train services run to Pembrokeshire in the west, and Cardiff and beyond to the east.

2.3 PROJECT DESIGN PARAMETERS AND PRINCIPLES

2.3.1 As a result of the local context and the aspirations of the Applicant for the property, the following design principles and parameters have influenced the design of the proposal subject of this planning application: -

- **Scale** – To generally retain the existing external built form of the application site.
- **Design** – To respect the existing position the building occupies within the urban form through the retention of key features and no change of primary external features.
- **Access** – To retain the existing means of access and off-street parking serving the application site.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposal is for full planning permission for the conversion of a 1-bed flat and the adjoining building's first floor which is currently being used for storage, to two 3-bed HMOs. The following information should therefore be read in conjunction with the accompanying plans, drawings and associated supporting information.

Project Overview

- 3.2 The conversion will utilise the form of the existing first floor flat (49 Station Road) with some alterations. However, the second element (51 Station Road) that is currently being used for storage will be altered considerably to form a 3-bed residential flat. Considering the former use, its future occupants and the sustainable location of the site, the proposal does include off-street parking for the proposed residential elements of the building.

Internal Accommodation

- 3.3 The internal layout of the first floor of 49 Station Road will be altered to suit its future occupants. The shower room, kitchen, and utility area to the rear of the building will comprise of two bedrooms and a storage area, whilst the living/dining area at the front of the building will now include a kitchen and the bedroom will include a shower room. The two rear rooms in 51 Station Road will consist of two bedrooms, whilst the front of the building will consist of a kitchen/dining/living area, two bedrooms and a bathroom.

External Finishes

- 3.4 The relationship of each element has been given careful consideration with regards to both existing and proposed uses. Externally, the building will remain largely unchanged, with the exception of the replacement of the doors on the flat roof of No.49 being replaced with windows, as illustrated on the accompanying plans.

Drainage

- 3.5 All surface water and foul water will continue to be disposed of as existing, via connections to the public sewer.

4.0 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

4.0.1. In terms of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the adopted development plan for the area within which the application site is positioned is the *Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan (LDP)*.

4.0.2 On the basis of the above, the following policies are considered of particular relevance to the application proposal and so have been given full consideration in its preparation:

-

- Policy SP3 – Sustainable Communities
- Policy SC1 – Settlement Limits
- Policy TR2 – Design and Access of New Development
- Policy BE1 – Design

4.0.3 In addition to the above, we consider the following ‘Supplementary Planning Guidance’ (SPG) produced by the Local Authority to be relevant to the application proposal:

- Parking Standards (Oct 2016)
- Design (July 2017)

4.0.4 The following therefore represents an assessment of the application proposal against what are considered to be the pertinent policies associated with the proposed development.

POLICY SP3 – SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

4.1.1 Policy SP3 (*Sustainable Communities*) states that the delivery of “*sustainable, healthy and cohesive communities and the conservation of the countryside*” will be promoted by “*the identification of a settlement hierarchy that reflects the role and function of settlements*”. Development therefore will be steered towards the more sustainable locations of the county.

4.1.2 The proposed development is situated in Port Talbot Town Centre. Table 2.0.1 of the LDP ‘Settlement Hierarchy for Neath Port Talbot’ identified Port Talbot as town, where

the settlement is one of the most densely populated areas in the County Borough, and offers a variety of retail, leisure, and community opportunities, as well as having public transport interchanges that enable easy access to the surrounding communities and wider area. It is 1st out of a 6-tier hierarchy, which highlights that it is regarded as an extremely sustainable settlement by the Local Authority.

- 4.1.3 Therefore, the application site is located well within the Settlement Hierarchy and will therefore promote sustainable development.

4.1. POLICY SC1 – SETTLEMENT LIMITS

- 4.2.1 The proposed development is within the settlement limits defined by Policy SC1 (*Settlement Limits*).

- 4.2.2. Policy SC1 states that “*development within settlement limits that is proportionate in scale and form to the role and function of the settlement as set out in the Settlement Hierarchy will be acceptable in principle*”. With no change to the physical form or nature of the application building it is considered that this development is proportionate in scale to its surroundings.

4.3. POLICY TR2 – DESIGN AND ACCESS OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 4.3.1 For developments to comply with Policy TR2 (*Design and Access of New Development*) proposals must adhere to the relevant requirement of four criteria. In the case of this application proposal, we believe that all four are of relevance and an assessment of the application proposal against each now follows:

- 4.3.2. Criteria 1 requires that proposed developments should not “*comprise the safe effective and efficient use of the highway network*” and do not impact highway safety or create unacceptable levels of traffic generation. It is considered the site will not experience an increase in levels of vehicular traffic as the flow of traffic will be comparable to that of its existing use. The proposal therefore adheres to the requirements of the Criteria.

- 4.3.3. Criteria 2 requires that there are appropriate levels of parking and cycling facilities provided and the access arrangements for the site allow for the safe manoeuvring of any service vehicles associated with the planned use. It is considered the proposals adhere to the requirements of this criterion for the reasons set out in section 4.5.
- 4.3.4. Criteria 3 requires that development is accessible by a range of travel means. The proposed development is accessible by road, bus, train, and pedestrian networks. Port Talbot Town Centre and Port Talbot Parkway Station are also easily accessible by foot, car, or bus.
- 4.3.5. Criteria 4 requires a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan for developments likely to generate significant traffic generation. It is not considered that Transport Assessments and Travel Plans are required as it is considered that the development is unlikely to create significant traffic generation.
- 4.3.6. In summary, the application proposal satisfies the requirements of Policy TR2.

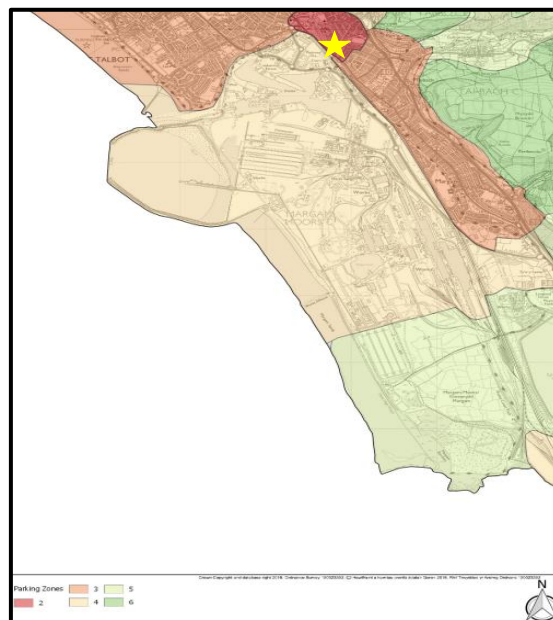
4.4. POLICY BE1 - DESIGN

- 4.4.1. Design is key to the Local Authority as highlighted by Policy BE1 (*Design*). The policy states that all development proposals must be of high-quality design and consider the natural, historic, and built environment and sets out criteria as to how this can be achieved.
- 4.4.2. Whilst the exterior of 49 Station Road is in a good condition (as an existing residential dwelling), the exterior of 51 Station Road is in a generally poor condition. The redevelopment will refurbish the building to a high-quality which will enhance the character of the site whilst taking into consideration its context on the townscape of the surrounding area. As a result of this, the proposal complies with Criteria 1,2,3,5 of the policy.
- 4.4.3. As mentioned previously it is not considered that the proposed development will have a significant adverse impact on highway safety, therefore complying with Criteria 4 of the policy.

- 4.4.4. The building will be refurbished and maintained physically therefore the attractiveness and safe places of the locality will be maintained complying with Criteria 6.
- 4.4.5. The proposed development is situated in the Town of Port Talbot, therefore encouraging active travel as all essential amenities are within walking distance of the site. This ensures that the development complies with Criteria 7 by promoting the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and ensures linkages with the existing surrounding environment.
- 4.4.6. The drainage systems are designed to limit surface water run-off and flood risk and prevent pollution which follows Criteria 9.
- 4.4.7. Lastly Criteria 10 requires that the layout and design of the development achieves inclusive design ensuring a barrier free environment, which has been implemented.

4.5. PARKING STANDARDS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

- 4.5.1. The proposed development lies within Zone 2 (Town Centre or City Centre Fringe) of the Parking Zone Designation within the SPG (illustrated by Map A).



**Map A – Parking Zone Map Index Sites Location Within Zone 2 (Approximate Site
Location Identified by Yellow Star)**

4.5.2. The site is classed as a Town Centre or City Centre Fringe because it is the destination where local people carry out most of their activities. The area has a full range of retail activity and many commercial businesses, all within walking distance, as well as being the focus of the local bus network and containing a railway station. As a result, the built density is high with little private car parking, and there are significant parking restrictions and substantial amounts of off-street car parking available to the public.

4.5.3. The SPG identifies the following maximum parking standards for a development of the nature proposed in within Zone 2:

Type of Development	Residents	Visitors
Dwellings, Apartments, House Conversions to Bedsits, or Self-Contained Apartments	1 space per bedroom (Maximum requirement 3 spaces per apartment)	1 Space per 5 units

Type of Development	Operational	Non-Operational
Shops (< 200m ²)	1 commercial vehicle space	1 space per 60m ²

Maximum Total Spaces: 8

4.5.4. Although there is no specific parking requirement for HMO properties the following maximum requirements are based on a house conversion to bedsits or self-contained apartments, and the requirements for commercial use buildings.

4.5.5. In view of the above, the current use of the first floors results in a maximum parking requirement of **2 maximum total spaces**. The proposed use of all elements of both buildings would generate a maximum parking requirement of 8 spaces (3 spaces per flat, and 1 space per commercial unit).

4.5.6. Notwithstanding the above, Annex F of the SPG allows for a reduction of the number of required spaces at sustainable locations, dependant on the site's distance from public transport and community facilities. A score of seven points can lead to a reduction of one space per unit whilst ten or more points to a reduction of two spaces per unit.

- 4.5.7. Based on the guidance of the SPG and the associated scoring system, the following information should be taken into consideration in determining the appropriate level of car-parking provision for the application proposal:

Local Facilities

- Tesco Superstore – 439m (1pts)
- Londis Store – 521m (1pts)
- Premier Store – 539m (1pts)
- One Stop – 539m (1pts)
- Post Office – 283m (2pts)
- Medical Centre – 500m (1pts)
- Central Primary School – 631m (1pts)

Public Transport

- Port Talbot Parkway – 238m (3pts)
- Port Talbot Bus and Coach Station – 483m (1pts)

- 4.5.8. Based on the above and the guidance of the SPG, the application site scores in excess of 10 points and is clearly at a very sustainable location. The advised reduction in on-site parking provision therefore would be 2 spaces per unit.

- 4.5.9. To conclude the maximum total spaces required within the SPG has been identified as **8 spaces**. However due to the site's sustainable locality, only **4 spaces** are required. Based on the above and adopting a balanced approach, the application proposal includes provision of 2 off-street parking spaces per flat, and 1 per commercial unit..

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1. The proposal is for the conversion of one existing 1-bed flat and the first floor of a building used for storage to two 3-bed HMOs.
- 5.2. The application proposal seeks to rejuvenate an existing flat at 49 Station Road and bring back into beneficial use an underused and vacant element of 51 Station Road.
- 5.3. On the matter of sustainability, as detailed above, the application site is positioned at an extremely sustainable location within the town centre form. Being situated within Port Talbot town centre, it has immediate easy access to a range of community facilities via foot, alongside excellent public transport links such as Port Talbot Parkway train/bus station and non-car access routes. All of these attributes ensure that the site and the proposed use are able to fully promote sustainable transport patterns.
- 5.4. In design terms, the proposal proposes very few external physical changes and very little internal changes to the buildings. Similarly, the area of off-street parking will remain unchanged to more than adequately serve the proposed mix of uses.
- 5.5. In conclusion therefore, the proposal represents an appropriate and sustainable development that adheres to all relevant current planning policy.