

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE FROM DWELLING (C3) TO 5 BEDROOM HMO (C4)

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Planning, Access and Design Statement for the conversion of a dwelling (C3) into a 5-bed

House of multiple occupancy HMO (C4)

March 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the change of use of the property known as 16 cwrt ucha terrace, Port Talbot from a dwelling (C3) into a 5 bed HMO (C4).

This Planning, Design and Access 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
- Accessibility
- Character
- Community Safety
- Environmental Sustainability
- Movement to, from and within the development

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site (picture below) relates to a 3 bedroom mid terrace at Cwrt Ucha terrace.



Figure 1 - Image of front of house

The site is a two-storey mid terrace dwelling with a pitched roof, there is also a rear extension which is of flat roof construction in a residential area with a rear garden which has a small storage shed and access from the double width rear lane running behind the terrace.

The existing dwelling consists of a living, dining room parlour, with a kitchen and a shower room and separate toilet to the ground floor. On the first floor, there are three bedrooms.

Site location

The application site is located at Taibach which is central to Port talbot. Near to the Talbot Memorial park and St Theodores church. Property is shown in the red box below



Figure 2 - Maps location of dwelling

3. PLANNING HISTORY

The property has no previous planning application history shown on the planning portal

4. THE SURROUNDING AREA

The application site lies in Port Talbot. Cwrt ucha terrace consists of a row of two storey terraced houses of stone wall construction with small front gardens. The street lies on the A48.

Most of the terrace dwellings are of the same proportion with 2 windows on the first floor and a front door and a window on the ground floor, of a similar size.

The area immediately surrounding the application site is very well served by public transport and other non-car modes of transport and links such as the Welsh coastal bike path which runs through the rear lane. With regards to bus travel, two bus stops are located adjacent to the application site, all served by regular services (listed below), providing regular access to the surrounding and wider areas of the County and beyond:

- 85
- 87
- 88
- X1
- X4

The national cycle route (route 4) runs behind the house in the rear lane.

5. ACCESSIBILITY

The property benefits from the close proximity to the M4 motorway and direct access to the A48 carriage way. The property is lacking in dedicated off-street parking spaces, there is however on-street parking on both sides of the road and parking in the rear lane which can be accessed via the rear garden.

The Train Station is in close proximity and subsequently comfortable walking distance and the bus route operates along the street with a bus stop across the road. The main shopping centre, including a superstore, is also a short walk from the property.

6. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for a conversion of a residential dwelling Use Class C3 to a 5-bedroom HMO, Use Class C4. There will be no external building alterations of the property to allow this change.

Project Overview

The conversion will utilise the form of the existing building with little or no physical alteration. It also does not seek to alter the previously approved level of off-street car parking initially, but will make provision for promoting non-car modes of travel.

Internal Accommodation

General

The internal layout of the building will be largely unaltered however partition walls will be implemented to separate bedrooms and create additional en-suites where required.

Ground floor

The ground floor will consist of a bike/bins storage area, kitchen, communal living area, W.C, Shower room and 2 bedrooms.

The first floor will consist of 3 bedrooms.

Bathroom elements

All bathroom elements will have obscurely glazed units installed to ensure that there is no detriment to privacy to either future residents of the building or those of existing adjoining land uses

External Finishes

The external finishes of the building will remain unaltered however new windows are likely to be installed to conform with fire risk assessments.

Drainage

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

7. CHARACTER

The character and appearance of the street scene and surrounding area will remain unaffected. And certainly, not to a level that would warrant a refusal recommendation on visual amenity grounds.

The 5 bed HMO is considered appropriate for a dwelling of this size. The use of the property will be for 5 persons which will not be significantly different to that of many houses which are occupied by families. It is therefore considered that the noise and disturbance associated with the comings and goings to and from the property are unlikely to be different when compared to that of a family property.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed five-bed HMO would not lead to unacceptable levels of noise, disturbance or nuisance.

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY – ISSUES

The proposal will not impact or impede on the existing flow of the pedestrian traffic on the adjoining properties. The proposal will assist with the natural surveillance of the area. We believe that the development will not create any negative impact on the community safety. HMOs represent an efficient use of building resources, where a single house can be fully utilised to provide accommodation for multiple people. This will have positive contributions and important socio-economic role for an area. The positive impacts of HMO's are that they are catering for the increased number of students, the need for affordable and flexible housing tenancies, the changes to Housing Benefit and in recent times provide an affordable alternative to current substantially increased rental costs of conventional single family homes for young adults and the like. Creditably showing their role within the housing market. This proposal will not reduce the provision of community facilities for families and children social Benefits HMO's can play an important role in providing a suitable mix of housing types. This proposal will support the development of equal and more cohesive communities in area. This development should not have any impact upon the property value of the area, which itself is not a material planning consideration. At present the Council does not have any specific local Policies aimed at HMO's. This is due largely to the absence of any significant historical issue in the area, and the introduction of the C4 Use Class post adoption of the LDP.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Landscaping/Townscape Setting

As detailed above, the proposal seeks no real physical change to the existing building or its adjoining spaces.

Biodiversity and Local Environment

The proposal will have no detrimental impact on biodiversity or ecological interests in the area.

Energy Efficiency/Carbon Reduction

The following measures will be undertaken where possible to maximise energy efficiency and carbon reduction of the HMO themselves and during their construction:

- Maximise use of daylight in key rooms through fenestration
- Use of local suppliers and labour wherever possible
- Use local recycled products wherever possible
- The units will be insulated to current targets
- Energy efficient internal and external lighting units will be installed.

Sustainable Materials

We understand that recycled or reclaimed products will be used in the construction of the proposal wherever possible. 8.5 We understand that the existing mains supply will be utilised. In line with this, we would propose that the domestic water and heating system of the HMO be designed to reduce domestic water wastage, through a range of measures including low water consuming fittings in the bathroom and kitchen.

Waste Management

We understand that the HMO will have access to domestic recycling facilities. 8.7 The existing connection to the public sewer will be utilised for the disposal of foul waste

10. PARKING

Policy TR2 of the Local Development Plan states that permission will only be granted for development that is acceptable in terms of access, parking and highway safety. The policy also requires that sufficient parking and cycle provision is provided and that the development is accessible by a range of travel means. In this respect, the site is situated in close proximity to the Port Talbot Parkway Train Station has a main bus route in the street, as well as other local facilities, local restaurants and a shopping centre close by.

The approved Parking Standards SPG does not specifically refer to Class C4 HMOs, but it is considered that a residential use should be subject to the same parking standards as for the existing C3 dwelling house, with both uses requiring a maximum of 3 parking spaces.

The current residential use of the dwelling does not have any off-street parking provision. The application proposes to utilise the space in the rear garden to offer up to 2 number parking space and a cycle store.

This is over and above what is currently required for the use class but is nonetheless something that the applicant is passionate at providing.

Given that the parking requirements are the same for the existing and the proposed uses, the proposed use will not increase the impact upon on street parking over and above the current position. It will in fact offer a 'betterment' in terms of parking provision.

11. ACCESSIBILITY

Full accessibility has been addressed wholly in compliance with requirement under Part M of the Building regulations as well as the rights of the Disability Commission Code of Practice “Rights of Access, Services and Premises”. Appropriate level access IS provided at its current stage via the front.

12. LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

The Development Plan for the area comprises the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan which was adopted in January 2016. On this basis, the following policies are considered of relevance to this proposal and have been given full consideration

National Planning Policy Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Notes Technical Advice Note 12: Design

Local Planning Policies

Topic based Policies

- Policy SP1 Settlement limits
- Policy TR2 Design and Access of New Development
- Policy BE1 Design • Policy SP3 Sustainable Communities • Parking Standards (October 2016)

SP1 – SETTLEMENT LIMITS

The proposed development is within the settlement limits of the Policy SC1, which states that the “development within settlement limits 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” Since we not proposing any change to the form, scale and nature of the property it is considered that the development is proportionate in scale to its surroundings.

SP3 – SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

SP3 state 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. New development should be therefor come considered in more sustainable location of the county. This dwelling is located within the Taibach Table 3.1 of the LDP “Settlement Hierarchy of Neath Port Talbot” as a “District Centre”, It’s a settlement “with good transport links and a wide range of functions serving the immediate and surrounding communities”. We believe that in light of the above and the LDP this development is clearly positioned well within the settlement hierarchy and therefore will promote sustainable development in adherence of the requirements of the policy SP3.

Policy TR2 – DESIGN AND ACCESS OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development has to comply with Policy TR2 and must adhere as appropriate to the requirement of four criteria.

Criteria 1: the development do not “compromise the safe effective and efficient use of the highway network” It is considered that the site will not impact on the highway safety or create unacceptable level of traffic.

Criteria 2: the requirement is to have appropriate levels of parking and cycling facilities provided. The matter of the parking has been looked into under “Parking and Access” Additionally the rear garden provides sufficient space for the safe storage of bikes. It is considered that this point will be passivated.

Criteria 3: the requirement is that the development is accessible by a range of travel means. The property is in close proximity of bus links, the train station and the national cycle route (route 4) is behind the house. We believe that this criterion has been sufficiently met.

Criteria 4: the requirement is for a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan. Since the development will not be increased in size and has already got a residential use, we believe that this requirement is not necessary as no new traffic will be created. In summary all four Criteria of the Policy TR2 have been fulfilled.

Policy BE1 – DESIGN

The policy states that “all development proposals must be of a high-quality designs” and “taken into account the natural, historic and built environment” and set out criteria to archive this. The outer appearance of the property will not be altered. The outdoor space to the rear will remain untouched save for the parking provision which may in fact be deemed unnecessary. The building will not be altered as no extending or alterations are required.

The existing drainage system was design to limit surface water run-off and flood risk. This will not be amended (Criteria 9)

In summary, all necessary requirements of Policy BE1 will be meet.

PARKING STANDARDS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDIANCE

The SPG sets out the parking requirement for all forms of development, which differ slightly dependant on which zone a proposal is located. The applicant site lies within Zone 3 – urban – of the Parking Zone Designation. The table below shows the maximum parking standards for the provision of off- street parking spaces for a resident development in this zone. A further figure illustrates how the site lies withing this zone.

Within the provisions of the SPG, the site is located therefore within a classified urban area, as it is in a substantially built up area with a number of basic local facilities within 400m walking distance. It also has a variety of main road bus routes with a range of destinations.

However, there is no specific parking requirement for an HMO property and the maximum requirements are based on a house conversion to a number of bedsit’s.

Based on the table above the requirements for bedsits would be 3 spaces for the residence and 1 additional for visitor. In total 4 car parking spaces. Given that this number would be the required amount for the existing dwelling, no additional space would be necessary.

Annex F of the SPG allows for a reduction of the number required at a sustainable location, depending on site distance to public transport and community facilities by a point system where 7 points would reduce one space and 10 or more will mean a reduction of 2 spaces.

Local Facilities

- Aldi & Filco (super market)– 321m (2pts)
- Knights Pharmacy (Pharmacy) – 482m (2pts)
- Taibach Post office – 475M (2pts)
- Central reception & Infants School – 182m (3pts)
- Central Junior School – 321m (2pts)

Public Transport

- Talbot Road Bus Stop – 20m (3pts)
- Port Talbot Parkway & Port talbot Transport hub – 643 (1pts)

Cycle Route

- Welsh coastal national cycle route - 1m (behind house) (1pt)

The above is not an exhaustive list.

Based on this guidance and the close proximity to local amenities, public transport and local community facilities, this site scores in excess of 10 points and is a sustainable location. Taking into account that no changes will be necessary to amount of provided space from the existing use, we considered these criteria are met.

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 (< 200m2)	1 commercial vehicle space	1 space per 60m2

As a result of the above, the application site will be able to fully promote the use of public transport and discourage the use of the private motor car.

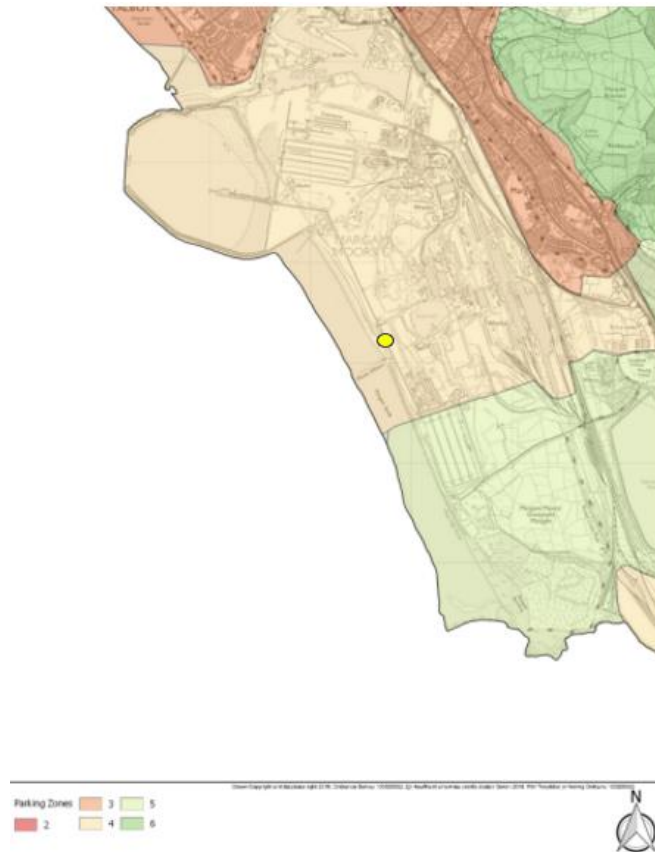


Figure 3 Parking Zone Index - Approximate location shown with yellow circle

13. CONCLUSION

In the absence of a HMO Policy, this application should be determined with current LDP Policies. Since the site is located within the settlement limits defined by Policy SC1 of the LDP and therefore the principle of residential development (albeit a Class C4 HMO use rather than a Class C3 dwelling house) would be acceptable subject to an assessment of its general impact, which includes the consideration of any potential wider impacts on local character and social / community cohesion created by Class C4 uses, as well as other amenity / highway issues.

We believe that the proposed development would represent an acceptable form of development in a sustainable location. The property is within easy walkable reach of a range of community facilities along an excellent public transport links. These will ensure that the site can sustain a sustainable transport pattern away from the necessity of a car.

It would not have a detrimental impact upon local character or community cohesion, on residential amenity or upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and there would be no adverse impact upon highway and pedestrian safety. Nor would it have an impact on the visual amenity of the area.

We also believe that the proposal represents an appropriate and sustainable development in accordance with Policies SC1, TR2 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.