

PLANNING STATEMENT

Proposed Change of Use of Ground Floor to A3 Bar and Restaurant with Beer Garden
Former Barclays Bank, 9 The Parade, Neath, Port Talbot, SA11 1RB

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a full planning application and listed building consent for the change of use of the ground floor of the Former Barclays Bank building at 9 The Parade, Neath, from Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) to Class A3 (Food and Drink) for use as a bar and restaurant. The proposals also include the creation of a beer garden to the rear and the installation of green infrastructure and ecological enhancements.

The site lies within the Neath Town Centre Conservation Area and the building is Grade II listed. This statement demonstrates how the proposed development aligns with national and local planning policy and contributes positively to the vitality, heritage, and environmental objectives of the area.

2. Site Description and Planning Context

The site comprises the ground floor of a substantial, three-storey stone building formerly occupied by Barclays Bank PLC. The property is located on The Parade, a primary street in Neath town centre, and is within a mixed-use area comprising retail, commercial, and hospitality premises.

The building was listed (Grade II) in 1989 and is noted for its architectural character and contribution to the historic townscape. The property is currently vacant and presents an opportunity for active reuse that respects its heritage while supporting the local economy.

3. Proposed Development

The proposed development includes:

- Change of use of the ground floor from A2 (bank) to A3 bar and restaurant.
- Installation of a commercial kitchen, with an Elta Fans Revolution SLC long-cased axial flow extractor fan.
- Creation of a rear beer garden, including:
 - Raised planters with native wildflowers and pollinator-friendly planting.
 - External seating and landscaping to support a high-quality customer experience.
- Installation of ecology enhancements, including:

- One **bird box** and one **bat box** mounted under the eaves on the rear elevation.

No changes are proposed to the upper floors.

4. Planning Policy Assessment

4.1 National Planning Policy

The proposal is consistent with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11), which support sustainable reuse of buildings, economic regeneration, urban biodiversity, and heritage protection.

4.2 Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (2011–2026)

Key relevant policies include:

- **SP1** – Delivering Sustainable Growth
- **SC1** – Settlement Limits (site lies within town centre settlement limit)
- **BE1** – Design
- **BE2** – Listed Buildings
- **TR2** – Design and Access of New Development
- **EN6** – Important Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sites
- **EC3** – Employment Area Uses
- **R2** – Retail and Commercial Centres

The proposal supports town centre vibrancy, brings a vacant listed building back into beneficial use, and incorporates sensitive design and biodiversity improvements.

5. Heritage and Design Considerations

The proposal has been designed to preserve the special character of the listed building. No alterations are proposed to the front elevation. Internal changes are limited to fit-out works for the kitchen and bar areas. The external beer garden is located to the rear and will not impact the primary visual façade.

All interventions have been carefully designed to be reversible and respectful of the building's fabric. Heritage Impact Statement accompanies this application.

6. Green Infrastructure and Ecology

As detailed in the accompanying Green Infrastructure Statement, the beer garden will incorporate:

- Raised planters with native wildflowers
- Support for pollinators and insect biodiversity
- Reduction in hard-surfaced runoff
- Ecological enhancements with bat and bird boxes under the eaves of the rear elevation

These measures provide tangible benefits in line with LDP Policy EN6 and contribute to wider environmental goals.

7. Access and Waste Management

The proposal makes no changes to the existing pedestrian access from The Parade. The rear yard will serve as both a beer garden and a controlled point for waste collection. All waste will be stored internally, segregated into general, recyclable, and food waste, and collected regularly by a licensed commercial contractor in accordance with Environmental Health requirements.

8. Noise and Odour Mitigation

The kitchen will be fitted with a Revolution SLC axial flow fan, designed for commercial kitchens and compliant with DEFRA guidance. The system will include grease filters and potential carbon filtration if required.

A Noise Risk Assessment is being commissioned and will accompany the submission or be provided as a condition of planning. Use of the beer garden will be subject to appropriate operational hours to limit any noise impact on nearby residents or properties.

9. Conclusion

The proposed development will:

- Bring a vacant and underutilised listed building back into viable, active use
- Support the town centre economy and contribute to local employment
- Enhance local amenity and biodiversity through green infrastructure
- Preserve the special character and historic interest of the building and its setting

The proposal is considered to be compliant with national and local planning policies and delivers social, economic, and environmental benefits. We respectfully request that planning permission and listed building consent be granted.