



PLANNING STATEMENT

**Conversion of a Residential Flat to Provide Additional
Facilities for an Existing Chiropractic Clinic
at 31A Commercial Road, Port Talbot, SA13 1LN**

**On behalf of
Mr Herbert**

Our Ref: 1687.a

Date: August 2025

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Approved by: Jason Evans

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Evans Banks Planning Ltd. has been instructed by Mr Herbert (the Applicant) to prepare a full planning application for the conversion of a residential flat to provide additional facilities for the existing Chiropractic Clinic at 31A Commercial Road, Port Talbot, SA13 1LN.
- 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 site location plan for the proposed development at 31A Commercial Road is presented in Figure 1 below.

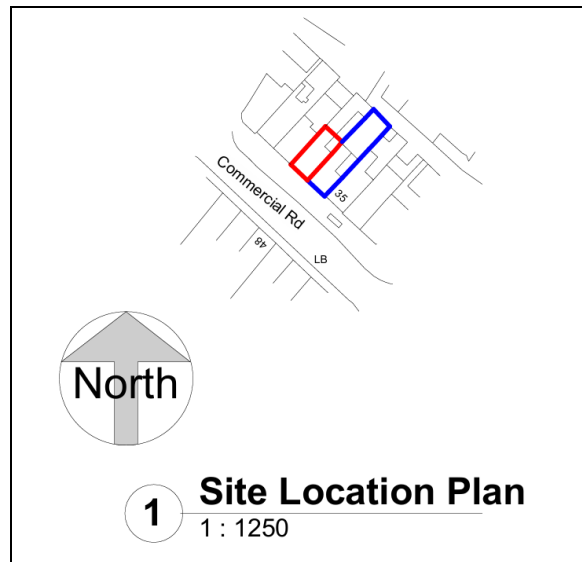


Figure 1

2.1.2 The application site, 31A Commercial Road, comprises solely the first-floor level of 31 Commercial Road in Port Talbot. Photograph 1 below shows a view of the application site as seen from across the street.



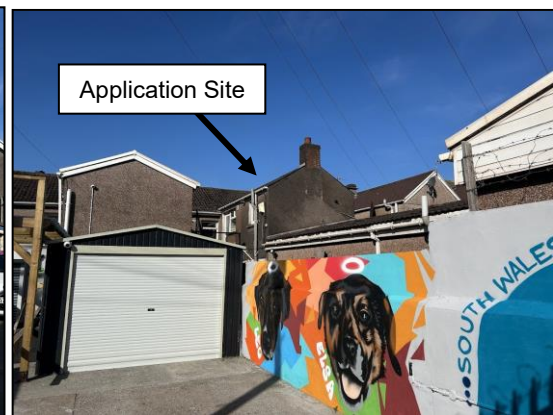
Photograph 1

2.1.3 As can be seen in Photograph 1 above, the application site is situated directly adjacent to the Taibach Chiropractic Clinic and a barber's shop.

2.1.4 Photographs 2 and 3 illustrate views to the rear of the application site. Photograph 2 shows the rear access to the property, while Photograph 3 captures the site from the perspective of the neighbouring chiropractic clinic at 33 Commercial Road.



Photograph 2



Photograph 3

2.1.5 It is noteworthy that 33 Commercial Road, situated immediately southeast of the application site (as seen in Photograph 3), is also owned by the Applicant. The Applicant currently operates a chiropractic clinic at this address. This application

proposes the change of use of the first floor of 31A Commercial Road from residential to commercial purposes to support the expansion of the existing clinic.

2.2 THE SURROUNDING AREA

2.2.1 In the immediate sense, the application site lies within the town of Port Talbot, situated within a district centre according to the LDP map. Figure 2 below displays a Google Earth aerial image of the application site, highlighting the application site and illustrating its location within the immediate area (captured in September 2022).



Figure 2

2.2.2 Photographs 4 and 5 below show views along the adjoining highway opposite the application site.



Photograph 4



Photograph 5

2.2.3 As can be seen in the photographs above, the application site is situated along a busy street, surrounded by other businesses. Notably, a bus stop is located directly outside the application site, making this a highly accessible and sustainable location.

2.2.4 An Ordnance Survey Map is shown in Figure 3 below which shows the surrounding areas.

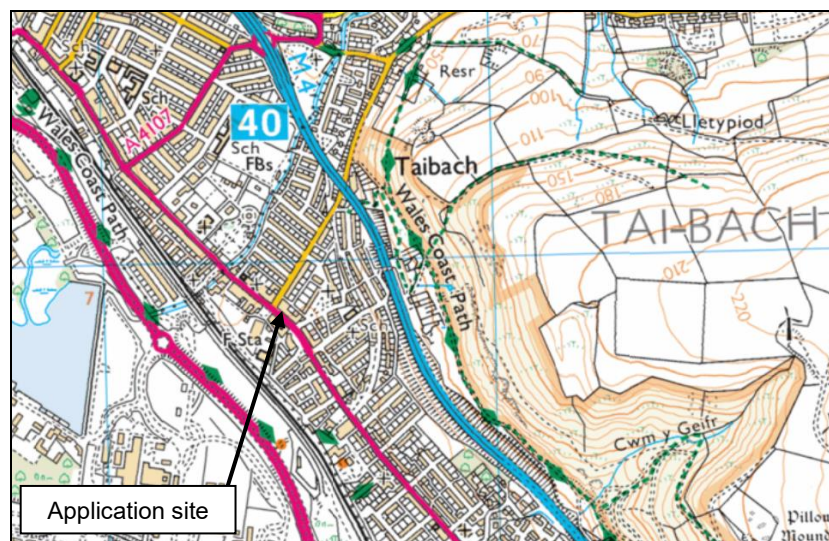


Figure 3

2.2.5 As mentioned, the application site is centrally located within a district centre in the town of Port Talbot, benefitting from convenient access to a diverse mix of uses,

including commercial, residential and retail premises. These include restaurants, pubs, cafés, takeaways, high street shops, a pharmacy, post office, and an Aldi supermarket.

2.2.6 Furthermore, the application site is well served by public transport, with regular bus services providing a variety of connections to nearby settlements such as Neath, Margam, Swansea and Bridgend. Additionally, Port Talbot Parkway railway station is situated 1 kilometre from the pre-application site and provides direct services to Swansea, Carmarthen, Pembroke Dock, Fishguard Harbour, Cardiff Central, Milford Haven, Manchester Piccadilly and London Paddington.

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 influenced the design of the proposal subject of this planning application:

- **Scale** – To retain the existing scale and massing of the existing building.
- **Design** – To preserve the existing architectural character of the property while reconfiguring the internal layout of the first floor to support clinical use.
- **Access** – To maintain existing access arrangements while introducing an internal staircase to provide dedicated access to the first floor.
- **Drainage** – To utilise the existing drainage system which is fully compliant with current regulations.
- **Biodiversity** – A bird box will be installed on the external wall of the property as a simple enhancement measure to support local wildlife and contribute to biodiversity gain.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 *Project Overview*

- 3.1 This application seeks permission to change the use of the first floor of 31A Commercial Road from residential to commercial purposes, in order to provide additional facilities for the existing chiropractic clinic operating at 33 Commercial Road, Port Talbot, SA13 1LN.

3.2 *General Scale and Design*

- 3.2.1 Notably, the application site comprises solely the first-floor level of 31 Commercial Road. The proposal does not include any extension or increase in the building's height; consequently, the overall scale, form, and external appearance of the structure will remain entirely unchanged, as shown in the block plan presented in Figure 4 below.

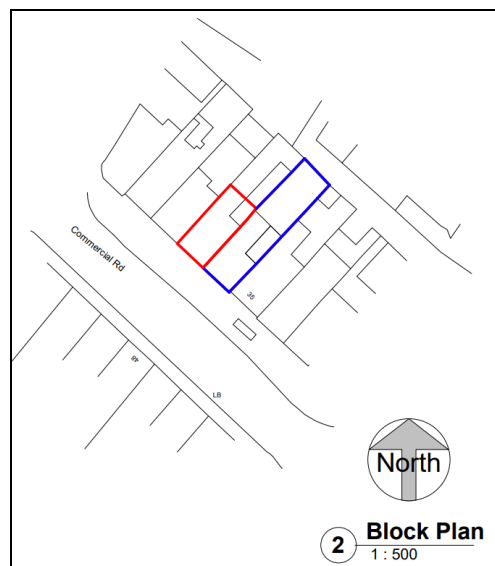


Figure 4

3.3 *External Finishes*

- 3.3.1 No alterations are proposed to the external finishes of the building. The existing rough-textured, light brown concrete render dash on the upper level and the dark tiles

on the lower portion will be retained, ensuring consistency with the local architectural character. The large, wooden-framed windows at first-floor level will also be retained as part of this application, as well as the roof which is clad in brown tiles.

3.4 Internal Accommodation

3.4.1 The existing first-floor residential elements – comprising two bedrooms, a living room, kitchen, and bathroom – will be repurposed to provide additional facilities supporting the adjacent chiropractic clinic at 33 Commercial Road, as illustrated in Figures 5 and 6 below, which show the existing and proposed floor plans respectively.

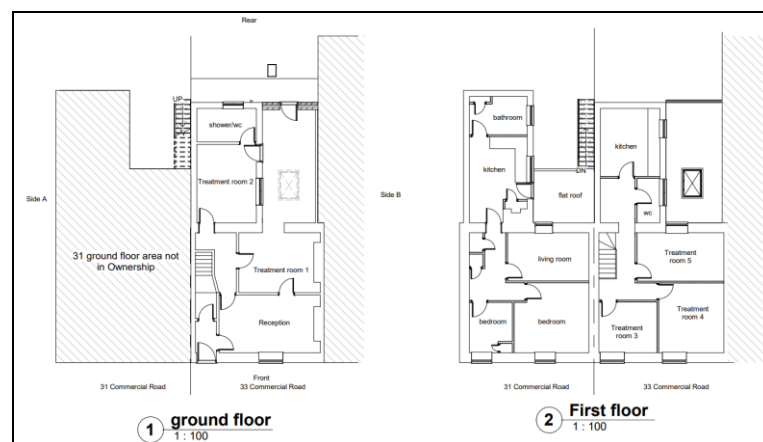


Figure 5

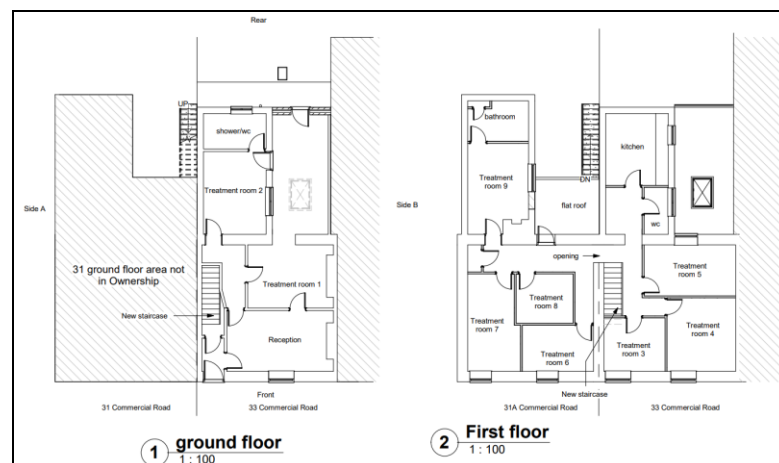


Figure 6

- 3.4.2 As depicted in the plans, the proposed alterations will reconfigure the first floor of 31A Commercial Road by converting the residential accommodation into additional treatment spaces integrated with the adjoining clinic.
- 3.4.3 A new staircase will be installed at the front of 31A to provide dedicated access to its first floor. Internally, the existing living and bedroom areas in 31A will be reconfigured to create two new treatment rooms, enabling a seamless extension of the clinical facilities.
- 3.4.4 A key element of the proposal is the introduction of an opening in the party wall at first-floor level, linking 31A and 33 Commercial Road to allow free circulation between the properties. These changes will effectively integrate the first floors of both addresses into one larger commercial unit, significantly expanding the treatment capacity of the existing clinic while maintaining the external appearance of the buildings largely unchanged.

3.5 Means of Access and Parking

- 3.5.1 No changes are proposed to the existing access arrangements. Although the application site does not include dedicated customer parking, it benefits from a highly accessible location, with a bus stop situated directly outside the property. In addition, numerous parking options are available in the immediate vicinity, including on-street parking along Commercial Road and several larger public car parks nearby. Therefore, the existing access continues to serve the site safely and effectively.

3.6 Drainage

- 3.6.1 Foul drainage will be managed via the existing system, and surface water will continue to be disposed of via existing soakaway systems already in place on the site.

3.7 Biodiversity

- 3.7.1 Although no external alterations are proposed, biodiversity enhancements will be introduced through the installation of a bird box on the building.

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 Local Development Plan (LDP). As such, the policies contained within this document have been carefully considered in the preparation of this planning application. The proposal has been assessed with particular reference to the following relevant policies:

- **Policy R2** – Proposals within Retail Centres
- **Policy SC1** – Settlement Limits
- **Policy SP3** – Sustainable Communities
- **Policy TR2** – Design and Access of New Development
- **Policy BE1** – Design

4.0.2 Figure 7 below displays an extract from Neath Port Talbot's LDP map, highlighting the location of the application site.

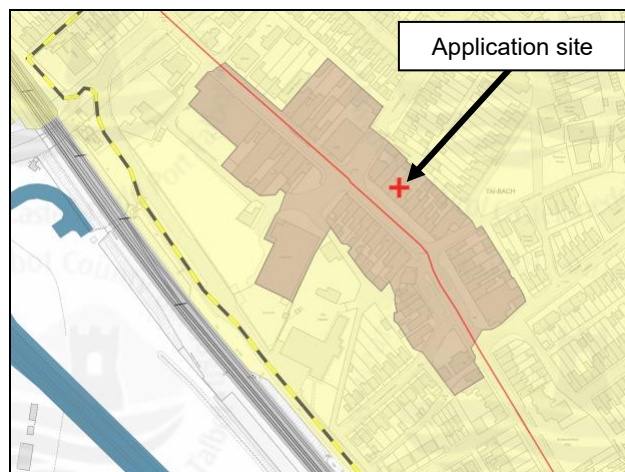


Figure 7

4.0.3 As illustrated in Figure 7 above, the application site lies within the defined Settlement Limits (Policy SC1) for Port Talbot and is also located within the Taibach District Centre. Additionally, the Local Development Plan (LDP) identifies Commercial Road as part of the 'core road network', and the Wales Coastal Path runs directly to the southwest of the site.

4.0.4 Accordingly, particular attention has been paid to Policy R2 and Policy TR2 which are considered of key relevance to this application. The following sections provide a detailed assessment of the proposal against the specific requirements of these policies.

4.1 Policy R2 – Proposals within Retail Centres

4.1.1 Policy R2 of the Local Development Plan supports proposals within designated retail centres that enhance the vitality, viability, and attractiveness of the area. The policy encourages development that strengthens retail character, makes effective use of upper floors, and maintains a vibrant and attractive street frontage. It also provides criteria for assessing conversions or redevelopment of existing premises to ensure such proposals contribute positively to the community and townscape.

4.1.2 The application site is located within the designated retail centre of Taibach, a defined commercial area in Port Talbot. The proposal seeks to convert the first floor of 31A Commercial Road from residential to commercial use, integrating it with the existing chiropractic clinic at 33 Commercial Road. The ground floor remains in commercial use, and no changes are proposed that would diminish its frontage or accessibility.

4.1.3 The proposal fully accords with Criterion 1) of Policy R2, shown below:

“Within the designated retail centres, uses that would enhance the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the centre, including uses in classes A and D will be permitted where:

- a) *The proposal integrates with and strengthens the layout, retail character and pedestrian flows of the centre; and*
- b) *Does not prejudice the effective use of upper floors; and*
- c) *Maintains a vibrant and attractive shopping street frontage.”*

4.1.4 The proposal aligns with Criterion 1) of Policy R2 as it will strengthen the retail character and layout of the centre by enhancing an existing business through expansion. Specifically, the proposal aligns with condition a) as the proposal strengthens the layout and commercial role of the Taibach District Centre by expanding an established chiropractic clinic into the underused first floor of 31A Commercial Road. The proposal also fully meets condition b) by making effective use of an upper floor currently in residential use. Finally, in regard to criterion (c), the development fully retains the property's existing frontage since no changes are proposed to the external façade or shopfront, ensuring the appearance and vibrancy of the shopping street is maintained. This also ensures adheres to the requirements of Policy BE1.

4.1.5 In summary, the proposed change of use supports all three criteria of Policy R2 by enhancing commercial use, ensuring efficient use of space, and preserving the active retail frontage within the district centre.

4.2 Policy TR2 – Design and Access of New Development

4.2.1 Policy TR2 requires that new development proposals demonstrate safe and efficient highway use, adequate parking and access arrangements, and connectivity to a range of transport modes.

4.2.2 With respect to criterion 1), the proposal does not compromise the safe or efficient use of the highway network. It involves internal reconfiguration only, with no intensification of external access or changes to the building footprint. As such, there will be no adverse impact on highway safety or significant increase in traffic generation.

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- 4.2.3 In line with criterion 2), while no dedicated customer parking is provided on-site, the site benefits from surrounding on-street parking and several nearby public car parks.
- 4.2.4 The site fully meets criterion 3), being highly accessible by a range of transport modes. A bus stop is located directly outside the property, and the surrounding area includes safe pedestrian footways and local cycle routes. The Wales Coastal Path, located just to the southwest, further reinforces pedestrian connectivity.
- 4.2.5 As the proposal is modest in scale and will not generate significant additional traffic, a Transport Assessment or Travel Plan is not required under criterion 4).
- 4.2.6 Overall, the proposal fully complies with Policy TR2, maintaining highway safety, ensuring accessibility, and supporting sustainable modes of travel.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of the first floor of 31A Commercial Road, Port Talbot, from residential use to commercial use, in order to provide additional treatment space for the established chiropractic clinic at the adjoining property, 33 Commercial Road.
- 5.2 The proposal represents a modest but highly effective intervention that brings underused residential floorspace into active commercial use, directly supporting a growing local business. The application responds to increased demand for clinical services and enables operational expansion without the need for external extension or alterations to the building.
- 5.3 The proposed change of use is both sustainable and appropriate, ensuring the effective use of upper floor space, preserving the commercial character and active frontage of Commercial Road, and reinforcing the vitality of the Taibach District Centre. No adverse impacts on highway safety, amenity, or local services are anticipated, and the site remains well connected by public transport, walking, and cycling routes.
- 5.4 The development aligns fully with key policies of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan, including Policies R2 (Retail Centres), TR2 (Design and Access), and SC1 (Settlement Limits). It reflects good planning practice by supporting an existing business, optimising land use within a defined commercial area.
- 5.5 In light of the above, and the proposal's compliance with local planning policy and sustainable development principles, we respectfully request that planning permission be granted for the proposed development.