



PLANNING STATEMENT

**PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF INDUSTRIAL WORKSHOP AND
YARD (USE CLASS B2) TO A WELL BEING CENTRE
(GYMNASIUM AND FITNESS) (USE CLASS D2)
AT
OAKTREE WORKSHOPS, MAIN ROAD, CRYNANT, NEATH,
SA10 8NY**

**On Behalf of
Mr P. Taylor, T/A Taylored Fitness & Nutrition**

**Our Ref: 1879.a
Prepared By: Rhydian Gore
Date: August 2025**

Approved By: Richard Banks

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Evans Banks Planning is instructed by Mr P. Taylor, T/A Taylored Fitness & Nutrition to seek full planning permission for the *“Proposed Change of Use of Industrial Workshop and Yard (Use Class B2) to a Well Being Centre (Gymnasium and Fitness) (Use Class D2)”* at Oaktree Workshops, Main Road, Crynant.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement forms part of the submission of the application to be considered by the Local Planning Authority and should be considered in tandem with the submitted Location and Site Layout Plans, together with the Existing and Proposed Floor Plans of the buildings, together with a proportionate Green Infrastructure Statement.
- 1.3 This Statement focuses on the overall design concept being promoted under this application, and how it provides an innovative and imaginative redevelopment, in line with *Planning Policy Wales* Guidance and *Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan* policies. The proposals seek to convert the existing industrial workshop to a health and wellbeing centre at a location where there will be no visual harm to the urban setting, matters of biodiversity and townscape, highway safety nor neighbouring occupiers’ amenities.

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 The application site consists of an existing industrial workshop, formerly used to serve The Lodge Workshop, which is located in Crynant, Neath. The site lies off the eastern flank of the A Road known as Main Road with an access then leading to the building and its large yard with associated parking areas. The building, its yard and existing interior are illustrated in Photographs 1 to 10 below.



Photograph 1 – View of Front Elevation of Existing Building



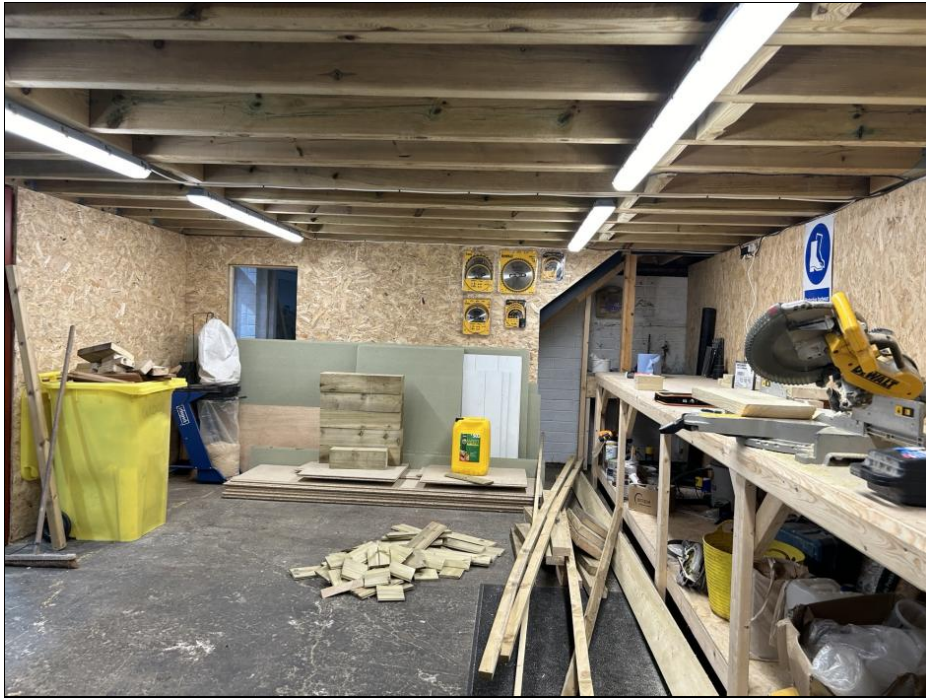
Photograph 2 – View of Front Elevation of Existing Building and Yard



Photograph 3 – View of Side Elevation of Existing Building



Photograph 4 – View of the Interior of the Western Portion of Building



Photograph 5 – Interior of Main Workshop Area



Photograph 6 – Interior of Main Workshop Area



Photograph 7 – View of Northern Portion of the Yard



Photograph 8 – View from Northern Portion of the Yard Towards Access Point



Photograph 9 – View of Northern Boundary with No. 43 Main Road



Photograph 10 – View of Southern Boundary from Adjacent Highway

- 2.2 The site comprises some 0.15 hectares in total, enclosed by a mixture of boundary fences and perimeter vegetation, with further residential buildings then situated from all directions from the site.

- 2.3 The site is accessible via a typical industrial gated access off the eastern flank of the aforementioned classified Main Road. The access and visibility splays are shown in Photographs 11, 12 and 13 below.



Photograph 11 – Existing Access to the Site



Photograph 12 – Visibility Splay from the Site Looking South



Photograph 13– Visibility Splay from the Site Looking North

- 2.6 Figure 1 below provides an extract from the Ordnance Survey Explorer map with the application site identified by a red arrow. Figure 2 provides a Google Earth image from May 2023, which is typical of the current urban setting within Crynant. Figure 3 is an extract from a more detailed OS plan, with the site edged in red for ease of identification.

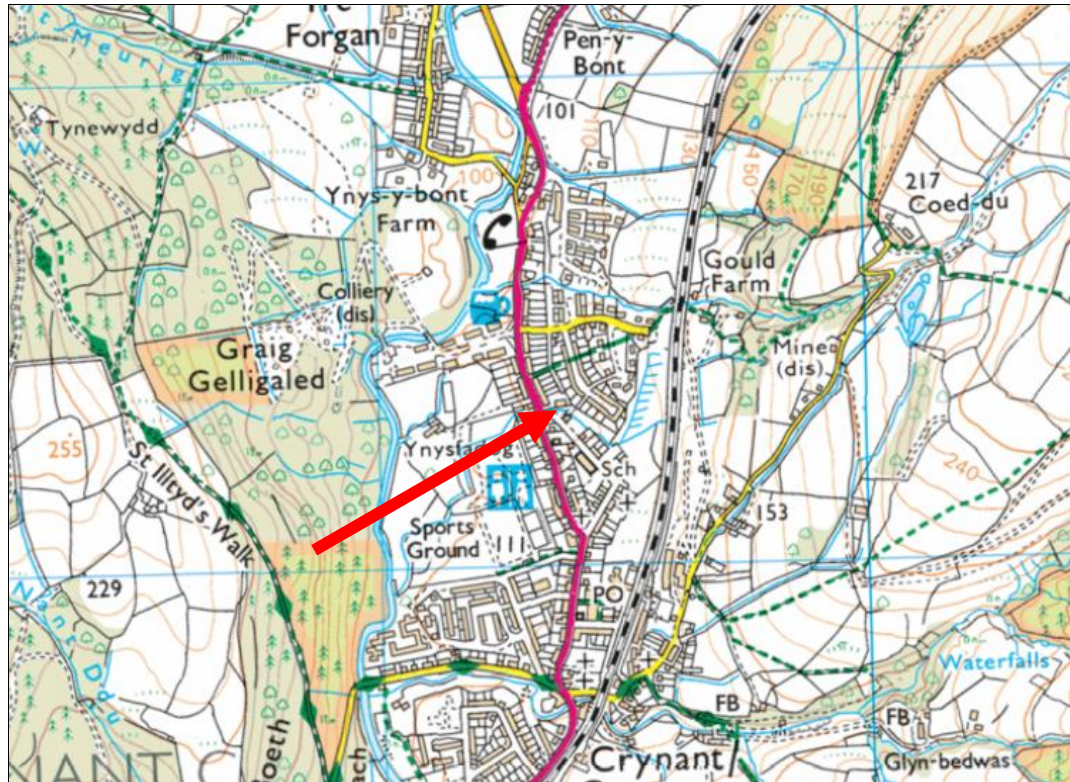


Figure 1 – Location of Existing Workshop at Main Road



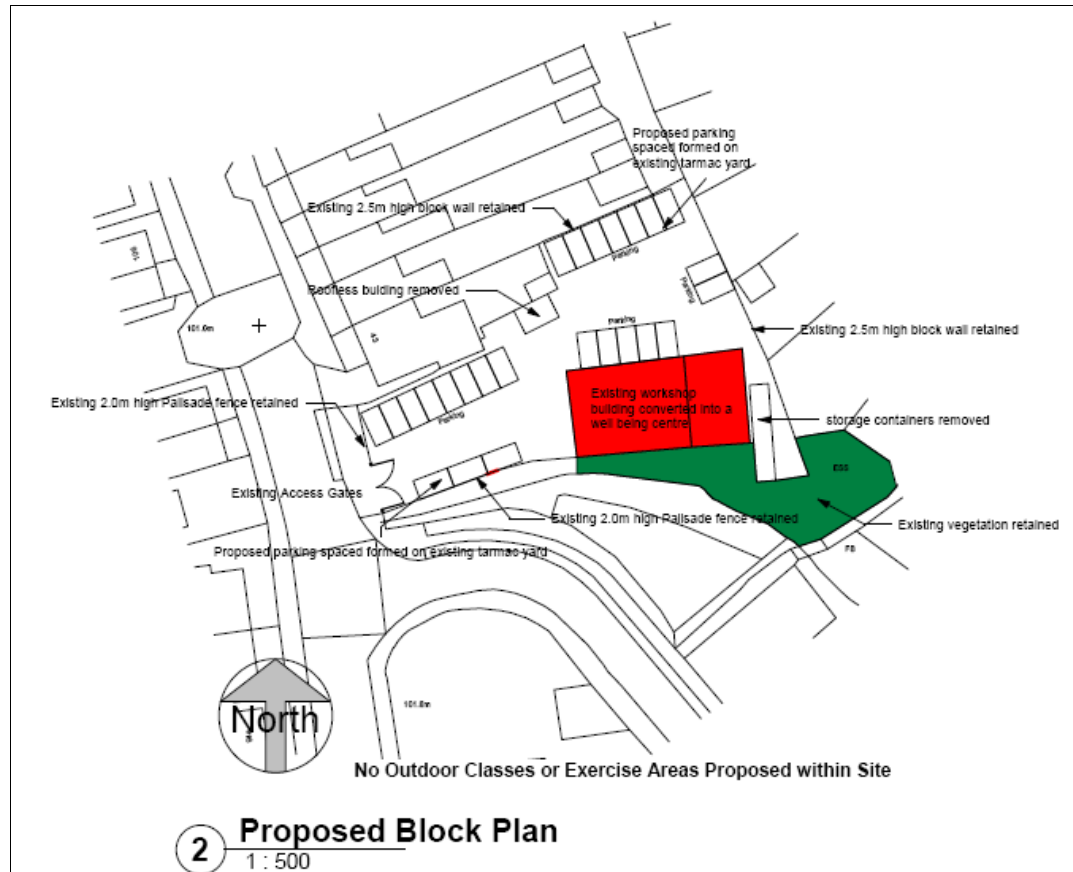
Figure 2 – Google Earth Image of the Application Site Locality – May 2023



Figure 3 – Location Plan

3.0 Application Proposals

- 3.1 The proposals seek planning permission to change the use of the existing industrial workshop to a wellbeing centre, in order to fully capitalise on a growing demand for health and wellbeing opportunities in the area. The existing building at the industrial yard last served as a workshop for 'The Lodge' business, and it should be noted that the mass and scale of the building will remain as existing with no external alterations, but with internal alterations in order to facilitate its use as a wellbeing centre. The detailed Site Layout Plan of the site is illustrated below in Figure 4.



- 3.2 The existing building, as shown in Figure 5 below comprises of an industrial workshop set over varying levels, with a lower workshop area, office and toilets comprising the main section of the building accessed via a roller shutter door at the front elevation, leading up to another workshop area to the rear that is also accessible via a roller shutter door at the northern elevation of the building. There is also a mezzanine level with further industrial space and equipment. The building is a flat roof structure, with a render finish to its elevations, and then a mix of roller shutter doors and white Upvc to the fenestration.
- 3.3 The existing Block Plan and Floor Plan are then shown at Figures 5 and 6 below.

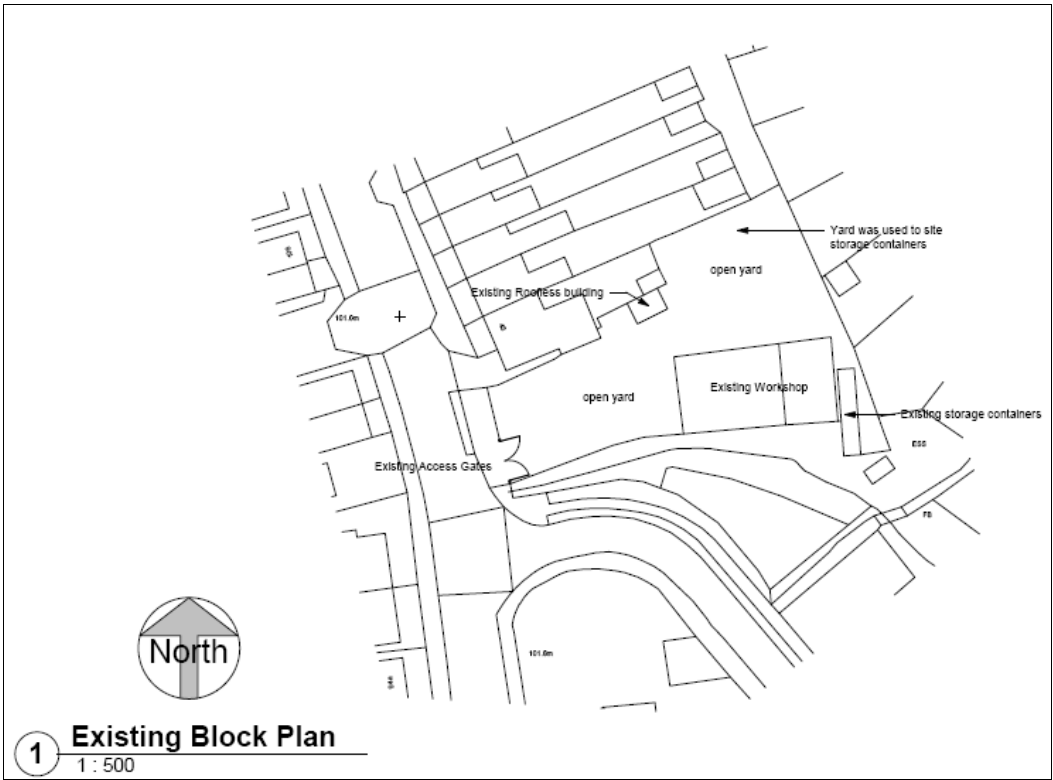


Figure 5 – Existing Block Plan

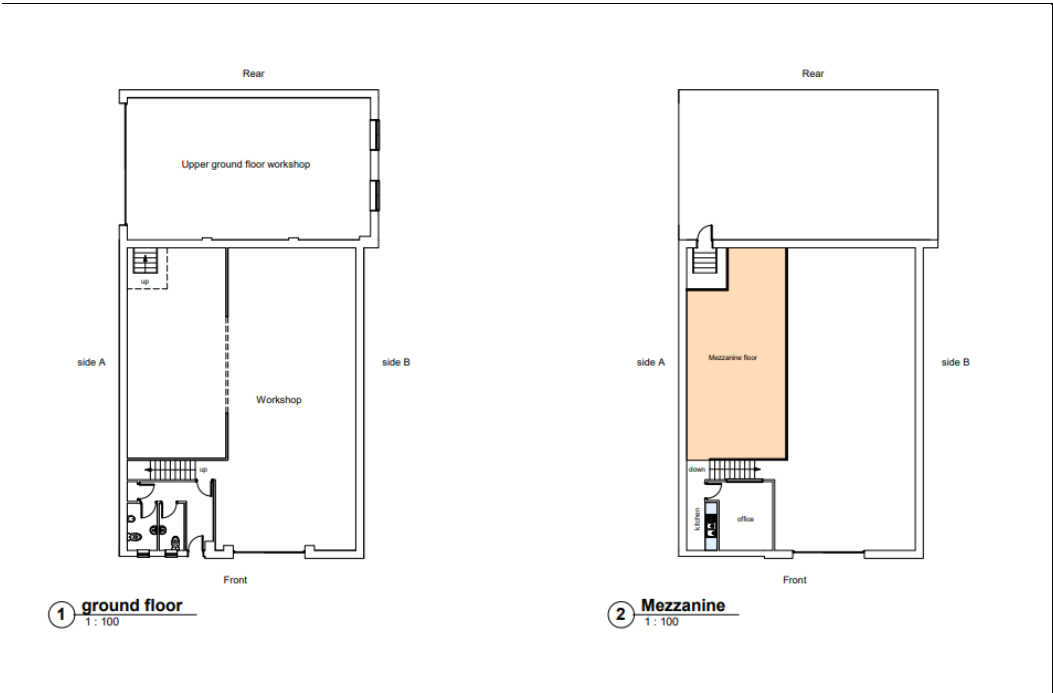


Figure 6 – Existing Floor Plan

- 3.4 In terms of this Application proposal, the building will remain as existing in terms of its scale and footprint, with no external alterations required.
- 3.5 Internally, the wellbeing centre will remain over split levels, with the lower ground floor being split between an area for free weights, and one for treadmills and rowing

machines. The upper ground floor will then consist of a dedicated area for aerobics, while the mezzanine floor will be raised up 250mm and will accommodate an office and a kitchen area.

- 3.6 The proposed mezzanine floor will accommodate an office and a small kitchen area. These facilities are intended solely for use by patrons of the Well Being Centre in connection with their gym and fitness activities. The kitchen will provide only light refreshments, and no commercial café or restaurant use is proposed. This ancillary function will support the primary D2 use and can, if necessary, be controlled by an appropriately worded planning condition to ensure it remains incidental to the main use.
- 3.7 The proposed Floor Plan of the health and wellbeing centre is illustrated in greater detail at Figure 7 below.

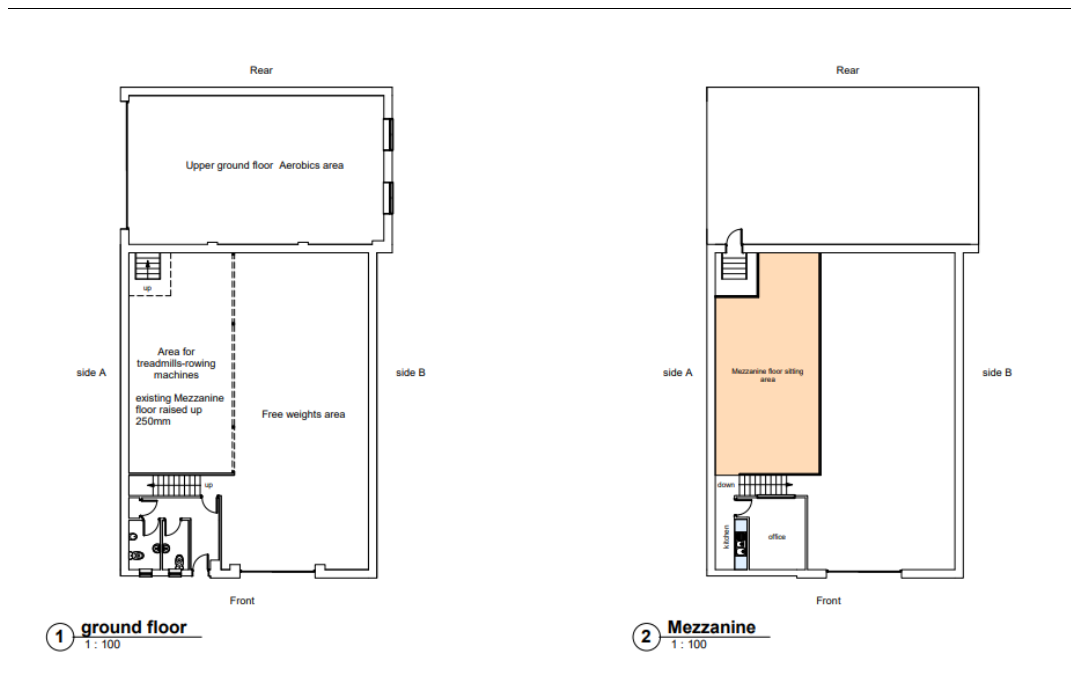


Figure 7 – Proposed Floor Plan

- 3.8 In terms of the operational arrangements at the site, the proposed hours of opening requested by the applicant are **06:00 to 21:00 Monday to Saturday**, and **08:00 to 17:00 on Sundays**. These hours are considered appropriate for the nature of the use and will support the effective functioning of the business while respecting the amenity of the surrounding area.
- 3.9 No outdoor areas within the application site will be used in connection with the proposed Well Being Centre. All gym and fitness activities will take place entirely within the building. Given this operational arrangement, and having regard to the building's location adjacent to residential properties, the proposal will not give rise

to any adverse impact on residential amenity in terms of noise, disturbance, or loss of privacy.

- 3.10 It should also be noted that 1x bat box, and 1x bird box are proposed to be affixed to the elevations of the building to increase the biodiversity levels of the site, as shown in the Plans above.

5.0 **Policy Context**

5.1 **National Planning Policy**

5.1.1 Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) (February 2024) has a significant focus on Placemaking principles, and that development should be seen in the context of any special characteristics inherent in a locality. Paragraph 3.9 indicates that *"The special characteristics of an area should be central to the design of a development. The layout, form, scale and visual appearance of a proposed development and its relationship to its surroundings are important planning considerations."*

5.1.2 Paragraph 3.10 goes further *"In areas recognised for their particular landscape, townscape, cultural or historic character and value it can be appropriate to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. In those areas, the impact of development on the existing character, the scale and siting of new development, and the use of appropriate building materials (including where possible sustainably produced materials from local sources), will be particularly important."*

The emphasis in this approach is whether an area exhibits "special characteristics," or is "recognised for their particular landscape, townspace.....character" which in the case of the immediate locality and neighbourhood of Main Road is not evident, and thus the particular design proposed within this application is argued as otherwise adjudged as acceptable, at Section 6 below.

5.2 **Local Planning Policy**

5.2.1 The development plan in form for the purposes of Section 38(6) of the *Planning & Compensation Act 2004* is the *Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan*, which was adopted in January 2016.

5.2.2 Policy BE1 "Design" is relevant, and states that:

"All development proposals will be expected to demonstrate high quality design which fully takes into account the natural, historic and built environmental context and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable places.

Proposals will only be permitted where all of the following criteria, where relevant, are satisfied:

- 1. It complements and enhances the character and appearance of the site, building or area in terms of siting, appearance, scale, height, massing and elevation treatment;*
- 2. It respects the context of the site and its place within the local landscape, including its impact on the important arterial gateways into the County Borough, its effects on townscape and the local historic and cultural heritage and it takes account of the site topography and prominent skylines or ridges;*
- 3. It utilises materials appropriate to its surroundings and incorporates hard and soft landscaping and screening where appropriate;*

4. *It would not have a significant adverse impact on highway safety, the amenity of occupiers of adjacent land or the community.*
5. *Important local features (including buildings, amenity areas, green spaces and green infrastructure, biodiversity and ecological connectivity) are retained and enhanced as far as possible;*
6. *It achieves and creates attractive, safe places and public spaces, taking account of 'Secured by Design' principles (including where appropriate natural surveillance, visibility, well-lit environments and areas of public movement);*
7. *It plays a full role in achieving and enhancing an integrated transport and communications network promoting the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and ensures linkages with the existing surrounding community;*
8. *It uses resources, including land and energy, as efficiently as possible through:*
 - a. *Making the best and most efficient use of the land available through being of appropriate density taking into account the character and appearance of the area, normally a minimum of 35 dwellings per hectare in the Coastal Corridor Strategy Area or a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare in the Valleys Strategy Area;*
 - b. *The layout and form of the development does not preclude the reasonable use of other adjacent land;*
 - c. *Developing brownfield land in preference to greenfield land where possible;*
 - d. *Minimising building exposure while maximising solar gain.*
9. *Its drainage systems are designed to limit surface water run-of and flood risk and prevent pollution;*
10. *The layout and design of the development achieves inclusive design by ensuring barrier free environments, allowing access by all and making full provision for people with disabilities."*

5.2.3 The locality is **not** afforded any protective status such as a Conservation Area. Neither is the application buildings designated as Listed Buildings, with none of the immediate surrounding buildings otherwise designated as such.

5.2.4 The proposed change of use from an industrial workshop to a health and wellbeing centre presents a valuable opportunity to remove an incompatible industrial use from a predominantly residential area. This would significantly improve local amenity by reducing noise, disturbance, and the potential for heavy vehicle movements associated with the existing use. The introduction of a community-focused facility in its place would offer a more appropriate and positive contribution to the character and wellbeing of the local area.

5.2.5 The site is enclosed by existing high blockwork boundary walls along its perimeters, which provide effective visual screening from neighbouring residential properties and prevent any overlooking or perception of overlooking from within the site. These walls also act as a physical barrier that will help to mitigate any incidental noise or movement within the yard area, further protecting residential amenity.

5.2.6 The site does nevertheless lie within an urban setting, at Crynant, as contained within the Proposals Map of the LDP, and accordingly for this reason, the site is adjudged to be at an appropriate location for a development of this kind. It is considered that the proposed Well Being Centre would offer a far greater amenity benefit to the residents of Crynant than the continuation of the lawful, unconditioned B2 industrial workshop and yard use. The existing use has the potential to generate significantly higher levels of noise, heavy vehicle movements, and general industrial activity, all of which could adversely affect neighbouring residential amenity. In contrast, the proposed use will operate within a managed, community-focused setting that promotes health and well-being, with far lower environmental impacts, thereby representing a more compatible and beneficial use of the site in this location. Figure 8 below provides an extract of the Inset Map for the area in which the site lies, with the building highlighted by a red arrow.

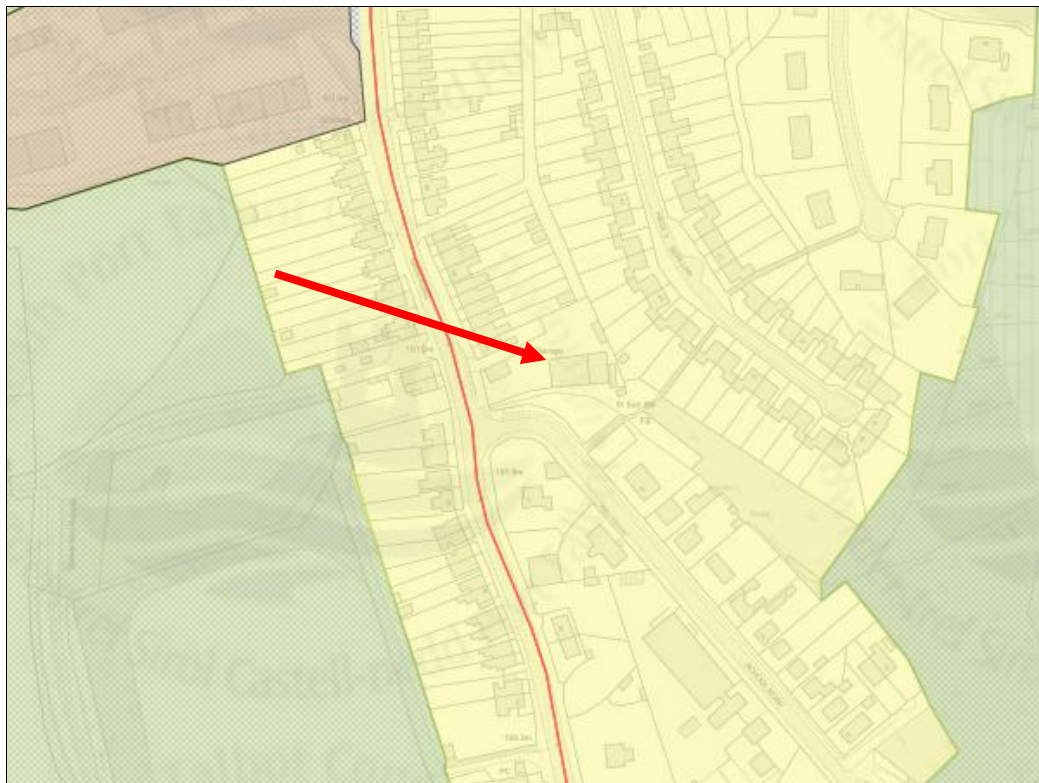


Figure 8 – Extract From LDP Proposals Map with Site Highlighted

Policy EN 7 – Important Natural Features

5.2.7 The site does not contain any existing trees or green infrastructure; however, the proposal seeks to enhance on-site biodiversity through the installation of one bat box and one bird box on the building. These small-scale but meaningful interventions demonstrate a commitment to ecological enhancement in line with local policy objectives. While no vegetation retention or replanting is required, the proposed measures contribute positively to biodiversity and support the integration of wildlife-friendly features within the built environment.

Policy EN8 – Pollution and Land Stability

- 5.2.8 The proposal accords with Policy EN8 (Pollution and Land Stability) of the Neath Port Talbot LDP by removing an industrial use that has the potential to generate noise, air pollution, and heavy vehicle movements within a predominantly residential area. By introducing a health and wellbeing centre in its place, the development significantly reduces the likelihood of environmental disturbance to neighbouring properties. The proposal does not involve any processes or activities that would give rise to pollution, and as such, it contributes to the protection of local environmental quality and residential amenity, in full accordance with the aims of Policy EN8.
- 5.2.9 No construction works are proposed as part of this application. The change of use will be implemented within the existing building, with no ground disturbance or alteration to external areas. As such, there will be no exposure to any underlying “capped” subsoils, and the potential for contamination to affect future users is therefore immaterial.

Policy SP 20 –Transport Network

- 5.2.10 The proposed development at Main Road retains the existing access and proposes extensive parking arrangements, which are already established and functional for the site’s intended use. This ensures the safe and efficient access and parking for customer and staff vehicles, ensuring there is no disruption to existing vehicle movement patterns. While the proposal does not include new transport infrastructure, the site remains accessible by public transport and is within walking and cycling distance of nearby residential and commercial areas, supporting Active Travel principles.
- 5.2.11 The proposed development accords with the *Neath Port Talbot Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)* and the *CSS Wales Parking Standards (2008)*. The on-site provision meets the quantitative requirements for a leisure use of this scale, ensuring adequate parking for staff and patrons. As such, the proposal is considered compliant with both local and national standards and will not result in any parking shortfall or associated highway safety issues.
- 5.2.12 The change of use to a health and wellbeing centre is expected to result in more predictable and manageable transport patterns, primarily involving private vehicles and occasional service visits, thereby reducing potential conflicts with surrounding residential traffic. Overall, the development supports the creation of a safer, more efficient, and more sustainable transport environment in line with the objectives of Policy SP20.

Policy TR 2 – Design and Access of New Development

- 5.2.13 The proposed change of use to a vehicle maintenance depot retains the site’s existing access arrangements, whilst proposing 20 parking spaces that are in line

with adopted standards and suitable for the operational needs of the building, including staff, visitor, and service vehicle parking. As no reduction in parking provision is proposed, the development will not compromise highway safety, accessibility, or the free flow of traffic, thereby complying with the key criteria of Policy TR 2. The retained parking provision ensures the proposal is well served, aligning with the maximum parking standards set out in the LDP.

6.0 **SUSTAINABILITY**

6.1 **Public Bus & Rail Connections**

The site at Main Road lies in close proximity to the **Crynant Business Park, Gradon Arms** and **Crynant Rugby Club bus stops**, with the **58, 907, X5, X8, 164, 167** and **T6 TrawsCymru Services** operating from the aforementioned stops shown in Figure 9 below.

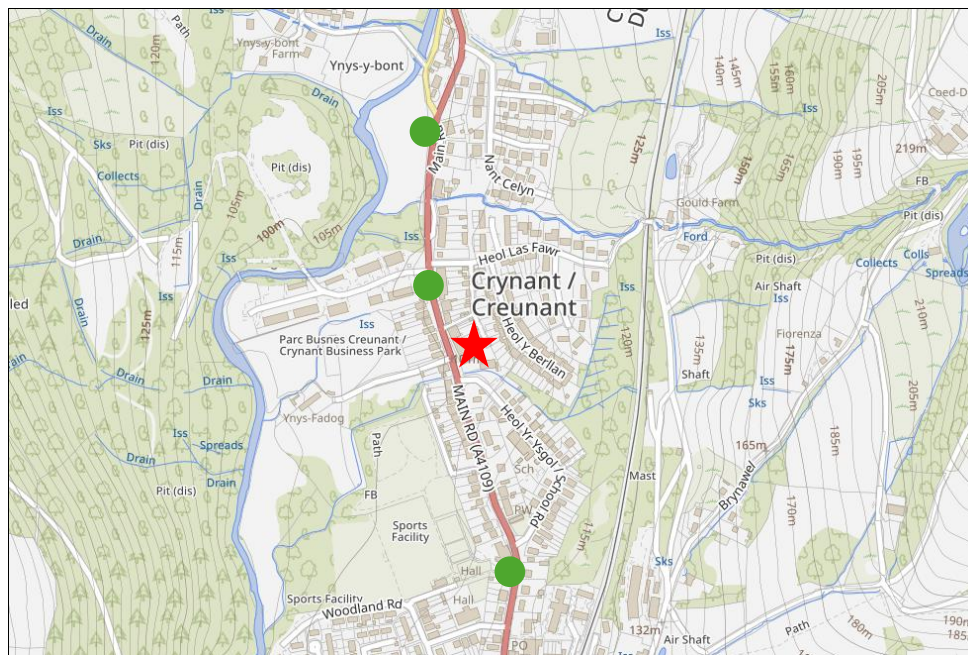


Figure 9 – Location of Public Bus Stops Near 5 Bryn Golwg

The above services operate daily to locations such as Crynant, Banwen, Brecon, Neath, Swansea and beyond

6.2 **Cycling Routes**

National Cycle Routes 43 (Swansea to Coelbren) and 46 (Bromsgrove to Neath) are accessible in under 30 minutes by bicycle from the site. Cyclists would also be able to alight/board trains at Neath and cycle to the site in less than 30 minutes. Figure 10 reveals a 30-minute cycle time from the site, where it is noted that the community facilities of Ystradgynlais, Tonna and Neath to name just a few, are all accessible, while Figure 11 shows the close proximity to **NCN 46 and 47**.

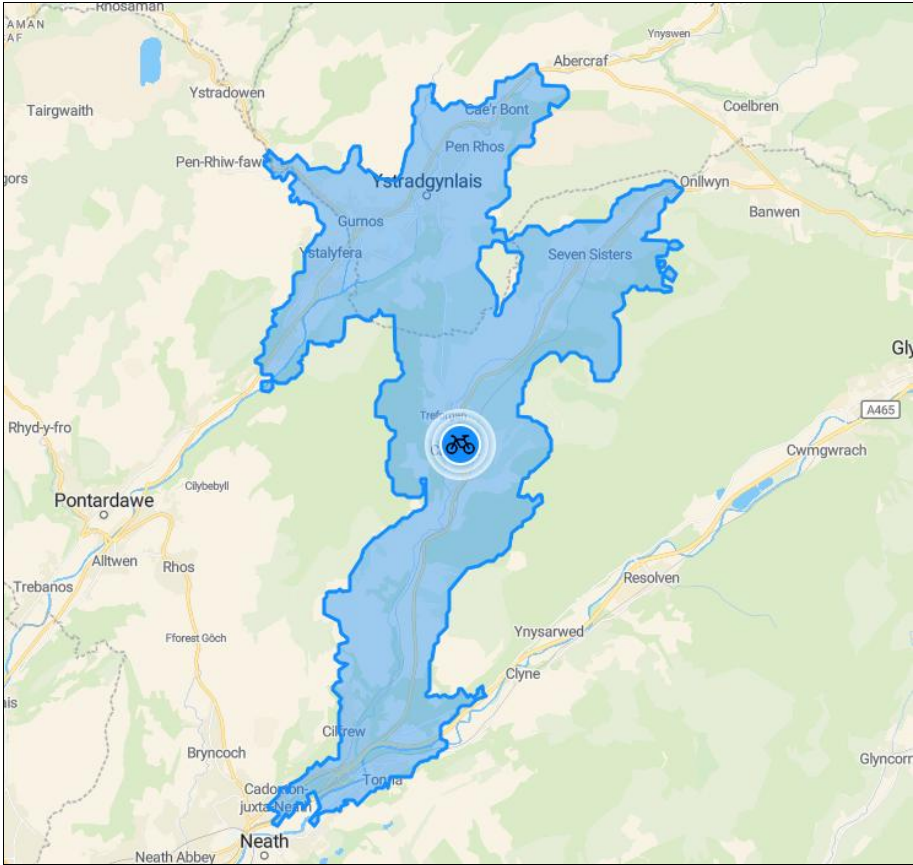


Figure 10 – 30 Minutes Cycle Time from Application Site

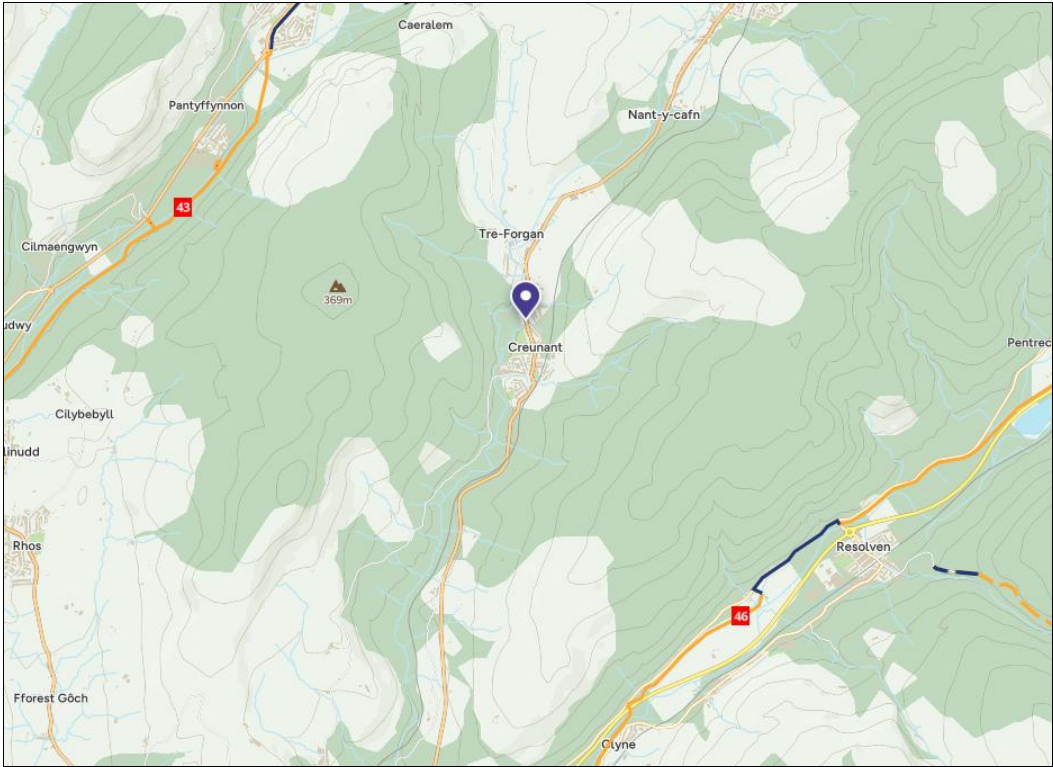


Figure 11 – National Cycle Network Map

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposals seek planning permission for the change of use of an existing industrial workshop to a health and wellbeing centre. The proposed use represents a more appropriate and compatible function within the context of the surrounding residential area. It makes efficient use of previously developed land without the need for physical alterations or expansion, contributing positively to local amenity and land use compatibility.
- 7.2 Although the site currently lacks trees or formal green infrastructure, a proportionate ecological enhancement is proposed through the installation of one bat box and one bird box on the building. This demonstrates a commitment to biodiversity improvement, aligning with the objectives of Policy EN6.
- 7.3 The removal of the industrial use reduces the potential for noise, air pollution, and heavy vehicle traffic, improving residential amenity and aligning with the wider objectives of Policy BE1 and SP20. The new use introduces a quieter, community-focused activity that better reflects the character of the area.
- 7.4 The existing access arrangements will be retained, and parking and servicing requirements can be accommodated within the current site layout. The development will not give rise to highway safety concerns and complies with the requirements of Policies TR2 and SP20.
- 7.5 Overall, the proposal meets the relevant criteria of the Local Development Plan and represents a sustainable and beneficial re-use of an existing building within an established urban area, enhancing both environmental quality and community wellbeing.