

1. Introduction

This Transport Statement has been prepared to accompany a full planning application for the conversion of the former RAFA Club, located on London Road, Neath, into 7 self-contained apartments for social rent.

The Statement considers:

- The accessibility of the site by a range of transport modes;
- The parking provision proposed in the context of Neath Port Talbot's adopted parking standards;
- Likely traffic generation; and
- Justification for the proposed parking strategy in line with planning policy.

2. Site Location and Existing Use

- The site occupies a prominent position on London Road at the corner with the Ropewalk
- The existing building is vacant but was most recently in use as a social club.
- The surrounding area is predominantly residential with local retail and service uses within easy walking distance.

3. Accessibility and Sustainable Travel

- Walking: The site is within walking distance of Neath town centre, which provides access to shops, services, schools, and employment opportunities.
- Cycling: The site is accessible by bicycle, with local cycle infrastructure linking into wider networks. Secure cycle parking will be provided for residents.
- Public Transport: Neath railway station is approx. 300m from the site, with direct services to Swansea, Cardiff and beyond. Frequent bus services operate along London Road, providing regular connections to Neath town centre and wider destinations.

This high level of accessibility supports reduced reliance on private car ownership.

4. Proposed Development and Parking Provision

- The scheme proposes 7 apartments (Use Class C3).
- 3 dedicated off-street parking spaces are provided within the site boundary.
- Secure, covered cycle parking (1 per unit) will also be provided.

5. Policy Context

National Policy

- Planning Policy Wales (PPW 11) and TAN 18: Transport encourage developments in accessible locations where car dependency can be reduced.

Local Policy – Neath Port Talbot SPG: Parking Standards (2016)

- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on Parking Standards in October 2016.
- The SPG uses a six-zone framework, where Zone 1 is the most accessible and Zone 6 the least.
- Based on its proximity to Neath town centre, railway station, and frequent bus services, the RAFA Club site falls within Zone 2: Town Centre / City Centre Fringe.
- For residential developments, the SPG provides baseline standards of 1 space per bedroom (up to 3 per dwelling), but states that “a more flexible approach may be taken where there is clear evidence that car ownership will be lower.”
- Paragraph 3.2.2 of the SPG also notes that in assessing parking needs, account should be taken of:
 - Accessibility by walking, cycling, and public transport;
 - Existing and possible future congestion in nearby streets; and
 - Availability of alternative public or private parking nearby.

6. Justification for Parking Provision

The scheme proposes 3 off-street spaces for 7 apartments, which is below the baseline requirement in the SPG. However:

- The site is in Zone 2 (Town Centre Fringe), where reduced parking is encouraged due to high accessibility.
- Neath town centre and railway station are within walking distance, and frequent buses run directly past the site.
- Secure cycle parking is provided, supporting modal shift.
- The tenure (social rent) is associated with lower car ownership compared to open-market housing, consistent with census data for the area.
- The previous use as a social club likely generated higher traffic and parking demand, especially during evenings and weekends.

On this basis, the reduced parking provision is reasonable and policy compliant.

7. Traffic Generation and Impact

- The lawful use as a social club would have generated regular traffic movements, particularly at evenings and weekends.
- The conversion to 7 apartments will generate fewer and more evenly spread daily trips.
- The development will therefore have a neutral or beneficial effect on local highway conditions.

8. Conclusion

The proposed development provides an appropriate level of car parking given:

- Its classification as a Zone 2 (Town Centre Fringe) site under the Neath Port Talbot Parking Standards SPG (2016);
- Its sustainable location with excellent access to walking, cycling and public transport;
- The social rent tenure, typically associated with lower car ownership levels; and
- The reduction in traffic compared to the building's former lawful use.

Accordingly, the proposed parking strategy is considered acceptable, and the development complies with both local and national transport planning policies.