

LDP Policy SC2 – Justification Statement

Loss of Community Facility (Former Dental Surgery / Seven Dental Laboratory) 82 Church Road, Seven Sisters

This statement demonstrates that the former D1 community use at 82 Church Road is no longer viable, needed, or capable of being brought back into beneficial use. The evidence below shows clear compliance with Policy SC2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

1. Cessation of Use

The premises were previously occupied by *Seven Dental Laboratory* and ceased operating in October 2020. Since that date, the building has remained entirely unused for any dental, clinical, or community-based purpose.

2. Long-Term Vacancy and Lack of Investment

Following closure, the property was sold again in 2021. Despite the change of ownership, no refurbishment, maintenance, or preparatory work was undertaken. The building continued to deteriorate and remained vacant for more than five years. Before the current purchase, the property was offered at auction for two consecutive months, reflecting the lack of market interest in retaining or reinstating the former D1 use. It was ultimately acquired in January 2026 in a poor and declining condition.

3. Lack of Demand and Viability for Reuse

No NHS or private dental operator has expressed interest in re-establishing a practice at the premises since its closure. The building is small, outdated, and incapable of meeting modern clinical standards without substantial structural and compliance-driven investment. Requirements such as HTM 01-05 decontamination facilities, clinical ventilation, digital infrastructure, and full accessibility cannot be achieved without disproportionate cost, rendering the former use unviable.

4. Adequate Alternative Provision

The wider Neath Port Talbot area is served by several modern dental practices within reasonable travel distance. The loss of this small, outdated facility does not create a gap in provision or reduce community access to dental services.

5. Unsuitability of the Building for Modern D1 Use

The internal layout, access constraints, and physical limitations of the building make it unsuitable for contemporary healthcare or community uses. Significant structural alteration would be required to meet current standards, and such works would not be economically

justified. Residential use represents the most appropriate, sustainable, and deliverable future for the building.

Conclusion

The former dental laboratory has been vacant since 2020, has attracted no viable interest for continued D1 use, and has deteriorated significantly despite being sold in 2021 and marketed repeatedly at auction. It is demonstrably surplus to community requirements and incapable of viable reuse for its previous function. The proposal therefore fully complies with Policy SC2 and supports the building's change of use to a more appropriate and sustainable residential use.