

Our ref: EW/AF/TR/Q250948
Your ref: -
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Date: 2nd March 2026



Planning Department
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
The Quays
Brunel Way
Neath
SA11 2HZ

Submitted via Planning Portal (PP-14656522)

Dear Sir / Madam,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Refurbishment of existing retail unit
32 – 38 Commercial Road, Port Talbot, SA13 1LG
Application submitted on behalf of TJ Morris Limited

We are instructed by our client, TJ Morris Limited ('TJM') ('the Applicant'), to submit the enclosed full planning application for the refurbishment of the existing retail unit at 32 – 38 Commercial Road, Port Talbot, SA13 1LG ('the Site'). Specifically, consent is sought for the following development:

"Refurbishment of existing retail unit (Class A1) comprising external alterations and associated works."

The planning application has been submitted via Planning Portal (PP-14656522) and includes the following documents and drawings in line with the Council's validation requirements:

- **Requisite planning application form, duly completed;**
- **Certificate A & Agricultural Holdings Certificate;**
- **Relevant Planning History;**
- **Flood Risk Assessment, prepared by Quod;**
- **Green Infrastructure Statement, prepared by Quod;**
- **Site Location Plan (ref. 10390-LC01 Rev A); and**
- **Existing and proposed drawings, prepared by WPL Consulting LLP:**

Drawing Title	Drawing Number	Scale
Site Location Plan	10390-LC01 Rev A	1:1250 @ A3

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RICS





Drawing Title	Drawing Number	Scale
Existing Site Layout	10390-101 Rev A	1:200 @ A0
Existing Building Plan	10390-102	1:100 @ A1
Existing Elevations	10390-103	1:100 @ A1
Existing Roof Plan	10390-104	1:100 @ A1
Proposed Site Layout	10390-105 Rev C	1:200 @ A0
Proposed Building Plan	10390-106 Rev A	1:100 @ A1
Proposed Elevations	10390-107 Rev A	1:100 @ A1
Proposed Roof Plan	10390-108	1:100 @ A1

An online payment of £383 along with the service charge has been made via the Planning Portal to cover the requisite planning application fee.

1 Introduction

The Site comprises a well-established retail destination and is recognised as being an appropriate location for large-format retailing, currently occupied by Aldi whose lease expires in 2026. Aldi will be vacating the unit at lease expiry and relocating to new premises in Port Talbot.

The enclosed application looks to bring forward modest refurbishment works to enable the existing retail unit to be re-occupied by the national variety discounter, Home Bargains (HB). HB is the trading name of TJM, who are looking to strengthen their offer within the Port Talbot area, with an existing store within the Aberafan Centre. The intention is to retain this store alongside the proposed new store at the Site. The package of refurbishment works proposed will improve the overall appearance of this prominent site and meet the requirements of the incoming retailer.

Whilst significant in terms of its positive effects, the planning application is modest in nature. For example, there is no increase in overall retail floorspace is proposed and this application raises no matter of principle. The existing retail unit benefits from unfettered retail use. Benefits associated with the proposals include the improvement of a prominent retail location, securing the long-term occupation of existing vacant floorspace together with the retention and. Once opened the new HB will provide up to 60no. jobs.

The application is progressed on this basis.



2 Factual Background

Site and Surrounding Area

The Application Site extends to 0.7 hectares and comprises the existing retail unit with associated servicing and car parking arrangements. The existing building extends to 1,372 square metres (GIA).

Existing commercial uses are located to the north of the unit, including Warehouse Fitness and a number of high street shops along Commercial Road. In terms of sensitive receptors, there are residential dwellings located immediately to the east of the Site as well as a fire station, to the south. A large open space is located along the southwest boundary as well as a railway line running along the boundary.

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the Site is achieved from Commercial Road which provides links to the M4.

The Site is well served by public transport, with existing bus stops located along Commercial Road, a short walk from the Site, which provides services to Port Talbot City Centre, Neath and Bridgend. Port Talbot Railway Station is located to the northwest, within a 15-minute walk of the Site.

The Site does not fall within a Conservation Area nor are there any listed buildings or structures located on or adjacent to the Site. The Site is not within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Finally, as shown on the Natural Resource Wales Flood Map, the Site falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (highest probability of flooding).

Planning History

Full planning permission was initially granted for a retail unit along with customer parking and a storage unit on 8th March 1996 (ref. 95/10218).

A subsequent planning application (ref. P/2001/187) was granted on the 24th April 2001. It is understood that this permission comprises the baseline consent for the Site. Specifically, planning permission was granted for the following:

“Proposed retail unit with car parking & adjacent storage unit (130 sqm).”

Consent was granted subject to 12no. conditions, although no restriction was imposed on the use of the retail unit.

Internal and external alterations and extension to the existing store was permitted (ref. P2006/1125) on the 11th October 2006.

There is no other planning history of relevance for the Site.



3 Proposed Development

Full planning permission is sought for the following development:

“Refurbishment of existing retail unit (Class A1) comprising external alterations and associated works.”

The proposals seek to refurbish the existing retail unit, and the external alterations can be summarised as follows:

North Elevation

- 1no. existing shopfront to be removed and walled up.
- New stainless-steel bollards at the entrance.
- Existing roof sheets to be replaced and gutter to be relined.
- Internal roller shutters to be installed on the shopfronts.

West Elevation

- Internal roller shutters to be installed on the shopfront.
- New stainless-steel bollards at the entrance.
- 1no. fire door to be removed and walled up.
- Existing high-level windows to be removed.

East Elevation

- 2no. existing fire doors to be replaced and widened.
- Existing fascias to be replaced with new colour grey 7012.
- Existing window to be removed and walled up.

The proposals will retain the existing retail use (Class A1) and no increase in floorspace is proposed. The existing servicing and access arrangements will also be retained.

There will be a minor reduction of 2no. parking spaces overall (from 150no. to 148no. spaces in total) to accommodate the trolley bays located within the car park.



Further details of the proposals are shown on the submitted drawings, prepared by WPL Consulting LLP.

4 Prospective Occupier

TJM was established over 40 years ago by Tom Morris who opened his first store in Liverpool. The business has grown organically to become one of the biggest privately-owned companies in the UK and currently employs over 24,000 members of staff.

The business currently has more than 600 stores throughout the UK and plans to expand to over 1,200 stores, employing over 40,000 staff. There are existing HB stores in the local area, with stores in Port Talbot Town Centre and Swansea. It is the intention that these stores will continue alongside a new store at the Site.

HB operates within the discount, or value, retail sector. Their strap line is “Top Brands – Bottom Prices”. The discount retail sector has seen significant growth in recent years as shoppers have been attracted by the quality of the products and competitive pricing. The success of discount retailers, and their ability to offer such low prices, is based on a combination of low profit margins and ruthless efficiency. The efficiency of HB’s operation extends across all aspects of their business including their trading format.

The proposed HB store when opened, would generate up to 60no. full and part time job opportunities. Most of these job opportunities will be available to local people. Job opportunities within the store will be across a range of scales. In addition to jobs within the store itself, other employment opportunities will be created. These would include jobs created by the store fit out and merchandising the store, and jobs involved with the future maintenance and security of retail units; cleaners; security guards; etc.

The high-quality, modern retail unit and shop fit out proposed will result in additional investment in the local economy.

5 Planning Policy Framework

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this instance, the development plan comprises the North Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan (2011 – 2026) and the Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021).

Material considerations include Planning Policy Wales (‘PPW’) (Edition 12, February 2024) and Technical Advice Note 4: Retail and Commercial Development (TAN 4) (November 2016).



Development Plan

North Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan (2011 – 2026)

The Application Site falls within the defined Taibach District Centre. s Policy R2 ('Proposals within retail centres') states that a mix of main town centre uses including A1, A2 and A3 are permitted in these areas.

Policy SP 12 ('Retail') states that the vitality, viability and attractiveness of Neath Port Talbot's retail centres will be enhanced and the County Borough's retail provision protected and supported.

Policy BE 1 ('Design') outlines that all development will be expected to take into account the natural, historic and built environmental context and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable places.

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

The National Plan promotes good design and the reuse of existing buildings indirectly through its placemaking and regeneration approach, particularly via Policy 2 ('Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration'). The plan emphasises sustainable placemaking, regeneration, and making efficient use of land, and it is intended to be read alongside Planning Policy Wales, which contains the explicit policy support for good design quality and the reuse and adaptation of existing buildings.

Material Considerations

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024)

Planning Policy Wales ('PPW') is the Welsh Government's policy document that sets out the framework for sustainable land use. The document supports all strategies published by the Assembly and is supplemented by various Technical Advice Notes ('TANs').

Chapter 3 deals with good design and placemaking. It states that development should create high-quality, inclusive and sustainable places, with design quality treated as a fundamental planning consideration. It also promotes the efficient use of land and resources, including a strong preference for previously developed (brownfield) land, which implicitly supports the reuse and adaptation of existing buildings where appropriate.

Technical Advice Note 15: Development, flooding and coastal erosion

A Flood Risk Assessment is required for any development proposal located or partly within Flood Zones 2 and 3.



6 Planning Assessment

Principle

There are no matters of principle that arise given the proposals do not seek a change of use and will remain operating under Class A1. Likewise, the proposals will not result in any increase in retail floorspace.

The proposals relate solely to modest external changes to an existing retail unit within a defined centre where such uses are supported by planning policy at the national and local level. The application proposals raise no retail policy matters.

Design and Layout

Full planning permission is sought to refurbish an existing unit to accommodate the trading requirements of the prospective occupier (HB), who will occupy the unit in its entirety.

The proposed external alterations are modest in nature but will result in a high-quality retail unit that will improve the overall appearance of this prominent location. The Site comprises a first-generation retail unit that has lacked investment in recent years. The refurbishment works will enhance this 'town centre' retail site, to the benefit of the character of the local area.

The proposals will modernise the existing unit, delivering an improved shopping experience for customers retaining much of the existing building fabric.

There are no changes to the existing servicing arrangements and there will be a minor reduction of 2no. parking spaces to the car parking overall.

Overall, the external works will improve the appearance of the Site. The design is of high-quality and meets the requirements of the development plan, including Policy BE 1 of the adopted development plan, and PPW.

Flood Risk

The Site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Therefore, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared and is submitted in support of this application.

The FRA outlines that the modest refurbishment works will not lead to an increase in the risk of flood damage to the proposed HB or to customers using the building or to properties in close proximity. This is principally due to there being no additional areas of hardstanding proposed or any increase in overall floor area.

The proposed works are considered entirely acceptable and accords with TAN15.



7 Conclusions

The proposals look to refurbish existing and prominent floorspace in a well-established retail destination to meet the requirements of HB. The proposals will secure the long-term occupancy, of the Site, which provides a key retail location within the defined district centre, alongside improving the overall appearance of the local area.

The proposed development raises no matter of principle. The proposals simply seek to utilise existing unrestricted retail floorspace - as encouraged by planning policy. The proposed external changes, whilst modest, will greatly improve the appearance of the site, which is soon to be vacant, alongside improving retail choice and creating jobs. These benefits should be afforded significant weight in the determination of the application proposals.

Overall, for all the reasons set out, the proposals comprise sustainable economic development. It has been demonstrated the proposal accords with relevant planning policy and planning permission should be granted without delay.

We trust the enclosed is sufficient for you to register this planning application and we look forward to receiving confirmation in due course. If for any reason this is not the case, please contact us immediately.

Yours faithfully,

Tim Rainbird
Senior Director

Encs.