

OFFICER REPORT

Application Number: P2026/0066

Site Address: 44 Victoria Road Sandfields Neath Port Talbot SA12 6AD

Proposal: Change of use (no external alterations) from a dental practice (use class D1) to a single dwelling (use class C3).

Applicant: Mr Louie Flower

Agent: Mr John Matthews

Ward: Sandfields East

Application Type: Full Plans

Valid Date: 15th April 2026

Statutory Expiry Date: 9th June 2026

Ext. of Time / PPA date:

Publicity Expiry Date: 7th May 2026

RECOMMENDATION - Approved

SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site comprises No. 44 Victoria Road, a mid-terraced property located in Sandfields. Victoria Road has a very consistent streetscene and character, with the majority of dwellings / properties along the street being built in a similar design with consistent features. The property benefits from a two-storey rear projection, with single storey projection stemming off, leading into the rear garden.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Planning consent is sought for the change of use from a dental practice (Use Class D1) to a single dwelling (Use Class C3). The only physical external alteration is the

reinstating of an existing first-floor window within the northern side elevation of the rear projection.

NEGOTIATIONS

The request of a Flood Consequence Assessment given that the application site is located within Flood Zone 2 and 3 of Flood Map for Planning. This was provided prior to the validating of the application.

PLANNING HISTORY

The application site has the following relevant planning history: -

T1977/1767: Change of use to dental surgery. Application approved on 9th January 1978.

T1980/3065: Change of use – 1st floor to dental surgery. Application approved on 14th May 1980.

CONSULTATIONS

Natural Resources Wales (NRW): Concerns Raised (Deferred determination to Local Authority).

Highways: No objection.

Contaminated Land: No objection.

Dwr Cymru (Welsh Water): No objection (include condition).

REPRESENTATIONS

Neighbouring properties were consulted on 16th April 2026.

In response, to date, no representations have been received from members of the public.

Two statements of support have been received from Local Ward Members, Councillor Matthew Crowley and Sean Pursey. Their comments are summarised as follows:

- General support for the return of residential dwelling.

REPORT

National Planning Policy:

[**Future Wales: The National Plan 2040**](#) is the national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. The development plan sets out a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and wellbeing of our communities.

The following policies are of particular relevance to the assessment of this application:

Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking

Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure

[Planning Policy Wales \(Edition 12, February 2024\)](#)

The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation and resultant duties such as the Socio-economic Duty. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places

PPW promotes action at all levels of the planning process which is conducive to maximising its contribution to the well-being of Wales and its communities. It encourages a wider, sustainable and problem solving outlook which focuses on integrating and addressing multiple issues rather than on an approach which is fragmented, un-coordinated and deals with issues in isolation. It provides an opportunity to remove any actual or perceived problems in current approaches and stimulate and support innovative and creative ideas as well as high standards of evidence and assessment to underpin the preparation of development plans and strategies and individual proposals. Monitoring and learning from development outcomes so as to drive sustainable improvements in planning practice is also important.

PPW12 is supported by a series of more detailed [Technical Advice Notes](#) (TANs), of which the following are of relevance: -

- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design (2016)
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 15: Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion (2025)

Local Planning Policies

The Local Development Plan for the area comprises the [Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan](#) which was adopted in January 2016, and within which the following policies are of relevance:

Strategic Policies

- **Policy SP15** Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Topic Based Policy

- **Policy TR2** Design and Access of New Development
- **Policy BE1** Design
- **Policy SC1** Settlement Limits
- **Policy EN8** Pollution and Land Stability

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

The following SPG is of relevance to this application: -

- [Parking Standards](#) (October 2016)
- [Design](#) (July 2017)

Issues

Having regard to the above, the main issues to consider in this application relate to the impact on the visual amenity of the area, the amenities of neighbouring residents and highway safety.

Principle of Development

Policy SC1 (Settlement Limits) of the Neath Port Talbot LDP outlines that, "Development within settlement limits that is proportionate in scale and form to the role and function of the settlement as set out in the Settlement Hierarchy will be acceptable in principle".

Given the moderate nature of the proposal, it is considered to be proportionate in scale and form to the role and function of the settlement as set out in the Settlement Hierarchy and as such, accords with Policy SC1 of the Neath Port Talbot LDP.

It should also be noted that the property was a private residential dwelling until 1977 when permission was granted for the ground floor to change use to a dentist. The first floor was subsequently also granted consent for a change of use to a dentist in 1980. The remaining properties within this block are all privately owned dwellings.

Impact on Visual Amenity

The existing property has an existing residential character and appearance. The only physical external alteration is the reinstating of an existing first-floor window within the northern side elevation of the rear projection, which is moderate and screened from the public domain. All other existing windows and openings being retained, and no further extensions or physical alterations being proposed. As such, the return of the property to its former residential use is considered to correspond with the character and appearance of the previous property and reinstate it within the predominantly residential streetscene. As such, the proposal is considered to have an acceptable impact on visual amenity, corresponding with Policy BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot LDP.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposal reinstates the property to its former residential use, which corresponds with that of neighbouring properties and those within the wider streetscene. As such, it is considered that the proposal will not produce any detrimental noise levels that are over and above the current use and those within the streetscene.

In terms of overbearing and overshadowing impact, given that there are minimal physical alterations proposed, the proposal is considered acceptable in this regard.

It is noted that the proposal gives rise to three bedrooms on the first floor of the property, with two of them being towards the rear, both benefitting from first-floor rear windows. One of the proposed bedrooms replaces a surgery room, whereas the other replaces an office, both of which already benefitted from identical window arrangements and levels of outlook. Whilst the proposal does give rise to two first-floor windows serving habitable rooms, the views gained are not over and above those already achievable from the rooms within the dental practice and the views are considered to be commonly associated with those within a residential terrace. A first-floor window is also sited in the northern side elevation of the rear projection, facing towards No. 42. Given that this window serves a bathroom, and that it faces directly towards No. 42, a condition will be attached to any permission requiring this window to be obscurely glazed and retained as such in perpetuity. As such, the proposal is considered acceptable in this regard.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to have an acceptable impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, corresponding with Policy BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot LDP.

Parking and Access Requirements and Impact on Highway Safety

The Head of Transport and Engineering (Highways) has raised no objection to the proposal, outlining that the existing use (D1 Dental Surgery) would require a minimum of 4 car parking spaces, whereas the proposal (C3 residential) requires a maximum of 3 car parking spaces. As such, the proposal represents a betterment in terms of car parking pressure on the local highway network, and is therefore considered to have an

acceptable impact on highway and pedestrian safety, corresponding with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot LDP.

Biodiversity

As identified above, Policies EN6 and EN7 of the Local Development Plan will be of relevance insofar as there is a need to ensure any impacts on biodiversity/ natural features are appropriately assessed and, where applicable, mitigated.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 12 sets out that;

The quality of the built environment should be enhanced by integrating green infrastructure into development through appropriate site selection and use of creative design. With careful planning and design, informed by an appropriate level of assessment, green infrastructure can embed the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services into new development and places, help to overcome the potential for conflicting objectives, and contribute to health and well-being outcomes.

A green infrastructure statement should be submitted with all planning applications. This will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed and will describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal. In the case of minor development this will be a short description and should not be an onerous requirement for applicants. The green infrastructure statement will be an effective way of demonstrating positive multi-functional outcomes which are appropriate to the site in question and must be used for demonstrating how the step-wise approach (Paragraph 6.4.15 of PPW 12) has been applied.

A Green Infrastructure Statement has been submitted alongside this proposal, outlining that given the nature of the proposal, will have no unacceptable impact on biodiversity. Whilst this may be the case, the step-wise approach outlined in edition 12 of Planning Policy Wales requires a form of biodiversity enhancement within every application. As such, it is considered reasonable and necessary to condition the implementation of a bird nesting box on the host property, to be retained in perpetuity.

Flood Risk / Drainage

The Flood Map for Planning identifies the application site to be partially at risk of flooding and within Flood Zone 2 and 3 (Sea). NRW highlight that the site does not fully comply with Figure 5 of TAN15, with the rear of the property being shown to be at risk in 0.5% plus climate change allowance, although the flood depths are shown to be minimal. In the 0.1% plus climate change allowance event the flood depths are within the tolerances of Figure 6 of TAN15. NRW outline that whilst the proposal does not fully comply with TAN15, they acknowledge the site's location and the limited flood risk associated with the site, and as such, advise that it is a matter for the Local Authority to be satisfied that the risks and consequences of flooding can be managed in accordance with TAN15.

Given that NRW themselves highlight that the application site benefits from limited flood risk, the fact that there are no bedrooms proposed on the ground floor, the existing residential setting and nature of the immediate streetscene, as well as the partially defended nature of this area of the Flood Zone, it is considered that the proposal would not be detrimentally impacted by flooding.

The application site is also shown to be located within Flood Zone 2 (Surface Water and Small Watercourses), however, upon review of the Flood Map for Planning, it would appear that the application site is not affected by this Flood Zone.

Welsh Water have outlined that the proposal will utilise an existing connection with no change in footprint of the existing premises, and as such, raise no objection to the proposal, subject to the including of a condition which relates to surface water from any increase in the roof area. Given that the proposal does not increase the roof area of the building, this condition is not considered relevant or necessary.

Other Matters

The application site has also been identified as being located within an area of potentially contaminated land. Notwithstanding this, given that there are no external alterations or ground breaches, Environmental Health (Contaminated Land) have raised no objection to the proposal. As such, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot LDP.

CONCLUSION

The decision to recommend planning permission has been taken in accordance with Section 38 of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires that, in determining a planning application the determination must be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan comprises Future Wales - the National Plan 2040 and the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (2011–2026) adopted January 2016.

It is considered that the proposal represents an appropriate form of development that would have no unacceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring residents, visual amenity of the area or highway and pedestrian safety. Accordingly, the proposed development is in accordance with Policies SP15 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity), TR2 (Design and Access of New Development), BE1 (Design), SC1 (Settlement Limits) and EN8 (Pollution and Land Stability).

It is further considered that the decision complies with Future Wales - the National Plan 2040 and the Council's well-being objectives and the sustainable development principle in accordance with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

RECOMMENDATION

Approved

Subject to the following conditions/reasons, which have been imposed for the reasons stated:-

Time Limit Conditions

- 1 The development shall begin no later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason:

To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

List of Approved Plans

- 2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Location Plan.

Existing and Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations.

Reason:

In the interests of clarity.

Regulatory Conditions

- 3 Notwithstanding the details submitted, prior to the first beneficial use of the dwelling hereby approved, the windows on the northern side elevation of the rear projection elevation serving the bathroom shall be fitted with obscured glazing, and any part of the window/s that is less than 1.7m above the floor of the room in which it is installed shall be non-opening. The windows shall be permanently retained as such thereafter,

Reason :

In the interest of the amenities of the adjoining property/ies, and to ensure accordance with Policy BE1 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 4 Prior to the first beneficial use of the dwelling hereby permitted, an artificial nesting site for birds shall be erected on the dwelling to one of the following specifications, and retained as such thereafter;
Nest Box Specifications for House Sparrow Terrace:
Wooden (or woodcrete) nest box with 3 sub-divisions to support 3 nesting pairs. To be placed under the eaves of buildings.
Entrance holes: 32mm diameter
Dimensions: H310 x W370 x D185mm
or
Swift Nest Box Specification:
Wide box with small slit shaped entrance hole. Must be placed under or close to roofs, at least 5m from the ground.
Dimensions: H150 x W340 x D150mm
- Reason:
In the interest of biodiversity, and to mitigate to loss of bird nesting/foraging habitats under the Habitats Regulations (amended 2012) and to accord with Policy SP15 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Case Officer	Lewis Byng
Telephone No.	01639 686746
Date of Recommendation	26th May 2026