

Protection of Community Facilities and Buildings of Local Importance

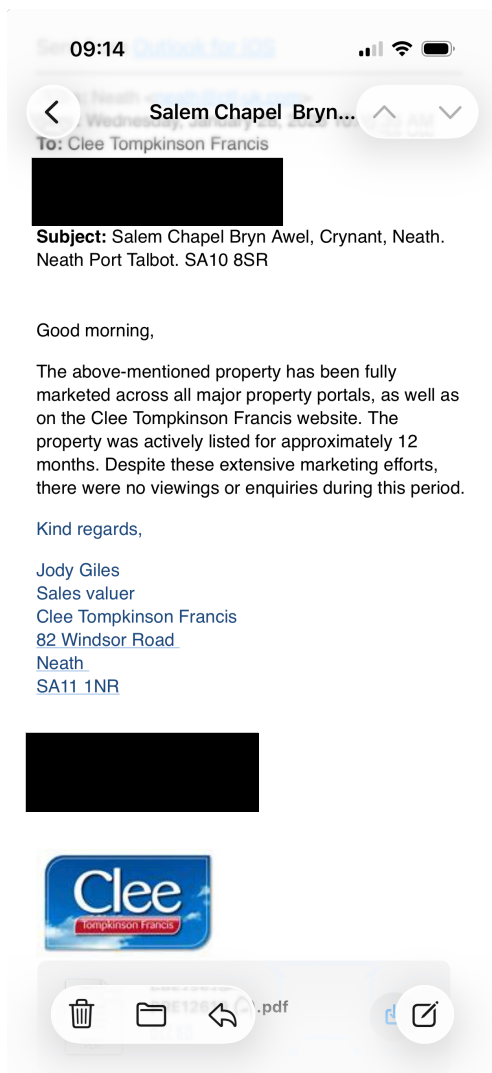
Change of Use from Chapel (Former Place of Worship) to C2 Residential Care Home – Salem Chapel, Brynawel, Crynant, Neath Port Talbot (SA10 8SR)

Planning Policy Assessment

Policy SC2 – Protection of Existing Community Facilities

Policy SC2 seeks to resist the loss of existing community facilities unless it can be demonstrated that the facility is no longer viable or required, or that an alternative community benefit would be delivered. The application site comprises **Salem Chapel, Brynawel, Crynant**, a former place of worship which has been vacant and unused for a prolonged period. Evidence submitted confirms that the property has been **fully marketed** across all major property portals and through the Clee Tompkinson Francis website, and was actively listed for approximately **12 months**. Despite these extensive marketing efforts, there were **no viewings or enquiries** during this period. This demonstrates a lack of market demand for the continuation of the site in its former community or religious use.

This is evident in the screenshot taken below of the email received from the Estate Agent Manager:



A copy of the advertisement document is also included in the appendix.

In this context, the proposal accords with Policy SC2, as it has been robustly demonstrated that the existing community use is no longer viable or required. Importantly, the proposal does **not** result in the loss of a valued, functioning community facility; rather it enables the productive re-use of a vacant and deteriorating building.

Furthermore, the proposed **C2 residential care home** represents a **complementary community use**, delivering direct social benefits through the provision of supported accommodation for children and their carers. This aligns with the objectives of the Local Development Plan and wider national planning aims in promoting health, wellbeing and inclusive communities. The proposal will therefore ensure the site continues to serve a community function, albeit in a more appropriate and sustainable form.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy SC2.

Policy BE2 – Buildings of Local Importance

Policy BE2 permits development affecting Buildings of Local Importance where proposals preserve the building's architectural and historic interest, character and setting, and where alterations are sympathetic and necessary to secure the building's long-term use.

Salem Chapel is identified as a **Building of Local Importance** (reference **CRY001**), recognised for its architectural and cultural value within the Crynant area. The proposed development has been designed to **retain and respect** the building's historic fabric, scale and external appearance. The submitted scheme is focused on **internal reconfiguration** to deliver a viable C2 care home layout, with no harmful alteration to the principal elevations or the defining external architectural features that contribute to its local significance.

The external architectural merits as seen below will remain as in-situ on site:



EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION

The conversion to a C2 use is considered to be the most effective means of securing the building's long-term future, preventing further vacancy and deterioration. The use is inherently compatible with the scale and layout of the existing structure and avoids the need for extensive or intrusive external alterations.

In accordance with Policy BE2, the proposal: (i) preserves the building's special architectural and historic interest; (ii) ensures a viable and sustainable new use; (iii) enhances the contribution the building makes to local character; and (iv) prevents the loss of a locally important heritage asset through neglect. The proposal therefore accords with Policy BE2 of the Local Development Plan.

Availability of Alternative Places of Worship

To further evidence compliance with Policy SC2, a review of alternative places of worship within an accurately checked approximate 5-mile radius of the application site has been undertaken. The radius focuses on Crynant, Neath, Clyne, Resolven and Seven Sisters, and excludes locations beyond this distance such as Port Talbot and Swansea.

Within Crynant (Immediate Area)

- St Margaret's Church, Crynant (Anglican Parish Church)
- Godre-rhôs Independent Chapel, Crynant
- Saron Independent Chapel, Crynant
- Bethel Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Crynant
- Chapel of Ease, Crynant (historic place of worship)

Neath, Clyne and Resolven (within approximately 2–5 miles)

- St Thomas' Church, Neath
- St David's Church, Neath
- St Catherine's Church, Neath
- Neath Methodist Church
- Bethel Elim Church, Neath
- Bethania Baptist Church, Neath
- Ebenezer Baptist Church, Neath
- The Bridge Family Church, Neath
- Clyne Free Mission Church
- Sardis Baptist Church, Resolven

The presence of multiple active places of worship within this accessible catchment confirms that opportunities for religious worship remain readily available to the local population. As such, the change of use of Salem Chapel would not result in an unacceptable deficiency in religious or community provision, further supporting compliance with Policy SC2.

Overall Planning Balance and Conclusion

The proposed change of use from a former chapel to a C2 residential care home represents a sustainable, sensitive and policy-compliant form of development. It responds positively to the evidenced lack of demand for the existing use, safeguards a Building of Local Importance, and delivers meaningful social benefits to the community. When

assessed against Policies **SC2** and **BE2** of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle and should be supported.

APPENDIX



**Chartered Surveyor, Valuers,
Estate Agents & Auctioneers**

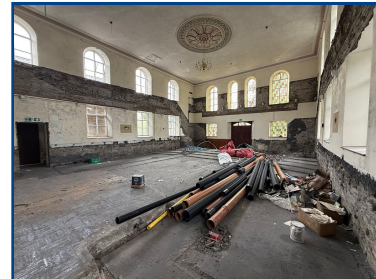
12 Offices Across South Wales

**Bryn Awel
Crynant
Neath
Neath Port Talbot.**

Price £150,000



- CHAPEL
- NEEDS FULL RENOVATION
- PROJECT
- INVESTMENT



General Description

Chapel in Crynant, needing renovation.