

OFFICER REPORT

Application Number: P2026/0099

Site Address: 20 New Road Neath Abbey Neath Port Talbot SA10 7NH

Proposal: Change of use of existing residential dwelling (Use Class C3) into 6 bedroom HMO (Use Class C4)

Applicant: Mr James Black

Agent: Mr Matt John

Ward: Dyffryn

Application Type: Full Plans

Valid Date: 10th March 2026

Statutory Expiry Date: 4th May 2026

Ext. of Time / PPA date: 1st June 2026

Publicity Expiry Date: 12th May 2026

RECOMMENDATION - Approved

SITE AND CONTEXT

The site comprises a semi-detached dwelling located in Neath Abbey. The property is currently vacant and previously operated as a residential dwelling. Evidence indicates that the property was licensed by Environmental Health as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) from April 2008 to April 2013. It then continued to operate as an unlicensed HMO until 2015, when it was no longer permitted to be occupied.

The application site is located inside the settlement boundary as defined by Policy SC1 of the NPTCBC LDP. Moreover, the application site is located within Flood Zone 2 & 3 (Rivers) and Flood Zone 2 (Surface Water & Small Watercourses). Moreover, the site

has been identified as being located in an area of contaminated land and within close proximity to a GGAT Site.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

This is a planning application proposing the change of use of an existing residential dwelling (Use Class C3) into 6 bedroom HMO (Use Class C4).

The submitted plans show that the property currently comprises six bedrooms, a lounge at lower ground floor level, a shower room at lower ground floor level, and two kitchens located at ground and first floor levels. The proposed development involves reconfiguring the internal layout. At lower ground floor level, Bedroom 1 would be removed and replaced with a kitchen, forming an open-plan kitchen/living area. At ground floor level, the existing kitchen would be converted into a bedroom, and a new shower room would be introduced. At first floor level, the positions of the existing bathroom and kitchen would be interchanged, maintaining the provision of a second kitchen and shower room. At second floor level, bedroom 6 would be retained, with the addition of an en-suite facility. Provision for bin and cycle storage is made within the private rear amenity space for the benefit of future occupiers. The submitted plans propose only minor external alterations, comprising the replacement of an existing access door on the rear elevation with a window. It is noted that the property does not benefit from off-street parking.

NEGOTIATIONS

The agent was requested to amend the submitted floor plans to include accurate room labelling to clearly identify the existing number of bedrooms and areas of shared accommodation.

PLANNING HISTORY

The application site has the following relevant planning history:

- N1990/0552: CHANGE OF USE FROM FRONT LIVING ROOM INTO VIDEO RENTAL SHOP. Refused: 13-NOV-90
- N1995/0207: CHANGE-OF-USE OF HOUSE INTO HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION AND S/C. BASEMENT FLAT. Refused: 19-JUN-95

CONSULTATIONS

Dyffryn Clydach Community Council: Objection due to lack of off-street parking.

Highways Authority: No objection.

Lead Local Flood Authority: No objection

Natural Resources Wales: No objection.

Contaminated Land: No objection.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust: No objection

Housing Enforcement: No objection subject to suitably worded condition restricting number of occupants and bin/bike storage.

Gigabit Capable Infrastructure: No response received.

Welsh Water/Dwr Cymru: No objection subject to suitably worded condition regarding no surface water shall be allowed to drain directly or indirectly to the public sewerage system.

Pollution Control Noise: No objection subject to suitably worded conditions regarding construction noise/hours and potential noise from plant and machinery.

Ward members have been notified. Councillor James Henton has presented the following concerns:

- No on-street or off-street parking available (no rear access to accommodate driveway)
- Considered unsuitable for an HMO as residents/visitors likely need cars
- Area already suffers significant parking and obstruction issues
- Pavement outside property is too narrow to accommodate parking
- Nearby permitted parking areas are already over capacity
- Overall objection; proposal should not be supported

Correspondence has been received from Councillor Martyn Peters outlining that they agree with Councilor James Henton's comments.

A follow-up email was sent by the planning officer, Kate Parry, to the local councillors advising that the application was likely to be recommended for approval and inviting any further comments. No additional correspondence was received, and the application was not called to the planning committee.

REPRESENTATIONS

The neighbouring properties were consulted on 11.03.2026, reconsulted on 31.03.2026 following the submission of amended plans, and reconsulted again on 28.04.2026 following the submission of amended plans.

Site notices were displayed on: 13.03.2026, 31.03.2026 (amended plans), and 28.04.2026 (amended plans).

In response, to date, one representation in writing has been received. The objection is summarised below:

- Concerns raised that the property is unsuitable due to its location on a main road with a pelican crossing and zigzag lines directly outside the front door
- Concerns with lack of parking
- Concerns with garden ownership

Further telephone calls were received from a neighbouring property; however, the individual was advised on numerous occasions that any objections needed to be submitted in writing in order to be addressed within the delegated report. No written representation was subsequently received.

REPORT

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet its sustainable development (or wellbeing) objectives. This report has been prepared in consideration of the Council's duty and the "sustainable development principle", as set out in the 2015 Act. In reaching the recommendation set out below, the Council has sought to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

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 8 – Flooding

Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure

Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity

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.

The following guidance is of particular relevance in the assessment of this planning application:

PPW (2024) - Good Design Making Better Places (Section 3 Strategic and Spatial Choices):

Para 3.3 - Good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places. To achieve sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, economic, environmental, cultural aspects of the development, including how space is used, how buildings and the public realm support this use, as well as its construction, operation, management, and its relationship with the surrounding area.

Para 3.4 - Design is an inclusive process, which can raise public aspirations, reinforce civic pride and create a sense of place and help shape its future. For those proposing new development, early engagement can help to secure public acceptance of new development. Meeting the objectives of good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process and applied to all development proposals, at all scales.

Para 3.8 - Good design can help to ensure high environmental quality. Landscape and green infrastructure considerations are an integral part of the design process. Integrating green infrastructure is not limited to focusing on landscape and ecology, rather, consideration should be given to all features of the natural environment and how these function together to contribute toward the quality of places.

Para 3.12 - Good design is about avoiding the creation of car-based developments. It contributes to minimising the need to travel and reliance on the car, whilst maximising opportunities for people to make sustainable and healthy travel choices for their daily journeys. Achieving these objectives requires the selection of sites which can be made easily accessible by sustainable modes as well as incorporating appropriate, safe and sustainable links (including active travel networks) within and between developments using legal agreements where appropriate.

Para 3.16 - Planning authorities should through a process of negotiation seek to improve poor or average developments which are not well designed, do not take account of their context and consider their place, or do not meet the objectives of good design. Where this cannot be achieved proposals should be rejected. The planning system should create sustainable places which are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly. Development proposals should create the conditions to bring people together, making them want to live, work and play in areas with a sense of place and well-being, creating prosperity for all.

PPW 12 is supported by a series of more detailed Technical Advice Notes (TANs), of which the following are of relevance: -

- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 11: Noise (1997)
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design (2016)
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 15: Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion (2025)
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 18: Transport

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 SP1** Climate Change
- **Policy SP3** Sustainable communities
- **Policy SP7** Housing requirements
- **Policy SP8** Affordable Housing
- **Policy SP15** Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- **Policy SP20** Transport Network

Topic Based Policies:

- **Policy SC1** Settlement limits
- **Policy AH1** Affordable Housing
- **Policy EN6** Important Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sites
- **Policy EN8** Pollution and Land Stability
- **Policy TR2** Design and Access of New Development
- **Policy BE1** Design

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

The following SPG is of relevance to this application: -

- Parking Standards (October 2016)
- Affordable Housing (October 2016)
- Pollution (October 2016)
- Design (July 2017)
- Biodiversity and Geodiversity (May 2018)

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening

The application site does not exceed the Schedule 2 threshold for development of this type as outlined within the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. As such the application has not been screened in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 3 of the Regulations.

The proposed development is not located within a zone of influence for any Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Candidate Special Area of Conservation (CSAC) or Ramsar sites and as such it is considered that an Appropriate Assessment as set down within the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 is not required.

Issues

Having regard to the above, the main issues to consider in this application relate to the principle of development, together with the impact on the visual amenity of the area, the amenities of neighbouring residents, highway safety, flood risk and biodiversity enhancement.

Background Information:

As background, it is of note that in February 2016 the Welsh Government introduced changes to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order to create a new use class for Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Class C4). The Use Class C4 in broad terms covers shared houses or flats occupied by between three and six unrelated individuals who share basic amenities, such as the proposals set out within this submission.

The change to the Use Classes Order therefore served to bring the change of use of dwellings (which fall in Class C3) to HMOs within the control of Planning Authorities by making such changes subject to planning permission. The reason for the change in the Use Class Order followed a recognition that, in some parts of the Country, the number of HMOs within an area was having an adverse impact upon the character of an area. It should be noted that large houses in multiple occupation (those with more than six people sharing) remain unclassified by the Use Classes Order and in planning terms are therefore considered to be 'sui generis'.

Having regard to the above, it is acknowledged that concentrations of HMOs can, in some instances, lead to a range of cultural, social and economic changes in a community and that high concentrations have the potential to create local issues. The Council does not, however, have any specific local Policies aimed at preventing the spread of HMOs at present. This is due largely to the absence of any significant historical issue in the area, and the introduction of the C4 Use Class post adoption of the LDP.

Evolving Local Context

Although it is emphasised that it is not directly relevant to this Authority or its decisions, it is also of note that the City & County of Swansea (CCS) adopted its LDP in February 2019, which now includes an HMO Policy, accepted by the LDP Inspectors, and based on local background evidence, notably a report by an independent company called Lichfields.

That background evidence report, while focussing on CCS, is nevertheless of relevance insofar as it identifies the wider national context.

That report notes that: -

- HMOs represent an efficient use of building resources, where a single house can be fully utilised to provide accommodation for multiple people.
- Notwithstanding their positive contributions and important socio-economic role, areas with high densities of HMOs can also be characterised by problems with community cohesion, higher levels of noise and waste complaints, and place a strain on services.
- The positive impacts of HMOs are realised and, with rising pressures from the increased number of students, the need for affordable and flexible housing tenancies, and the changes to Housing Benefit, their role within the housing market is increasingly important.

The analysis undertaken by Lichfields identified a correlation between areas with high densities of HMOs and community cohesion issues. These negative impacts were summarised as:

1. Higher levels of transient residents, fewer long-term households and established families, leading to communities which are not balanced;
2. Isolation for the remaining family households in areas with very high concentrations of HMOs;
3. Reduction in provision of community facilities for families and children, in particular pressure on the viability of schools through falling rolls;
4. Issues of anti-social behaviour, noise, burglary and other crime;
5. Increased pressure regarding on-street parking, although this might be expected in City Centre fringe locations;

6. Reduction in the quality of the local environment and street scene as a consequence of increased litter, lack of suitable refuse storage, refuse left on the street, fly tipping, increased levels of housing disrepair in the private rented sector, and high numbers of letting signs.

As a consequence of this research, CCS now has an adopted HMO Policy in their LDP. However, the complexity of assessing whether any proposed change of use has a harmful impact on local character or community cohesion is demonstrated by the varying criterion in their Policy, which includes a requirement (outside of their HMO Management areas – these being existing areas of high HMO concentration) for any proposal not to result in more than 10% of all residential properties within a 50m radius of the proposal being HMOs, and within ‘small streets’ for a proposal to not “create a disproportionate over-concentration of HMOs within that street”. In addition to specifying % rates within designated areas, the policy also requires an assessment of whether the development would have an unacceptable adverse impact caused by noise nuisance and general disturbance.

The supporting text to their Policy is also relevant to a wider understanding of the issue, insofar as it emphasises that there is a need for future HMO provision to be managed sustainably in the interests of fostering cohesive communities, including avoiding instances of over-concentration of HMO properties to the detriment of residential amenity and community balance. These objectives are equally pertinent to consideration of this application.

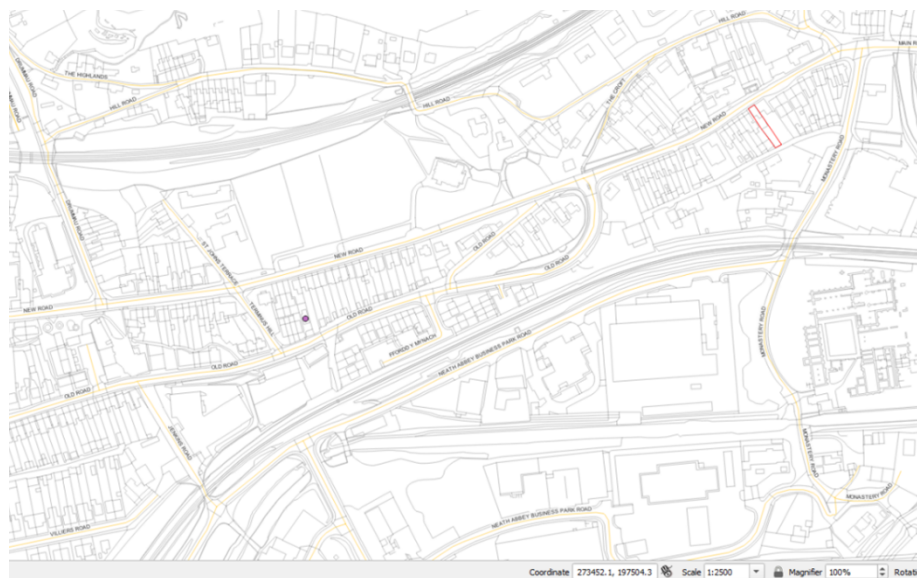
It also emphasises that “National research has identified that 10% is a general ‘tipping point’ beyond which the evidence indicates that a concentration of HMOs can begin to have an adverse impact on the character and balance of a community. This tipping point is described as a threshold beyond which a community can ‘tip’ from a balanced position in terms of demographic norms and impacts, towards a demographic that is noticeably more mixed in terms of shared and family households.

Principle of Development

The CCS policy approach, while not directly applicable in this case, is acknowledged as a robust, evidence-based method that supports a 10% HMO threshold outside designated management areas. However, exceeding this threshold is not inherently unacceptable, as harm must still be clearly demonstrated, particularly in the absence of a specific policy within NPT.

The application site lies within settlement limits where, under Policy SC1, development proportionate in scale and form to the settlement's role is acceptable in principle. Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with relevant policies and supplementary planning guidance. Due regard must also be given to the distribution of existing HMOs, to identify whether concentrations are at a level where further provision should be resisted.

In relation to the proposed development, the nearest property within the wider Neath Abbey area that is known to meet the planning definition of an HMO is located approximately 430 metres to the west. No other HMOs are known to exist within a 50-metre radius of the application site. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to any adverse impact on the character or cohesion of the local community. Please see the attached map below:



(Nearest registered HMO to application site)

Occupancy.

Under the Housing Act 2004, each local authority in Wales was required to set its own space and amenity standards for HMOs. Although there is some variation in amenity standards across the 22 No. Welsh Local Authorities, the room size standards are similar across most Council areas. Neath Port Talbot Council's standards for space and amenity are set out within the "NPT Amenity and Space Standards for HMOs" of the proposed size are set out below:

1. **Amenity Standards:** for a house of 1-4 people 1 Bathroom and 1 WC which may be combined.

2. **Shared Houses:** Kitchen facilities should be provided in an easily accessible room for up to four people to share. No kitchen should be more than one floor away from anyone's accommodation, except where the kitchen is a kitchen/diner that is big enough for the number of people sharing, or a living room is provided one floor away from the kitchen

The space standards outlined within the 'NPT HMO Space & Amenity Standards' are also highlighted below:

Bedrooms and other habitable rooms

Floor area of room	Maximum number of people
Under 4.65 squ.m (50 square feet)	None
4.65 squ.m (50 square feet) to 6.50 squ.m (70 to square feet)	1/2 a person (see below)
6.50 squ.m (70 square feet) to 8.36 squ.m (90 to square feet)	One person
8.36 squ. m (90 square feet) to 10.22 squ.m (110 to square feet)	1 1/2 people (see below)
10.22 squ.m (110 square feet) to 14.86 square metres (160 square feet) to	Two people
Over 14.86 square metres (160 square feet)	Three people
With an extra 4.65 square metres (50 square feet) for each extra person after that	

- The expression '1/2 a person' refers to a child aged between one and 10. The floor space calculation for a room, equates to the overall floor area including that covered by chimney breasts and fixed cupboards. The minimum height between the floor and ceiling should be at least 2.14 metres (7 feet) over at least threequarters of the room area, with any floor area where the ceiling height is less than 1.5 metres (5 feet) from the floor excluded from the calculation.
- For a property to be considered a 'shared house', there must be a shared room (other than a shared kitchen) for the people living there to use. This may be a kitchen and / or diner, a living room, or a dining room providing it meets the minimum requirements for floor area.

Each proposed bedroom meets the minimum requirement of 6.50m² noted above. The proposed HMO provides two communal kitchens, the kitchen at lower ground floor level measuring 12.8m² and adjoining living room measuring 24.8m² (37.6m² combined). A total minimum space of 28.81m² is required, therefore the proposed open plan kitchen

living room complies with the above-mentioned standard. A second communal kitchen on the first-floor is proposed measuring 7m². There is a shower and W/C room proposed at ground floor level, shower and W/C room at first floor level and en-suite for bedroom 6 at second floor level. The property also benefits from a private rear garden area with adequate space for clothes drying facilities, bin storage and bike storage.

The Environmental Health Officer has recommended that should approval be granted, a condition be imposed to ensure that the maximum occupancy of the dwelling is restricted to a maximum of 6 people as requested in the application, this to ensure adequate amenity space for the occupiers and in the interest of clarity

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would accord with the guidance within the Council's SPG: Design and Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12).

Impact on Visual Amenity

From a visual perspective, the proposed change of use would result in only minimal external alterations to the dwelling. These works are limited to the replacement of an existing access door on the rear elevation with a window. This change is considered minor in nature and would remain in keeping with the character of the surrounding properties. As such, it is concluded that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area and would therefore accord with Policy BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Impact on Residential Amenity

As previously noted, HMOs can have the potential to generate a higher level of activity compared to a Class C3 dwellinghouse, which is typically occupied by a single household or up to six residents under Class C3(b) or C3(c). This is particularly relevant where occupancy exceeds the six residents that define a Class C4 HMO. In order to ensure that the proposed use does not result in a material increase in noise or disturbance, it is recommended that any planning permission be subject to a condition restricting the maximum number of occupants to no more than six persons.

As discussed previously, the proposal includes the replacement of an existing access door on the rear elevation with a window. This alteration is considered minor in nature and would not result in any unacceptable overlooking of neighbouring properties, as it provides views only over the rear private amenity space of the application site. Furthermore, the introduction of the window is not considered to give rise to any impacts beyond those already experienced. There are no changes to the overall dimensions or

siting of the property and, as such, no additional overshadowing or overbearing impacts would arise for neighbouring properties.

In light of the above-mentioned information, it is not considered that the proposed use would detrimentally impact upon the residential amenity of the surrounding properties. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policies BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan

Parking and Access Requirements and Impact on Highway Safety

Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan states that development will be permitted where it is acceptable in terms of access, parking provision, and highway safety. The policy further requires that adequate car parking and cycle storage are provided, and that the site is accessible by a range of sustainable modes of transport.

The existing residential property (C3) would have a parking requirement, as detailed in the Parking Standards SPG, for 1 space per bedroom up to a maximum of 3 spaces. On the basis that there is no current HMO classification within the approved Supplementary Planning Guidance: Parking Standards (October 2016), the application submission has been assessed against the closest Use Class being C3 (residential). This would require a maximum of 3 parking spaces for the proposed change of use. It should be noted that the application site is located on an active travel route (Ref: INM-NEA-P003).

The Highways Authority have been consulted and have presented no objection as the property previously operated as a HMO (albeit without planning permission) and *“as this is a dwelling that currently does not benefit from offstreet parking, and our approved SPG Parking Standards would treat this as a 3 bedroom dwelling currently we have no objection to the change of use”*.

The maximum provision for the proposed use would therefore be 3 spaces, representing the same number of spaces required at the current property and its use. Given that this requirement does not change as a result of the proposed change of use refusal of this planning application on these grounds would be unfounded.

Given that the proposal would not alter the parking requirement from the existing use, is sustainably located in close proximity to local facilities and public transport, and includes provision for cycle storage, it is considered that the development would be acceptable in terms of highway and pedestrian safety. Whilst the concerns and objections raised by neighbouring residents, local councillors, and the Town Council are acknowledged, it

remains that the proposal complies with the relevant planning policy requirements. Accordingly, the development is considered to accord with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Flooding

The application site is located within Flood Zone 2 & 3 (Rivers) and Flood Zone 2 (Surface Water & Small Watercourses).

The Lead Local Flood Authority have been consulted who presented no objection subject to no alterations to the building footprint, no changes to floor levels, and no creation of new hardstanding areas.

Natural Resources Wales have been consulted who noted that *“the planning application proposes the change of use from highly vulnerable development (HVD) to HVD. The change of use would result in a de-intensification of occupancy with the removal of sleeping arrangements to the lower ground floor.”*

The submitted Flood Consequences Assessment demonstrates that, subject to mitigation measures, including the removal of sleeping accommodation from the lower ground floor, incorporation of flood resistance and resilience measures, and implementation of a flood management plan, the development would be safe, would not increase flood risk elsewhere, and would comply with the requirements of TAN15.

Contaminated land:

The application site has been identified as being located within an area of contaminated land. The Environmental Health team have been consulted and have noted the following; *“This application is for a change of use which should not result in any extensive ground excavation, and therefore any risks will be minimal. However, in view of the age of the building, it is possible that asbestos containing materials (ACM), may be present on the land (following demolition of previous buildings), and within the current building on site. In addition to the potential for asbestos contamination to be present in the grounds, due to the age of the buildings, it is likely that asbestos will be present within some or all the building/s, and therefore this will require investigation and reporting prior to redevelopment. We would encourage the developer undertake a full destructive asbestos survey to ensure that all notifiable asbestos is appropriately dealt with”.*

Archaeology:

The application site lies to the south of the Scheduled Area associated with Neath Abbey (Cadw ref. GM006), specifically the remains of the Gatehouse. However, given that the proposal is for a change of use of a dwellinghouse to an HMO with limited internal alterations, it is unlikely to disturb archaeological remains. The Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust have been consulted; they have raised no objection to the application. They do advise that if any unexpected archaeological features are encountered during works, their office should be contacted.

Noise:

The Environmental Health Department have been consulted with regards to noise. They have recommended the inclusion of suitably worded conditions regarding potential combined noise from any fixed mechanical services and/or external plant and equipment shall be effectively controlled so that the combined rating level of noise from all such equipment does not exceed the background sound level at any time. "Rating level" and "background sound level" are as defined in BS 4142:2014+A1:2019. Additionally, a condition restricting 'noisy' construction to designated hours has been recommended. Both of the above mentioned suggested conditions have been recommended to ensure that the proposed use does not give rise to the loss of amenity to nearby residential properties, by reason of noise or disturbance, and to ensure the development complies with Policy BE1 and EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Biodiversity / Ecology

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.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 12 sets out that “planning authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. This means that development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity”. This policy and subsequent policies in Chapter 6 of PPW 12 respond to the Section 6 Duty of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

Following the changes to Chapter 6 of PPW12, all planning applications are required to submit a Green Infrastructure Statement to support the application. A GIS has been submitted as part of the application and identifies that biodiversity enhancement will be encouraged in the form of x1 bird box situated on the rear elevation of the dwellinghouse. A suitably worded condition will be attached to the Decision Notice to ensure the bird box is installed prior to the use of the HMO to ensure the enhancement measures are installed in a timely manner.

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 SP3 (Sustainable Communities), SP7 (Housing Requirement), SP8 (Affordable Housing), SP15 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity), SP20 (Transport Network), SC1 (Settlement Limits), EN8 (Pollution and

Land Stability), AH1 (Affordable Housing), TR2 (Design and Access of New Development) and BE1 (Design) of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

It is further considered that the decision complies with Future Wales - the National Plan 2040, specifically Policies 2 (Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration - Strategic Placemaking), 8 (Flooding) & 9 (Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure), 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.

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

Proposed Block Plan and Location Plan received 27/04/2026;

Existing Floor Plans received 27/04/2026;

Cycle Storage and Bin Details received 27/04/2026;

Proposed Floor Plans Rev.A. received 30/03/2026;

FCA received 16/02/2026;

Existing Elevations received 16/02/2026;

Proposed Elevations received 16/02/2026;

Green Infrastructure 20 Neath Road received 18/05/2026.

Reason:

In the interests of clarity.

Action Conditions

- 3 Prior to the first beneficial occupation of the HMO hereby approved, 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.
- 4 Prior to the first beneficial occupation of the House of Multiple Occupancy, the secure storage of bicycles and bins shall be provided, in accordance with Cycle Storage and Bin Details (received 27/04/2026) within the garden area to the rear of the property, and the facilities shall thereafter be retained at all times.
- Reason:
In the interest of highway safety and to ensure the development complies with Policy BE1 and TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan

Regulatory Conditions

- 5 The combined noise from any fixed mechanical services and external plant and equipment shall be effectively controlled so that the combined rating level of noise from all such equipment does not exceed the background sound level at any time. "Rating level" and "background sound level" are as defined in BS 4142:2014+A1:2019.
- Reason: To ensure that the proposed use does not give rise to the loss of amenity to nearby residential properties, by reason of noise or disturbance, and to ensure the development complies with Policy BE1 and EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 6 Construction works shall not take place outside the hours of 07:30 to 18:30 hours Mondays to Fridays, 08:00 to 13:00 hours Saturdays, and no construction on Sundays or Public Holidays.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity and to ensure the development complies with Policy BE1 and EN8 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 7 The HMO hereby approved shall be limited to a maximum occupancy of 6 people at any time.

Reason:

To ensure that the development stays within a C4 Use Class, and to comply with Policy BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 8 No surface water from any increase in the roof area of the building /or impermeable surfaces within its curtilage shall be allowed to drain directly or indirectly to the public sewerage system.

Reason: To prevent hydraulic overloading of the public sewerage system, to protect the health and safety of existing residents and ensure no pollution of or detriment to the environment.

- 9 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended for Wales) (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), there shall be no extension or external alteration to any building forming part of the development hereby permitted without the prior grant of planning permission in that behalf.

Reason:

In order to safeguard the amenities of the area by enabling the Local Planning Authority to consider whether planning permission should be granted for extensions, having regard to the particular layout and design of the development and need to protect the amenity of nearby properties, and to accord with Policies BE1 and SC1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 10 No bedrooms/sleeping accommodation shall be located on the lower ground floor.

Reason: To minimise risks to occupiers/future occupiers from flooding by preventing habitable sleeping accommodation at a level most vulnerable to flooding, thereby ensuring the development remains safe for its lifetime and in accordance with Policy BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan and Technical Advice Note 15 (development, flooding and coastal erosion).

Case Officer	Kate Parry
Telephone No.	01639 685346
Date of Recommendation	3rd July 2026