



PLANNING STATEMENT

**PROPOSED CONVERSION OF FORMER ST PETERS SCHOOL
ROOMS TO COMMUNITY HUB AT OAK COTTAGE, HIGH STREET,
PONTARDAWE, SWANSEA,
SA8 4JN**

**On behalf of
Mr and Mrs Morgan**

Our Ref: 1903.a

Date: July 2026

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Evans Banks Planning has been instructed by Mr and Mrs Morgan (the Applicant) to prepare this Planning Statement to accompany a full planning and Listed Building application for the proposed conversion of the former school building to a community hub at St Peters School Rooms, High Street, Pontardawe.

1.2 This Planning Statement therefore forms part of the submissions of the application to be considered by the Authority, and provides information on the following points:

- A detailed description of the site and surrounding area
- A description of the proposed development
- Consideration of relevant planning policy
- Assessment of the potential heritage and community impacts of the proposed change of use

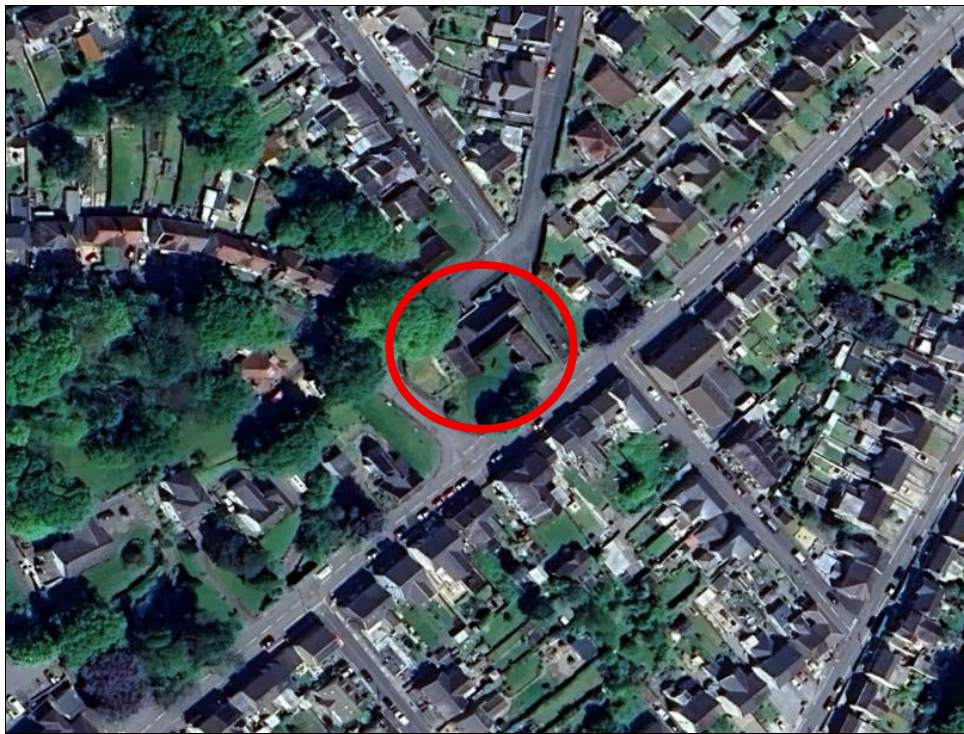
1.3 This Statement and Assessment should be read in conjunction with the following accompanying drawings.

- Location Plan
- Existing and Proposed Site Block Plans
- Existing and Proposed Elevations
- Existing and Proposed Floor Plans
- Proposed Porch Plan
- Proposed Demolition Plan
- Structural Report
- Transport Statement
- Green Infrastructure Statement
- Heritage Impact Assessment

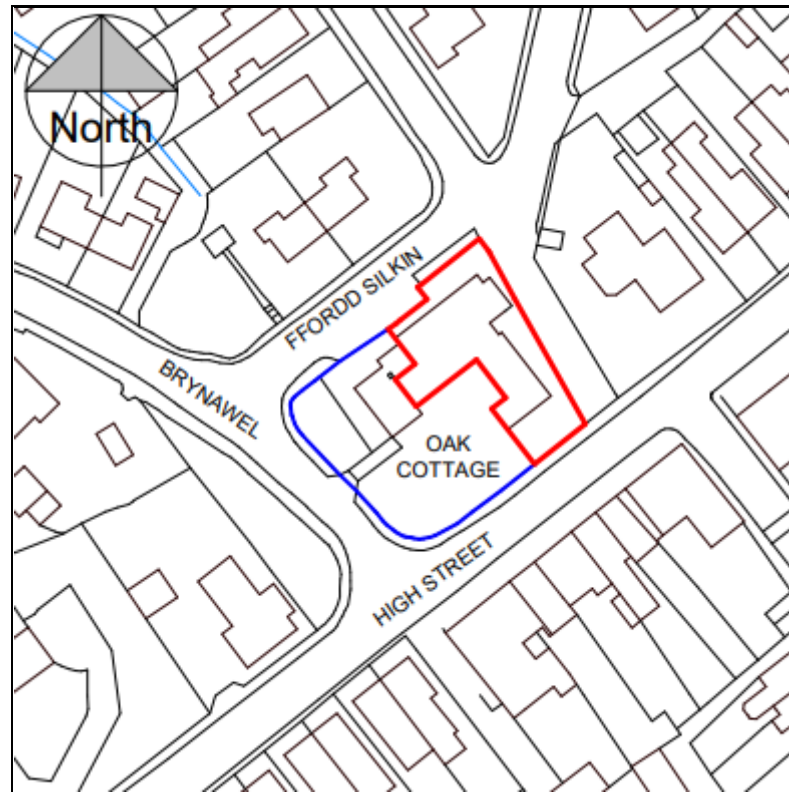
2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 THE SITE

- 2.1.1 The application building, St Peters School Rooms, is a Grade II Listed Building, located on the B-road known as High Street, within the established urban area of Pontardawe. The property is highlighted in red on both Photograph 1 and Plan A below.



Photograph 1 – Google Earth Image (May 2025)



Plan A – Location Plan

2.1.2 The National Schoolroom was constructed in 1856 as part of the local church school group. The overall building is historically significant, having served as a schoolmaster's residence, a home for the curates of Llangiwig Parish, and subsequently as accommodation for individuals supported by the church. In 2017, the property was purchased by Mr and Mrs Morgan (the Applicants), who converted it into a family home while maintaining its historic character.

2.1.3 The building is constructed of course rock-faced sandstone with yellow terracotta dressings and a slate roof, typical of mid-19th century Gothic school architecture. The terracotta, manufactured locally at Ynysmeudwy, is one of the largest surviving examples of this material in the area. Oak Cottage retains several key architectural features, including mullioned windows with terracotta detailing, gabled porches with cross finials, and pointed traceried windows indicative of its original ecclesiastical and educational function. The attached former schoolroom has a distinctive roof carried low

over mullioned windows, with a large gabled porch and historic Bath stone traceried window highlighting its use as a church space.

2.1.4 Internally, the former schoolroom comprises a series of interconnected spaces reflective of its historic educational and communal use. While some structural modifications have occurred over time, including later insertions of softwood windows and doors and post-war internal finishes, the principal fabric of the building remains intact. Annotated photographic plates submitted with the application demonstrate these surviving features.

2.1.5 The former schoolroom possesses significant heritage value across several categories:

- **Evidential value:** The building retains substantial elements of its original fabric and form, providing a clear understanding of its 19th-century construction techniques and subsequent adaptations.
- **Historical value:** The property represents a fine local example of a Victorian National School, reflecting the growth of formal education for the working population in mid-19th century Pontardawe.
- **Aesthetic value:** The Gothic design, craftsmanship, and use of locally produced terracotta contribute to the building's architectural interest, despite some loss of detail from later modifications.
- **Communal value:** The building has long served the local community, initially in education and church-related functions, and its association with St Peter's Church, use of local materials, and role in early education reinforce its significance to the community.

2.1.6 The building's history is also tied to local philanthropy and industrial development. Funding for the original construction was provided by a combination of prominent Victorian industrialists, local landowners, and contributions from the general community, highlighting its role as a communal asset. These associations, combined with its architectural integrity, underpin the rationale for its Grade II listing by Cadw on the 13th of March 2003 (Source ID: 80988).

- 2.1.7 In summary, the former schoolroom represents a well-preserved example of mid-19th century Gothic school architecture with substantial historic, aesthetic, and communal significance. The proposed change of use to a community hub seeks to maintain the residential function for the applicant's family while introducing a community-focused element, respecting the building's heritage significance and ensuring its continued relevance to the local area.
- 2.1.8 The HIA identifies that the former school building remains structurally sound but exhibits typical age-related deterioration, including weathered masonry, missing lime mortar, isolated cementitious repairs, slipped slates, and mixed-condition joinery. Internally, modern partitions and finishes have diluted some of the original character, but the principal historic fabric—including masonry, roof structure, and the distinctive Bath stone traceried window—remains intact. These findings confirm that the building retains medium evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value, and that sensitive conservation-led intervention is required to sustain its significance.
- 2.1.9 Photographs 2 to 11 below highlight the aforementioned features of the Listed Building.



Photograph 2 – Principal Elevation



Photograph 3 – Front and Northern Elevations



Photograph 4 – Western Elevation



Photograph 5 – Eastern (Rear) Elevation



Photograph 6 – Eastern (Rear) Elevation and Proposed Access Point to Community Hub



Photograph 7 – Existing Residential Amenity Space



Photograph 8 – Existing Residential Amenity Space



Photograph 9 – Existing Internal Features



Photograph 10 – Existing Internal Features



Photograph 11 – Existing Internal Features

2.2 THE SURROUNDING AREA

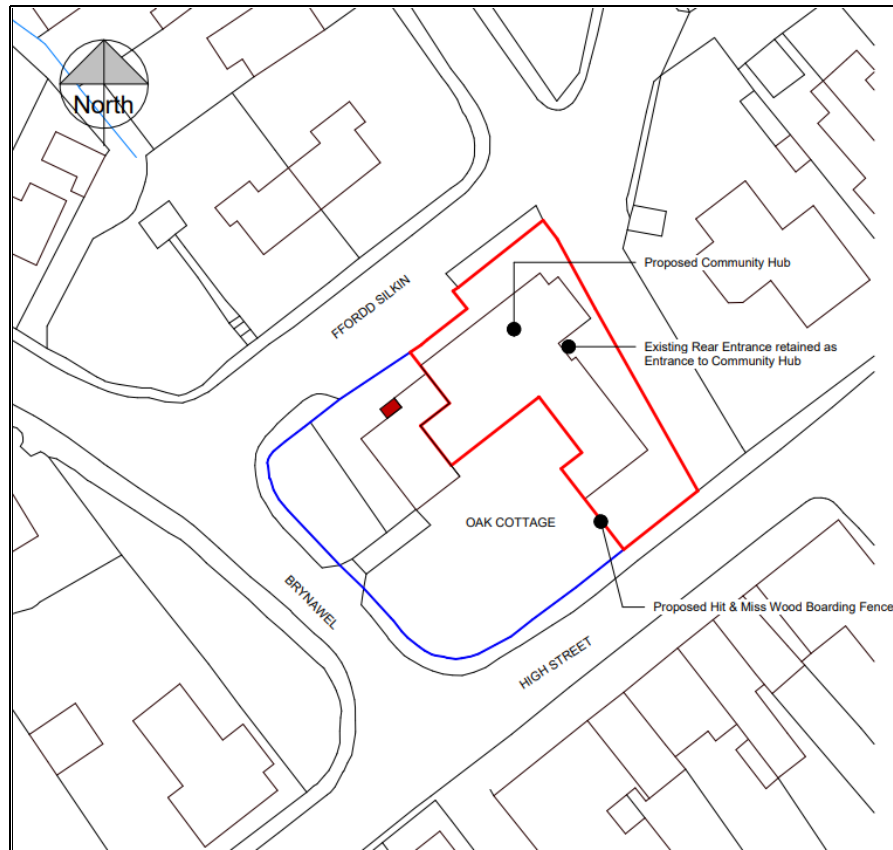
- 2.2.1 In the immediate sense, St Peters School Rooms sits within a mixed-use streetscape, off the northern flank of High Street, Pontardawe. Immediately to the north of the building is the short road known as Ffordd Silkin with its dedicated parking bays, with Smithfield Road then located to the east and Brynawel to West.
- 2.2.2 The street scene in Pontardawe primarily consists of buildings with commercial uses at ground floor level and with residential accommodation above. To the east and west, adjoining properties follow this pattern, contributing to the vibrancy of the town centre. Across the street to the south, further commercial and residential buildings continue the established rhythm and character of the High Street. No changes to parking or access to the site from High Street are proposed, with the family home retaining its existing front entrance and the rear of the building accessed via the existing rear route for the proposed community hub.

- 2.2.3 In the wider sense, Pontardawe is the third largest settlement in the County Borough and the largest within the valley areas. The town benefits from excellent transport links, connecting to the M4 via the A4067, and serves as a hub providing access to Neath, Swansea, and the wider valleys. Nestled at the foothills of the Brecon Beacons and the Black Mountain, Pontardawe lies along the River Tawe, which flows through the valley towards Swansea Bay.
- 2.2.4 Pontardawe also acts as a local town centre for the surrounding valley communities, offering a wide range of retail, leisure, educational, and employment opportunities. In recent years, the town centre has seen a number of regeneration initiatives, including upgrades to existing facilities and enhancements to the public realm. These improvements have created high-quality public spaces suitable for community events and festivals held throughout the year, increasing the accessibility and overall attractiveness of the town centre.
- 2.2.5 Within a matter of metres of the application site are the 'Ffordd Silkin', 'Ivy Bush', 'Thomas Street', 'St Peters Church' and 'Kitty's' bus stops, which connect the area with the settlements of Ystradgynlais, Abercrave, Neath, Swansea and beyond via the 903, 905, X6 and X26 bus services respectively.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Project Rationale

- 3.1 The proposal relates to the conversion of the former school building to a community hub at St Peters School Rooms, a Grade II Listed building on High Street, Pontardawe. The front part of the building known as Oak Cottage, will remain the private residence of the applicant's family, preserving the established domestic function, while the rear section of the building will be adapted to accommodate a range of community uses, including a small-scale exhibition space, workshops, and an ancillary café, all generally focused on promoting local art and cultural activity. The proposal is designed to support a sustainable, family-run enterprise employing two full-time and two part-time staff, while ensuring the continued conservation of the building's historic fabric.
- 3.2 Furthermore, the proposed community hub represents an appropriate and sustainable reuse of a former community facility building. The hall element of the former schoolrooms cannot realistically be accommodated within the wider town centre, as its scale, historic form and spatial configuration are uniquely suited to small-scale, community-focused activity rather than larger commercial or institutional operations. The proposed use therefore reinstates the building's historic communal function in a manner that is proportionate to its size and character, supported by a modest ancillary café that ensures long-term financial sustainability without competing with established, larger community facilities such as the Pontardawe Arts Centre and Cinema.



Plan B – Site Layout Plan

- 3.3 The scheme has been carefully developed to bring the rear portion of the building into beneficial use. The owners are committed to avoiding further decay of the building and ensuring its long-term viability. At the same time, the proposal seeks to retain the residential function, allowing the family to continue living on site while contributing to the wider community through the hub. The layout and design have therefore been tailored to ensure that the two functions remain fully separate, with independent access arrangements via the existing front and rear entrances.

Proposed Uses and Accommodation

- 3.4 The front section known as Oak Cottage will continue to serve as a private family residence, accessed via the original front entrance. The rear section known as St Peters School Rooms will be adapted into a community hub, providing flexible space for creative workshops, exhibitions of local art, and a small ancillary café. Staff and

visitors will use the existing rear access, ensuring that residential and community functions remain fully distinct. The hub is intended to be family-run, with two full-time and two part-time staff, providing a sustainable model for the continued use of the building.

- 3.5 The adaptation of the building ensures that both functions complement each other: the residential occupation guarantees ongoing stewardship and oversight of the property, while the community hub contributes to the vitality of Pontardawe by offering cultural and social opportunities to local residents.

External Alterations

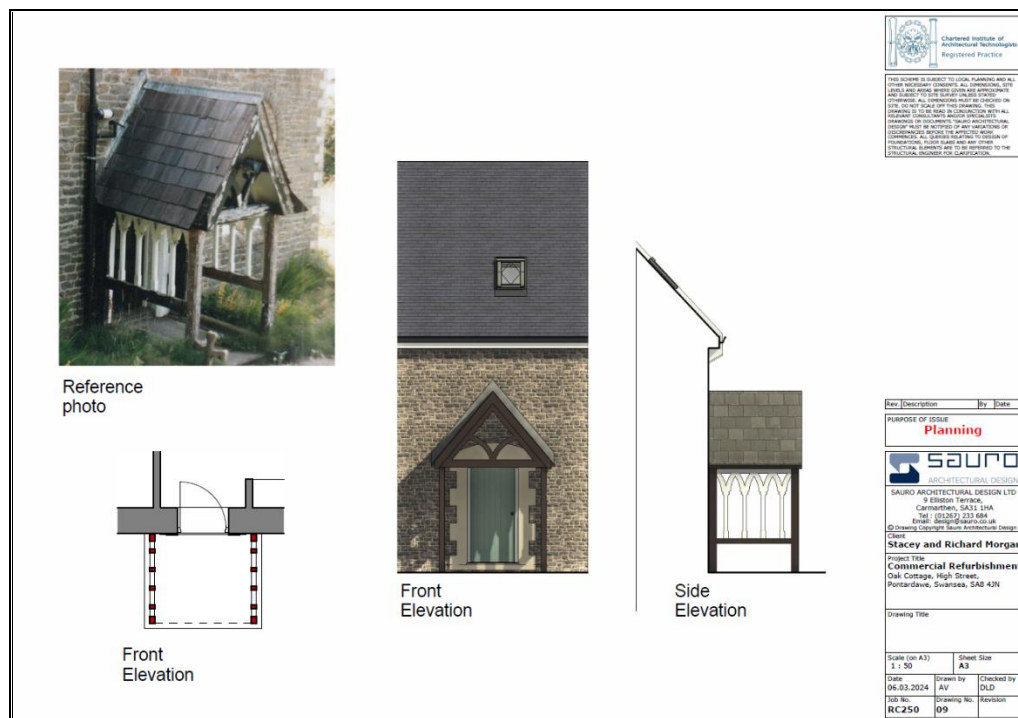
- 3.6 The proposed external alterations to the former school building are modest in nature and have been sensitively designed to preserve the character and appearance of this historic building. These works are limited to essential repairs and minor interventions required to facilitate the proposed community hub. This includes the repointing of areas of external masonry in poor condition using traditional lime mortar, the removal of the derelict concrete shed to improve the setting of the building, and the installation of one bat box and one bird box on suitable elevations to provide biodiversity enhancements in line with policy expectations. Collectively, these alterations are minimal yet sympathetic, ensuring the external appearance, heritage significance and ecological value of Oak Cottage are preserved and enhanced.
- 3.7 The Existing Elevations are illustrated in Plan C below, while the Proposed Elevations and Porch Details are shown in Plans D and E.



Plan C – Existing Elevations



Plan D – Proposed Elevations



Plan E – Proposed Porch Details

Conservation-led Rationale

- 3.8 The HIA confirms that all external works are modest, reversible and confined to areas of lower historic sensitivity. Lime repointing will replace harmful cementitious repairs, improving breathability and long-term fabric performance. Removal of the derelict concrete shed will enhance the building's setting and reveal more of the historic rear elevation. Minor stone repairs will consolidate weathered areas without altering historic detailing. No changes are proposed to principal elevations, roof form, or key architectural features.

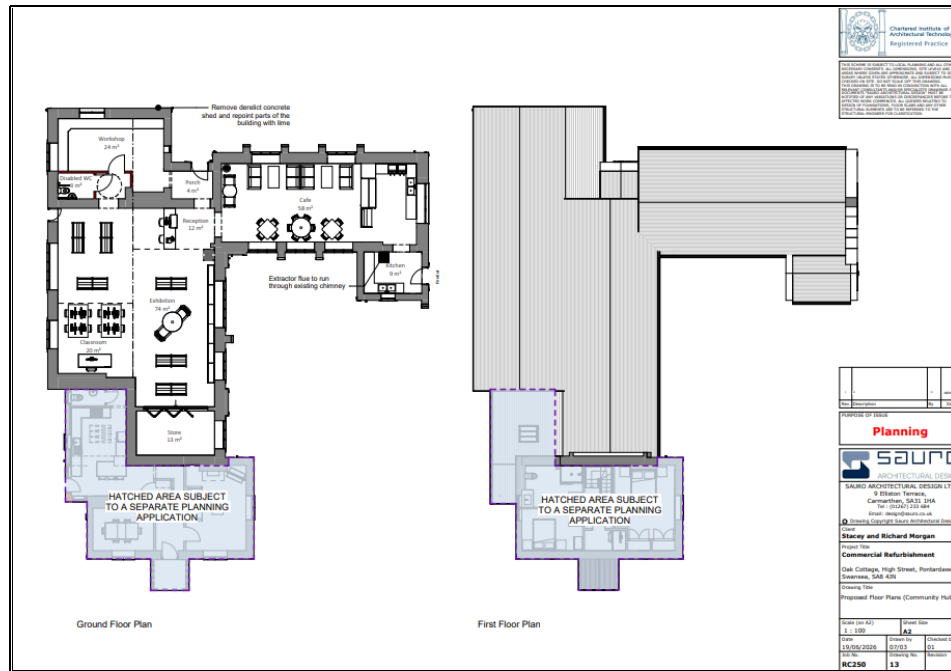
Internal Layout and Adaptations

- 3.9 Internally, the proposal has been developed with a strong focus on retaining the building's historic features and fabric. Original elements, including key ceiling features and walls, will be preserved, maintaining the building's special architectural interest.
- 3.10 The rear section of the ground floor, which is proposed to be converted to form the community hub, will undergo a reconfiguration. This will involve the subdivision of the

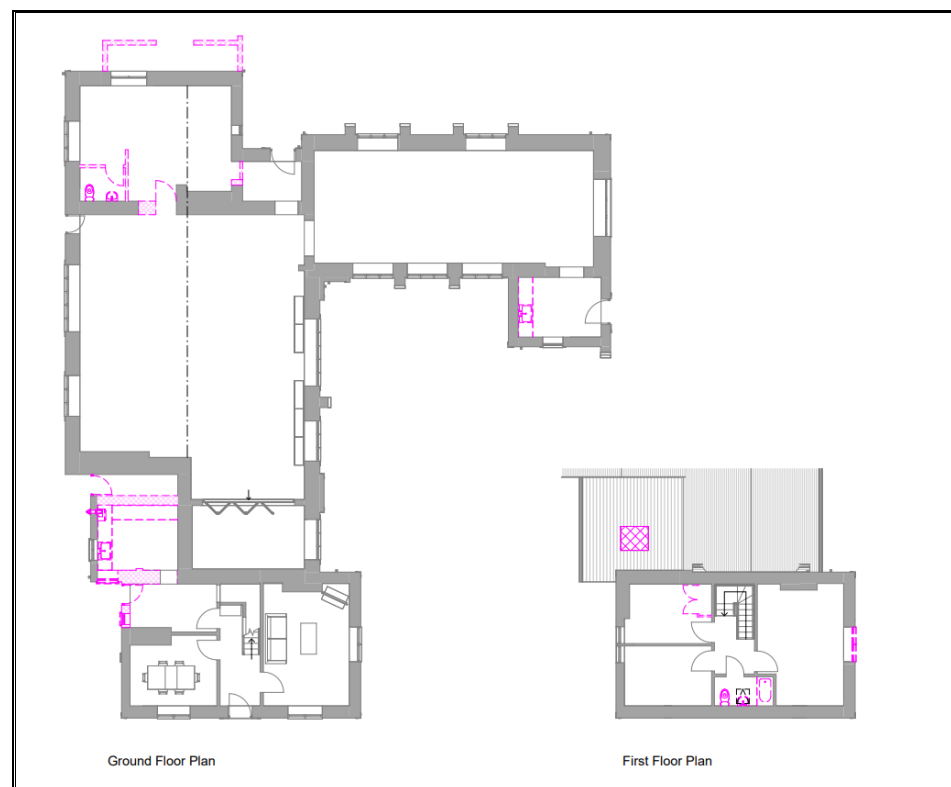
3.11 A small number of internal walls will be removed where necessary to facilitate these alterations. This includes the demolition of limited sections to accommodate the installation of the accessible WC, to maximise usable space for the new ancillary café kitchen, and to deliver the internal layout required for the community hub. In addition, the existing derelict concrete shed located to the rear of the building will be removed to improve the setting of the building, and areas of external masonry in poor condition will be repointed using traditional lime mortar to preserve the integrity of the historic fabric.

3.12 The Existing Floor Plans are illustrated in Plan F below, while the Proposed Floor and Demolition Plans are shown in Plans G and H.





Plan G – Proposed Floor Plans



Plan H – Proposed Demolition Plans

Fabric Retention and Reversibility

- 3.13 The HIA confirms that all significant historic fabric – including original joinery, ceilings, walls, and roof structure – will be retained. Internal changes are limited to later partitions and modern finishes that do not contribute to the building's significance. All new works are designed to be reversible where possible and clearly legible as contemporary interventions, ensuring the building's special interest remains unharmed.

Parking, Access, and Sustainability

- 3.14 The location of St Peters School Rooms within the town centre means that the site is highly accessible by foot and public transport, further reducing reliance on private vehicles and supporting the sustainable operation of the proposed community hub.
- 3.15 Therefore, although there is currently no onsite parking provision, there are an abundance of nearby car parks and on street parking bays that can be utilised if required, particularly the parking bay situated along the northern perimeter of the site. As such, this provides a level of parking commensurate with the site's sustainable location and use as a community hub within the Town Centre.
- 3.16 Separate access arrangements for the residential and community areas ensure safe movement for both residents and visitors, while respecting the building's historic layout.

Drainage

- 3.17 All existing surface and foul water drainage connections will be utilised.

Heritage and Conservation Considerations

- 3.18 The proposed works have been designed to minimise impact on the listed building. Most original openings, windows, doors, and architectural features will remain unchanged, while internal adaptations are carefully planned to avoid permanent loss of significant fabric. By bringing the rear section into active use, the scheme enhances the building's sustainability, providing ongoing management and maintenance while introducing a community function that reinforces its historic and communal value.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

4.1 PRIMARY LEGISLATION CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1.1 The *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* states under Section 16 that “*special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural interest which it possesses.*”.
- 4.1.2 Welsh Government Circular 61/96 “*Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas*” informs that the purpose of listing is to ensure that a building’s special architectural or historic interest is fully recognised and that any works for the alteration or extension in any way which would affect its character as a listed building, are brought under statutory control (Paragraph 46).
- 4.1.3 Paragraph 66 identifies that consent is normally required for any works of alteration which would affect the character of a building of special architectural or historic interest.
- 4.1.4 Paragraph 68 emphasises that the listing status of a building “*should not be seen as a bar to all future change*” yet withstanding the theme of the 1990 Act, in that it places a statutory requirement on local planning authorities to have “*special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural interest which it possesses.*”. Paragraph 69 then sets out that applicants must be able to justify their proposals and they will need to show why works which affect the character of a listed building are desirable or necessary. They must provide the local planning authority with full information, to enable them to assess the likely impact of their proposals on the special architectural or historic interest of the building and on its setting.
- 4.1.5 The application proposal relates to only minor physical alterations and additions to facilitate the building’s change of use, with key historic and original elements that led to its Listing being retained as part of the proposals being put forward. In addition, it

will be through the proposed conversion works that the current condition, and special interest, of the Listed Building, will be retained for further years to come.

4.1.6 The Heritage Impact Assessment demonstrates that the proposed works preserve the building's special architectural and historic interest by focusing change only in areas of low significance, retaining all principal elevations, and enhancing the building's condition through conservation-led repair. The scheme therefore fully accords with the statutory requirement under Section 16 of the 1990 Act to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting, and its features of interest.

4.1.7 With the above in mind, it is considered that the alterations retain the key remaining original features of the building, ensuring that any impact on the Listed Building in question does not result in any detriment to its character, setting or special historic interest.

4.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

4.2.1 Planning Policy Wales (12th Edition) (2024) sets out the Assembly's guidelines for ensuring that the character of historic buildings is safeguarded from alterations, extensions or demolition that would compromise a building's special architectural and historic interest (Paragraph 6.1.1).

4.2.2 Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: "The Historic Environment" (May 2017). Paragraph 5.15 states that *"When determining a listed building consent application, the local planning authority should consider the following issues:*

- *The importance and grade of the building and its intrinsic architectural or historic interest.*
- *The physical features of the building which justify its listing and contribute to its significance, (for example its form and layout, materials, construction and detail) including any features of importance such as the interior, which may have come to light after the building's inclusion on the list.*

- *The contribution of curtilage and setting to the significance of the building, as well as its contribution to its local scene.*
- *The impact of the proposed works on the significance of the building.*
- *The extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial community benefits for example, by contributing to the area's economy or the enhancement of its local environment."*

4.2.3 As detailed in Section 4.1, the application proposal has been developed in line with the relevant guidance and principles to ensure it is sympathetic to, and harmonious with, the core rationale behind the building's Listing. The majority of the building's historic fabric will be retained, with the only external changes comprising of modest interventions. These works are designed to be sensitive and in keeping with the building's historic character, ensuring that the overall appearance, setting and special architectural interest of the Listed Building and its contribution to the surrounding historic environment remain preserved.

4.2.4 The approach to the interior of the building follows the same sensitive rationale, with all original historic features and architectural elements being retained and safeguarded wherever possible. The proposed partial conversion will, in fact, provide the means to secure the long-term preservation of these features by bringing the building back into active and beneficial use, thereby preventing any further deterioration through vacancy or underuse. On this basis, the proposal aligns with the guidance and requirements of TAN 24, which emphasises the importance of conserving the special interest of historic buildings through appropriate and sympathetic reuse.

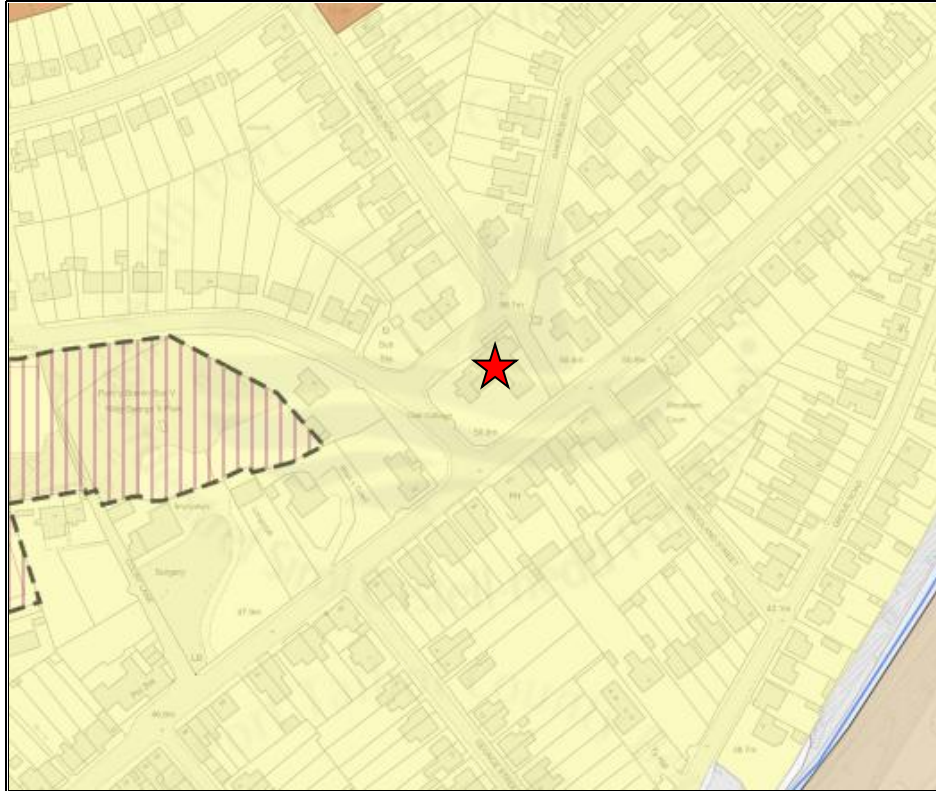
4.2.5 The HIA assesses the building against Cadw's Conservation Principles, confirming medium evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value. The proposed works sustain these values by improving condition, removing unsympathetic modern materials, and enhancing the legibility of historic fabric. The scheme therefore aligns with TAN 24's emphasis on sympathetic reuse, conservation of significance, and securing long-term viable use for historic buildings.

4.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

4.3.1 In terms of *Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*, the adopted development plan for the area within which the application site is positioned is the *Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan (LDP)*. It is therefore the policies of this document that have been referred to in the preparation of the proposal subject of the planning application in question, including the following:

- Policy SP 6 – Development in the Valleys Strategy Area
- Policy SP 20 – Transport Network
- Policy SC 1 – Settlement Limits
- Policy EC 5 – Employment Uses in the Valleys
- Policy TR 2 – Design and Access of New Development
- Policy SP 15 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Policy SP 21 – Built Environment and Historic Heritage
- Policy BE 1 – Design
- Policy BE 2 – Buildings of Local Importance

4.3.2 In terms of the LDPs Proposals Map, as can be seen from the extract below, the property (red star) lies within the defined Settlement Limits of the Town Centre of Pontardawe, with Towns described in the LDP as being “*regionally important settlements providing the widest and most diverse range of functions. Located on the strategic road network, they are fully accessible by a range of transport options*”.



Plan I – Extract from LDP Proposals Map

4.3.3 As a result of the above, the proposal seeks to retain the established external appearance and character of the building, whilst introducing a community-focused use to the rear. The site is located within the defined settlement limits of Pontardawe and within its established town centre and therefore represents a sustainable location for such a use. In this regard, the scheme fully accords with the principles of Policy SC 1, which supports appropriate forms of development within settlement boundaries. Furthermore, by maintaining the building's active presence and contribution to the town centre streetscape, the proposal also aligns with Policy SP 21, Policy BE 1 and Policy BE 2, which collectively seek to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the built environment and ensure that development proposals respect and reinforce local distinctiveness.

4.3.4 The proposal seeks to convert the St Peters School Rooms into a community hub with activities such as workshops, exhibition space, and a ancillary small café focused on

local art. The approach ensures that the building continues to make a positive contribution to the town centre, in accordance with Policy SP 21 (Built Environment and Historic Heritage), which emphasises the protection, enhancement, and sensitive adaptation of historic assets.

- 4.3.5 The proposal also reflects the unique characteristics of the former school hall, which is inherently small in scale and physically constrained by its historic layout. As such, the type of community activity proposed could not be accommodated within larger town centre venues without losing the intimate, heritage-based character that this building provides. The hub will therefore complement, rather than compete with, existing town centre facilities such as the Arts Centre and Cinema, offering a distinct, small-format community space that reinstates the building's original social function.
- 4.3.6 In line with Policy SC 1 (Settlement Limits), St Peters School Rooms is located well within the defined settlement boundary of Pontardawe. The scheme retains a residential use while introducing a complementary community function, supporting the vitality of the town centre and providing a sustainable use for the building without expanding its footprint.
- 4.3.7 The proposals also fully consider Policy TR 2 (Design and Access of New Development). The community hub will be accessed via the existing rear entrance, while the family home remains accessed from the front, ensuring separate, safe, and functional circulation. Internal adaptations have been designed to retain the building's key historic features, including original staircases and structural elements, while making the rear spaces suitable for community activity.
- 4.3.8 In terms of parking requirements, the location of St Peters School Rooms within the established town centre means that the site is highly accessible by foot and public transport, further reducing reliance on private vehicles and supporting the sustainable operation of the proposed community hub. This is illustrated below at Figures 1 to 4, which show the presence of walking and cycling routes in close proximity to the site, in

addition to the abundance of nearby bus stops as mentioned at Section 2 of this Statement.



Figure 1 – 20 Minute Walking Radius Map

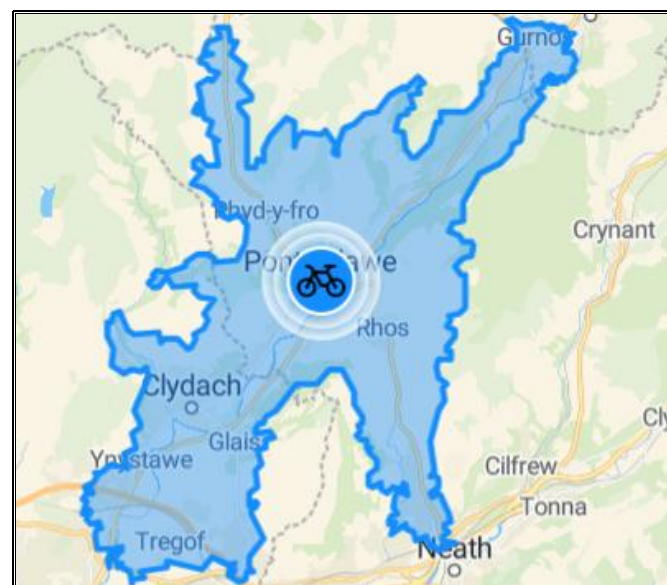


Figure 2 – 30 Minute Cycling Radius Map



- 4.3.9 It is, however, considered that the proposed use of the former school hall as a venue for exhibitions and workshops (D2 use) is not dissimilar to the uses that can be made of the hall under the existing D1 permitted use. Those uses include clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries (other than for sale or hire), museums, libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court, non-residential education and training centres. To that end, the proposed change of use of the building is unlikely to have a trip generation that is materially different to that which can be realistically expected from the fallback planning position.
- 4.3.10 Therefore, the parking generated by the proposed use will be accommodated on-street, as is the case for the current permitted uses. There are no parking restrictions on the streets adjacent to the site and it is considered that there is ample spare capacity to accommodate that demand safely.
- 4.3.11 The applicant's intended 10am – 4pm opening hours dictate that the development's traffic and parking generation will occur outside of the usual highway network peak hours. This is in contrast to some of the building's current permitted uses as a school, day nursery or creche, for instance, whose peak traffic and parking generating periods would coincide with highway peaks. The change in use will therefore result in improvements in highway conditions when compared to the fallback position.
- 4.3.12 Policies BE 1 (Design) and BE 2 (Buildings of Local Importance) emphasise that alterations should respect the scale, character, and architectural quality of historic buildings. The external form and principal elevations of St Peters School Rooms will remain largely unchanged, with only minor alterations. Internally, some small sections of existing walls are to be removed in order to accommodate the disabled access to the workshop, and to maximise space in the ancillary café kitchen, while original features and historic elements will be retained.
- 4.3.13 Policy SP 15 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) requires that development protects local habitats and natural features. The proposal incorporates the continued maintenance

and management of the existing amenity lawns, alongside the introduction of one bat box and one bird box to the suitable elevations, as outlined in the accompanying Green Infrastructure Statement.

- 4.3.14 The HIA confirms that the proposed community hub represents a sensitive and sustainable reuse of the former school building, consistent with Policy SP 21 and BE 2. The works preserve the building's architectural character, reinforce its contribution to the historic townscape, and ensure ongoing stewardship through active occupation. Conservation-led repair, retention of historic fabric, and removal of harmful modern interventions further demonstrate compliance with local heritage policy objectives.
- 4.3.15 Overall, the scheme aligns with these key Neath Port Talbot LDP policies by retaining the existing residential use, introducing a complementary community hub, preserving the building's heritage significance, and enhancing its contribution to the town centre. The proposal therefore demonstrates full compliance with the relevant local planning framework while delivering a sustainable, viable future use for the School Rooms.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposal represents a series of modest physical alterations to facilitate the conversion of the former St Peters School Rooms, a Grade II Listed Building, into a community hub. While the external interventions are limited and carefully designed to retain the character of the building, their significance lies in enabling the school building to be brought back into active and sustainable use, safeguarding it from further deterioration.
- 6.2 The National School building has remained underused since 2017, and the proposed hub will create a vibrant community-focused space while maintaining the family's private residential use at the front. This dual-purpose approach ensures the building continues to contribute positively to the local streetscape, cultural life, and community vitality of Pontardawe, while also preserving its heritage value.
- 6.3 The scheme has been carefully designed to minimise impact on the historic fabric of the building. Externally, the elevations will remain largely unaltered, preserving the building's architectural presence. Minor modifications are reversible and discreet, ensuring the character of the Listed Building is fully respected. Internally, the historic key features will be largely retained, with only a small section of internal walls to be removed in order to enable the viability of the proposal.
- 6.4 Importantly, the proposed use of the building as a community hub introduces a sustainable management model. The family-run operation, supported by two full-time and two part-time employees, ensures ongoing oversight and care of the building, while providing cultural, social, and educational benefits to the wider community. This approach not only preserves the physical integrity of the asset but also reinforces its communal value, continuing its historic role as a focal point for the local population.
- 6.5 In summary, the application proposes sensitive and modest alterations that respect the Listed Building's character, historic interest, and architectural integrity, while securing

a viable and sustainable future use. By proposing a small-scale community hub, the scheme ensures St Peters School Room will continue to make a positive contribution to the townscape, heritage, and community life of Pontardawe.

- 6.6 The Heritage Impact Assessment confirms that the proposed works preserve the building's architectural and historic interest, enhance its condition, and secure its long-term sustainable use. The conversion introduces a community-focused function that reflects the building's historic role while ensuring ongoing stewardship through active occupation. The works are confined to areas of low significance, retain all principal historic fabric, and introduce modest improvements that reinforce the building's contribution to the townscape and community life of Pontardawe.
- 6.7 On this basis, it is respectfully requested that full planning permission and Listed Building Consent be granted for the proposed works.