

OFFICER REPORT

Application Number: P2026/0191

Site Address: Skewen Police Station 152 New Road Skewen Neath Port Talbot SA10 6HH

Proposal: Change of use of former police station to provide 6 Nos. 1-bedroom and 2 Nos. 2-bedroom flats together associated works including external alterations, parking area, new cycle, bin storage and drying area to rear yard (amended plans indicating obscure glazing to windows to side elevation and disabled parking details)

Applicant: Mr S Owen

Agent: Mr Robert Bowen

Ward: Coedffranc Central

Application Type: Full Plans

Valid Date: 26th March 2026

Statutory Expiry Date: 20th May 2026

Ext. of Time / PPA date:

Publicity Expiry Date: 24th June 2026

RECOMMENDATION - Approved

SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site at 152 New Road Skewen comprises the former police station building and its associated curtilage. The site is located within the established residential area of New Road, characterised predominantly by residential development, with a commercial garage situated to the rear of the site.

The site is bounded by residential properties on either side. To the front of the building is a forecourt area surfaced with brick pavers, which is currently used for off-street parking and is accessed directly from New Road. An existing vehicular access is located along the side of the building adjacent to neighbouring flats at Nos. 153A and 153B New Road, providing access to the rear courtyard area. A separate pedestrian access is positioned on the opposite side of the building, running alongside the boundary with No. 151 New Road.

The existing building is a three-storey, L-shaped structure with a pitched roof to the front and a flat roof to the rear wing. Internally, it is arranged as a series of small rooms over all three floors, reflecting its former use as a police station.

In terms of appearance, the building incorporates stone cladding at ground-floor level and to the corners of the front elevation, with rendered panels to the upper floors complemented by darker horizontal banding. The front elevation is characterised by a regular and uniform fenestration pattern, comprising predominantly continuous horizontal windows. A recessed entrance is situated on the right-hand side of the front elevation, which formerly served as the principal public access to the building, although there are secondary pedestrian access to both sides of the building.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is sought to change the use of the existing building from the previous used as a police station which is now unoccupied to provide 6 no. 1-bed flats and 2 no. 2 bedroom flats. There are only minor alterations proposed to the exterior of the existing building, including cladding to the front elevation and replacement windows, the blocking up of the existing garage doors and the provision of a cycle and bin storage and private amenity areas to the rear. It should be noted no extensions are proposed to the existing building.

The proposed flats will feature open plan dining/living room, kitchen, bathroom either one or two bedrooms and storage cupboards.

The proposed flats have been designed to meet the quality requirements set out within the WDQR 2021 – Welsh Development Quality Requirements 2021 – Creating Beautiful Homes and Places.

The outdoor rear area of the site will be replanned providing private amenity space for two of the ground floor units and a general area which will provide a refuse area, cycle storage and a drying area for all the residential units.

NEGOTIATIONS

Improvements were negotiated in parking facilities and an alteration of glazing to two of the windows to the side elevation to obscure glazing.

PLANNING HISTORY

The application site has the following relevant planning history: -

1990/0493: Change of use of 1st and 2nd floor flats from residential to offices -
Approved: 24/11/90

P2005/0317: Signage - Approved: 05/05/05

CONSULTATIONS

Highways: No objection

NPT Local lead Flood Authority – Concerns raised.

NPT Drainage: No objection

NPT Biodiversity: No objections subject to condition and advisory note

NPT Active Travel: No objection

Heneb – No objections

Welsh Water: No objections subject to condition and advisory note

Wales and West utilities – No objections

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service – No objections

South Wales Police – No objections

Natural Resources Wales – No objections

REPRESENTATIONS

The neighbouring properties were consulted on 3.3.2026 and 14.05.2026

A site notice was also displayed on 30.3.2026 and 15.05.2026

In response, to date 4 no. representations have been received, with the issues raised summarised as follows: -

Highway Safety and Traffic Impact

- The site is located on an already heavily trafficked main road where congestion is a regular occurrence, particularly during peak periods.
- The proposed development of 8 residential units is likely to generate additional vehicle movements, placing further pressure on an already constrained local highway network.
- Increased traffic entering and exiting the site would disrupt traffic flow, increase delays, and exacerbate existing road safety concerns.
- The additional vehicle movements could increase the likelihood of accidents and conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.

Insufficient Parking Provision

- The application does not clearly demonstrate that adequate parking spaces will be available to serve the proposed residential units.
- Existing on-street parking in the area is already severely limited, with residents and visitors frequently experiencing difficulty finding spaces.
- Any shortfall in on-site parking is likely to result in overspill parking on surrounding streets, further worsening existing parking pressures.
- Increased on-street parking could obstruct visibility, reduce highway safety, impede traffic flow, and hinder access for emergency vehicles.

Construction Impacts

- The construction phase is likely to result in significant disruption to local residents and road users.
- Heavy goods vehicle movements associated with the development would add further pressure to the already congested road network.
- Construction activity would generate additional noise, dust, and disturbance, adversely affecting the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.
- Temporary road obstructions, restricted access arrangements, and construction traffic could create further highway safety risks and inconvenience.

Residential Amenity – Noise and Air Quality

- Increased traffic associated with both the construction phase and long-term occupation of the development would lead to higher noise levels in the locality.
- Additional vehicle movements would contribute to increased air pollution, to the detriment of local environmental quality and residential amenity.
- The cumulative effect of traffic, noise, and pollution would negatively impact the wellbeing and living conditions of nearby residents.

Overlooking and Loss of Privacy

- concerns regarding overlooking and loss of privacy.
- The assessment contained within the application states that "the proposal will not give rise to additional overlooking"; however, this conclusion is disputed.
- Proposed first-floor windows facing the neighbouring property would result in direct views on to the neighbouring property bedroom.
- Existing side-facing windows on the former police station are obscure glazed to protect neighbouring privacy, reflecting the recognised sensitivity of this relationship.
- The proposal therefore has the potential to result in an unacceptable loss of privacy and increased overlooking of neighbouring living accommodation and garden areas.

Impact on Access and Visibility

- Parking associated with nearby properties already creates visibility issues when vehicles enter and exit neighbouring driveways.
- Commercial vehicles and camper vans frequently park nearby, obstructing views of the highway and creating safety concerns.
- Additional parking demand generated by the development is likely to worsen these existing access and visibility problems.

Lack of Clarity Regarding Affordable Housing

- The application does not explain whether the proposed affordable housing units will be available for rent or purchase.
- This lack of information makes it difficult to fully assess the proposal and understand the likely occupancy and management arrangements.

REPORT

National Planning Policy:

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.

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 enhances the protection and sustainable management of the wider historic environment for the cultural, social, economic and environmental benefit of future generations.

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 makes walking and cycling the preferred option for shorter journeys, particularly everyday journeys, such as to and from a workplace or shops and services.

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 places a duty on the Council to maintain and enhance biodiversity, promote the resilience of ecosystems and increase their ability to adapt to events such as the impacts of climate change.

In accordance with the statutory requirements of **Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990** (as amended), *"in considering whether to grant planning permission for development ... the local planning authority ... shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the [listed] building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses [and] with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area ... special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area"*.

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 outlines the Welsh Government's commitment to the importance of 'places' and 'place-making', the importance of using previously developed land wherever possible in preference to greenfield sites, and the recognition of the health and wellbeing related benefits by creating a sense of place and improving social cohesion. PPW 12 confirms that the environmental components of places are intrinsically linked to the quality of the built and natural environment and contribute to the health and wellbeing of the people who live, work and play there. It emphasises the importance of creating sustainable communities and reducing reliance on the private car as part of a package of measures to reduce the country's carbon footprint and help tackle the climate emergency.

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

- Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)
- Technical Advice Note 11: Noise (1997) and emerging 2024 revision thereto
- Technical Advice Note 12: Design (2016)
- Technical Advice Note 18: Transport (2007)
- Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment (2017)

In addition to National guidance contained within Planning Policy Wales, any application would be considered against the Policies within Future Wales and the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan, details of which are available on the Council's web site by visiting www.npt.gov.uk/ldp. The relevant policies would include:

Strategic Policies

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| • Policy SP1 | Climate Change |
| • Policy SP2 | Health |
| • Policy SP3 | Sustainable Communities |
| • Policy SP5 | Development in the Coastal Corridor Strategy Area |
| • Policy SP15 | Biodiversity and Geodiversity |
| • Policy SP16 | Environmental Protection |
| • Policy SP20 | Transport Network |
| • Policy SP21 | Built Environment and Historic Heritage |

Topic based Policies

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| • Policy SC1 | Settlement limits |
| • Policy I1 | Infrastructure Requirements |
| • Policy EN6 | Important Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sites |
| • Policy EN7 | Important Natural Features |
| • Policy EN8 | Pollution and Land Stability |
| • Policy TR2 | Design and Access of New Development |

- **Policy BE1** Design
- **Policy AH1** Affordable housing
- **Policy OS2** Open space provision

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

The following SPG is of relevance to this application:

- [Planning Obligations \(October 2016\)](#)
- [Parking Standards \(October 2016\)](#)
- [Affordable Housing \(October 2016\)](#)
- [Pollution \(October 2016\)](#)
- [Open Space & Greenspace \(July 2017\)](#)
- [Renewable and Low Carbon Energy \(July 2017\)](#)
- [Design \(July 2017\)](#)
- [Biodiversity and Geodiversity \(May 2018\)](#)
- [The Historic Environment](#)

All of the above SPG can be viewed on the [Council's website](#).

The Placemaking Charter, of which Neath Port Talbot Council are a signatory sets out the following principles:

People and community

The local community are involved in the development of proposals. The needs, aspirations, health and well-being of all people are considered at the outset. Proposals are shaped to help to meet these needs as well as create, integrate, protect and/or enhance a sense of community and promote equality.

Location

Places grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing, employment and leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.

Movement

Walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised to provide a choice of transport modes and avoid dependence on private vehicles. Well designed and safe active travel routes connect to the wider active travel and public transport network and public transport stations and stops are positively integrated.

Mix of uses

Places have a range of purposes which provide opportunities for community development, local business growth and access jobs, services and facilities via walking,

cycling or public transport. Development density and a mix of uses and tenures helps to support a diverse community and vibrant public realm.

Public realm

Streets and public spaces are well defined, welcoming, safe and inclusive with a distinct identity. They are designed to be robust and adaptable with landscape, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage well integrated. They are well connected to existing places and promote opportunities for social interaction and a range of activities for all people.

Identity

The positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are valued and respected. The unique features and opportunities of a location including heritage, culture, language, built and natural physical attributes are identified and responded to.

The proposed development will need to address all of the above placemaking principles and the objectives for good design. How your proposals address all of these principles will be required as part of any Planning statement/ design and access statement submitted with your application. Your application will be assessed against these principles as they are key to ensuring that development positively contributes towards building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives.

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

Principle of development

The proposed development is located within the residential settlement of Skewen. Strategic **Policy SP3 Sustainable Communities** states “The delivery of Sustainable healthy and cohesive communities and the conservation of the countryside will be promoted”, with **Policy SC1 - Settlement Limits** – stating 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.” subject to an assessment of the acceptability in terms of other policies within the LDP, and

there being no unacceptable issues with regard to visual amenity, residential amenity or highway and pedestrian safety.

The application site lies within settlement limits and therefore residential development is acceptable in principle subject to compliance with policies BE1 and TR2 of the Local Development Plan and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on 'Design'. Previous planning applications show that the building was converted into offices and residential. The building is currently a Sui Generic use and thus the changing the building to any other use will require planning permission.

Given that this section of New Road is primarily residential, the re-use of the building for a residential use would not be incompatible with the locality. In this regard, the principle of the proposed development, its impact on visual amenity, the historic environment, residential amenity, highway and pedestrian safety and biodiversity issues are considered to be material to the overall planning assessment of the proposals.

Density

Policy BE1 (8a) of the adopted Local Development Plan states that 'normally a minimum of 35 dwellings per hectare in the Coastal Strategy Area or a minimum of 30 per hectare in the Valleys Strategy Area' will be required.

This site falls within the Coastal Strategy Area where a minimum of 35 dwellings per hectare will be required. The application site as a whole is approximately 0.05 hectares in size. 8 units would provide an overall site density in excess of 140 units. The density is thus considerably higher than the minimum required and demonstrates the efficient use of land required under Policy BE1.

Impact on Visual Amenity.

The existing building, of post-war modern design and currently presents a somewhat dated and tired appearance and would benefit from redevelopment. The proposed development introduces a series of visual enhancements, including new cladding to the front elevation, alongside replacement windows, doors, fascias and rainwater goods.

It is noted that the proposed cladding to the front elevation will alter the appearance of the building to a degree, introducing some interest resulting in a more contemporary appearance. The application would also include new windows, doors, fascias and rainwater goods. While these alterations and additions utilising the existing window and door openings would alter the appearance and character of the building the proposals are considered to be minor and necessary in order to bring the building back into a beneficial use and will have a positive impact on the building's appearance.

Collectively, the improvements will significantly enhance the building's appearance, support its continued and beneficial use, and contributing positively to the visual amenity of the area.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The submitted plans indicate that it is proposed to provide eight residential units across the three floors of the existing building. The proposed internal layout accords with Welsh Government guidance in respect of minimum space standards and would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation for future occupiers.

Given the site's location within an established urban area, opportunities to provide external amenity space are limited. Nevertheless, the proposal incorporates secure cycle and refuse storage within the rear yard area and proposes the subdivision of part of this rear yard area to provide private amenity areas for two of the ground floor flats. It is considered that future occupiers would benefit from the site's sustainable location, with convenient access to local shops, services and public transport links. In this context, the limited provision of external amenity space is not considered sufficient justification for withholding planning permission.

With regard to the adjoining property at No. 153, which has previously been converted into two self-contained flats (Flats 153A and 153B), which lies immediately adjacent to the application site, with the building positioned on the shared boundary and separated from the application building by the existing vehicular access serving the rear courtyard. The flats at No. 153 are set forward of the building line of the application property and are further separated by an existing stone boundary wall.

The side elevation of the main building at No. 153 contains two windows serving the lounge areas of Flats 153A and 153B, the ground-floor window being obscure glazed. Whilst these windows currently overlook the existing vehicular access, each lounge also benefits from a secondary window or glazed door within the rear elevation. The lounge windows face towards the stairwell windows serving the application building, reflecting a relationship similar to the situation when the building was utilised as a police station. Kitchen windows serving both flats are located within the side elevation of the rear wing and are positioned away from the shared boundary. The ground-floor kitchen window and door are effectively screened by the existing stone boundary wall, while the first-floor kitchen window is partially screened from the proposed rear flats by the bulk and massing of the existing application building, in addition due to the acute angles and separation distance between the two properties comply with the council's adopted standards for distances between habitable room windows .

In relation to the proposed rear-facing windows of the development, the projecting front section of the application building would substantially limit direct views between the

respective properties. Furthermore, any views towards the private rear amenity areas serving Flats 153A and 153B would be restricted by the separation distance between the buildings and the presence of the intervening stone boundary wall. Accordingly, the development would not result in any material loss of privacy or give rise to harmful overlooking.

It is also important to note that no additional window openings are proposed as part of the development, other than the infilling and replacement of the existing garage door opening. The submitted plans indicate that the ground-floor rear-facing windows serving Flats 2 and 3 would primarily overlook their own private amenity areas and would be screened from neighbouring properties by the proposed boundary fencing and part of the front section of the application building. Similarly, the side-facing windows serving the second-floor flats would predominantly overlook the internal rear courtyard. It should be noted the existing window at second floor in the application property will serve a stair well not a habitable room.

Although a kitchen window and a bedroom window within the proposed development would face towards other flats within the scheme, the separation distances involved, together with the oblique angles of view arising from the layout of the buildings, would ensure that acceptable levels of privacy are maintained in accordance with the Council's adopted standards. Consequently, the proposal is not considered to result in any unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of either existing neighbouring occupiers or future residents of the development.

Turning to the neighbouring property at No. 151, this end-of-terrace dwelling is also positioned forward of the application property. The two properties are separated by the pedestrian access running alongside the application building, together with an existing high stone boundary wall and the neighbouring property's side driveway. Collectively, these features provide a substantial degree of separation and screening between the properties.

No. 151 does not contain side-facing windows serving the main part of the dwelling. However, there are windows within the side and rear elevations of the rear wing, together with an additional first-floor window located at the rear of the main dwelling. The rear-facing windows within the rear wing overlook the property's rear garden, while a first-floor window is situated within the side elevation of the rear wing facing the application property. Despite attempts to seek confirmation, it has not been possible to establish which rooms these windows serve or whether the rooms should be regarded as habitable rooms.

At ground-floor level of the building the existing side elevation openings are to be retained and would serve a plant room, building manager's room, kitchen and two bathrooms. These openings are effectively screened from No. 151 by the existing high boundary wall and would not result in any adverse impact upon the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

At first-floor level, the retained side elevation openings would serve two bathrooms and two kitchens. The kitchen windows would act as secondary windows to the principal kitchen/living spaces and would be fitted with obscure glazing and restricted high-level opening mechanisms. A condition can be imposed requiring the installation and permanent retention of these measures. It is noted that the proposed flat windows would face towards no. 151 ; however, having regard to the oblique window-to-window relationship, the provision of obscure glazing, and the separation distances involved, it is considered that the proposal would not result in a significant loss of privacy to neighbouring occupiers. Again, due to the obscure glazing of the windows, it is not considered to be a loss to the privacy of the rear amenity space of the neighbouring property. Whilst concerns regarding potential impacts on privacy have been carefully considered, the development has been designed to safeguard neighbouring amenity. The majority serve non-habitable rooms, including bathrooms, stairwells and circulation areas, which are not typically associated with privacy concerns. Where windows serve habitable accommodation, appropriate mitigation measures, namely obscure glazing and restricted opening mechanisms and screening, are proposed to prevent unacceptable overlooking.

No windows are proposed within the side elevation at second-floor level.

Having regard to the separation achieved by the intervening pedestrian access and boundary treatments, together with the orientation of the properties and the limited and oblique nature of any potential views, it is considered that the proposal would not result in unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy or conflict with the guidance contained within the adopted Neath Port Talbot Household Design Guide.

Furthermore, as the proposal relates solely to the conversion of the existing building and does not involve any extension, increase in height or enlargement of the building footprint, there would be no additional overbearing impact, loss of outlook or overshadowing beyond the existing situation. The development would therefore maintain the established relationship between the application building and neighbouring properties, without giving rise to any unacceptable effects on residential amenity.

Taking all of the above into consideration, it is concluded that the proposed conversion would not give rise to any unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy, overshadowing, overbearing impact or other harm to neighbouring residential amenity. The proposal has been designed to ensure compliance with the amenity objectives of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Household Design Guide, and it is therefore considered that the development would not result in any material loss of residential amenity for neighbouring occupiers. Accordingly, the proposal is acceptable in residential amenity terms

Regarding any noise and disturbance to neighbouring residents the appropriate locating

of the storage of any heavy plant and equipment, including vehicles and car parking facilities for construction site operatives and visitors and appropriate working practices will also reduce amenity impacts. These measures will be secured through the imposition of a planning condition requiring a construction environmental management plan (CEMP), as is recommended by the Natural Resources Wales and the highways section. It is considered that subject to the securing appropriate management and hours of operation the temporary impacts on neighbouring properties from construction can be mitigated to an acceptable level.

Parking and Access Requirements and Impact on Highway and Pedestrian Safety

Policy TR2 identifies that proposals will only be permitted where appropriate levels of parking and cycling facilities are provided and that the development is accessible by a range of travel means, including public transport and safe cycle and pedestrian routes.

Policy BE1 requires, amongst other things, that new development has no significant adverse impact on highway safety, with Policy TR2 emphasising that development proposals will only be permitted where all of the stated criteria are satisfied, including that (1) The development does not compromise the safe, effective and efficient use of the highway network and does not have an adverse impact on highway safety or create unacceptable levels of traffic generation.

The application relates to an existing building that has previously operated as a Police Station. While there are no specific adopted parking standards for a police station, it is generally accepted that commercial uses generate higher levels of vehicle movements, the previous use would have involved staff, visitors and operational vehicle activity. The submitted plans indicate that is proposed to retain the 7 car parking spaces along the frontage of the site and the existing access arrangement with direct access off the highway which will allow vehicles to enter and exit the site safely. Adequate visibility splays are provided in accordance with the Council's adopted standards, to ensure pedestrian and highway safety whilst entering and leaving the site.

The application site occupies a highly sustainable location within the settlement of Skewen, positioned along the main road which provides local services and shops. In terms of accessibility, the site is well-served by public transport. A local bus route operates along the main road, furthermore, Skewen railway station is located nearby, offering additional sustainable transport opportunities. The immediate surrounding area is an established residential area of New Road, with on-street and resident parking

provision available in the vicinity. The application has been supported by a sustainability appraisal.

The Head of Highways has provided the following comments

Due to the proximity to local amenity within Skewen, the provision of a sustainability assessment has reduced the number of parking spaces required, however the development is still one space below the SPG parking standards requirements. We understand that there is existing resident permit parking along New Road.

It is considered that the proposed change of use from a former police station to residential units would result in a reduction in vehicular trip generation. The previous use would have involved staff commuting to the station, collecting operational vehicles, and undertaking multiple journeys to and from the site throughout the day as part of their duties. This pattern of activity is likely to have generated a relatively high number of daily trips. In addition, the police station may have accommodated meeting rooms, giving rise to visits from multiple stakeholders and placing further pressure on on-site parking provision.

In contrast, the proposed residential use is anticipated to generate fewer vehicular movements overall. Furthermore, the site occupies a sustainable location with convenient access to a wide range of local services and amenities along New Road, Skewen. The proximity of these facilities is likely to encourage walking, cycling, and other sustainable modes of transport, thereby reducing reliance on private vehicles.

The applicant's supporting information argues that this reduction is justified based on the highly sustainable location of the site. The sustainability scoring in the Car Parking Special Planning Guidance (SPG) is such that a reduction in parking provision is justified. The SPG indicates that due to the sustainability of the site that a reduction to 8 spaces for the whole site could be justified, however only 7 car parking spaces can be provided to the front of the building. Given the sustainable location it is not considered that the lack of a single car parking space could justify the refusal of this application.

Concerns have also been expressed regarding the potential increase in traffic generation and its effect on congestion and highway safety. It is not considered that emergency access would not be adversely affected, there is no evidence to suggest that the proposed residential use would increase the risk of accidents. On the contrary, the reduced intensity of vehicle movements compared to the previous commercial use is likely to result in an improvement in highway safety conditions. Although there is an existing vehicular access to the rear of the site it is not proposed to use this as the rear

of the site will provide amenity area for the development. Although the site is located on a busy main road, this reflects an established characteristic of the area and not a consequence of the proposed development. Whilst the concerns regarding the existing parking pressures and visibility constraints associated with vehicles parked on the surrounding highway are noted however this reflects the current situation and is not directly attributable to the proposed development ..

Taking these matters into account, it is concluded that the development would not give rise to parking or traffic-related problems above the existing situation and would be acceptable in terms of its impact on highway capacity, traffic flow and highway safety. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with relevant planning policies relating to sustainable development, parking provision and highway safety. In view of the comments received from the Highways section it is considered that the development to be an appropriate form of development that would not result a detrimental impact upon highways and pedestrian safety to warrant the refusal of the application.

Drainage

The site would be subject to a SABS application. The proposed sustainable drainage system must be approved by the Council's Highway Development Control service acting in its SuDS Approving Body (SAB) role before construction work begins.

Dwr Cymru also offer no objections and confirm there is capacity within the drainage system to accommodate the proposed development. It should be noted that the site is crossed by a public sewer which will not be impacted by the development, an advisory noted has been attached.

Flooding

Only a very small area to the rear of the site falls within the NRW-designated Small Watercourses and Rivers flood zone. No alterations are proposed to the existing building floor levels, and the rear courtyard is already hard surfaced. Whilst the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) raised concerns and sought confirmation that floor levels would remain unchanged, it is considered that the flood risk implications are limited given the very small extent of the site affected. A Flood Consequences Assessment (FCA) has been submitted in support of the application, and an advisory note has been attached recommending that residents familiarise themselves with appropriate emergency flood response measures. On this basis, the proposal is considered acceptable in flood risk terms.

Archaeology

Information in the Historic Environment Record, shows that there no know archaeological assets within the application area, additionally it is situated outside of any Archaeologically Sensitive Area. A review of historic mapping shows a Smithy identified on 1st Edition historic OS map (1879), immediately north of the proposed development.

The works are in an area of low archaeological potential. Therefore, it is unlikely that buried archaeological remains could be encountered during the groundworks. As a result, there is unlikely to be an archaeological restraint to this proposed development. Consequently, there are no objections to the proposed development.

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) Edition 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 must be submitted with all planning applications, that is proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed and will describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal. The green infrastructure statement is 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.

The proposed conversion of the property to a residential use is not considered to give rise to any biodiversity concerns that require mitigation and the net gain duty is met through the recommendations contained within the submitted Green Infrastructure Statement, namely the provision of 2 no. new bird boxes and 2 no. new bat boxes to the exterior of the building. These can be secured by condition.

Advice was received should bats be found at the property during construction works an advisory note will be added to any consent.

Other matters

Concerns have been raised regarding potential noise and disturbance arising from the conversion works. It is acknowledged that there will be a degree of temporary disruption during the construction phase; however, the proposal relates to the conversion of an existing building rather than a comprehensive redevelopment or new-build scheme. As such, the extent of construction activity is expected to be relatively limited and short-term in nature.

Any impacts associated with construction noise, dust, traffic movements and general disturbance would be temporary and confined to the construction period. To ensure that these impacts are appropriately managed and minimised, it is recommended that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) be secured by condition. The CEMP would set out measures to control noise, dust and disturbance, including details of working hours, site access arrangements, delivery management and mitigation measures to protect neighbouring occupiers.

The tenure of the proposed flats is not a material planning consideration, there is however a requirement to provide affordable housing in accordance the the adopted Supplementary planning guidance.

Regarding any noise or disturbance from the development, the proposed is a residential use within a predominately residential area issues and thus are not considered to affect the amenity of neighbouring properties.

The development is for only 8 units it is not considered that a development of this scale would have a detrimental effect local infrastructure.

Section 106 Planning Obligations

Local Development Plan **Policy SP 4** (Infrastructure) states that “Developments will be expected to make efficient use of existing infrastructure and where required make adequate provision for new infrastructure, ensuring that there are no detrimental effects on the area and community. Where necessary, Planning Obligations will be sought to ensure that the effects of developments are fully addressed in order to make the development acceptable”.

Policy I1 (Infrastructure Requirements) then states that “In addition to infrastructure improvements necessary to make a development acceptable in health, safety and amenity terms, additional works or funding may be required to ensure that, where appropriate, the impact of new development is mitigated. These requirements will include consideration of and appropriate provision for: Affordable housing; Open space

and recreation facilities; Welsh language infrastructure (in language Sensitive Areas); Community facilities including community hubs; Biodiversity, environmental and conservation interests; Improving access to facilities and services including the provision of walking and cycling routes; Historic and built environment and public realm improvements; Community and public transport; Education and training.

The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 came into force on 6th April 2010 in England and Wales. They introduced limitations on the use of planning obligations (Reg. 122 refers). As of 6th April 2010, a planning obligation may only legally constitute a reason for granting planning permission if it is:

- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- (b) directly related to the development; and
- (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

In view of the type and form of development proposed in this location, having regard to local circumstances and needs arising from the development, the following planning obligations are considered necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms and to meet the policy and legislative tests for planning obligations.

Affordable housing

Policy AH1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan states that all new residential developments of 3 or more units will be required to contribute to affordable housing provision within the Port Talbot, Neath and Pontardawe spatial areas. Within the Neath spatial area, a 25% affordable housing target is required. In this case, this would equate to two whole units.

Public Open Space / Children's Play Facilities

Policy OS1 states where there is a quantitative deficiency in outdoor sport, children's play, informal space or allotments, provision will be sought, including the requirement for maintenance in conjunction with all new residential developments of 3 or more dwellings, based on the following standards:

<u>Open Space</u>	<u>Standard</u>
Outdoor Sport	1.6 hectares per 1,000 population
Children's Play	0.25 hectares per 1,000 population
Informal Space	0.55 hectares per 1,000 population
Allotments	0.19 hectares per 1,000 population

Having regard to the 'Open Space Assessment 2013, produced in support of the adopted Local Development Plan, it is noted that there are existing ward shortfalls. Accordingly, the existing deficiencies would be exacerbated by the increase in population arising from the proposed development, and there is a need for the

development to contribute towards addressing such deficiency. Contributions for designated play space are only required for units of 2 bedrooms or more.

Open Space Cost	LDP Policy OS 1 Categorisation	Total Development Proposal Open Space Requirement	Open Space Cost	Cost Per Dwelling	Housing Units	Scheme Total Cost	
	Area	sq m	sq m				
	OUTDOOR SPORT-PITCH	0	£10.80	£284	8	£2,272	
Shortfall	OUTDOOR SPORT-NON PITCH	1,474	£100.00	£1,030	8	£8,240	
	DESIGNATED PLAY SPACE	0	£150.00	£855	2	£1,710	
	INFORMAL SPACE	0	£5.00	£63	8	£504	
Shortfall	ALLOTMENTS	622	£10.90	£48	8	£384	
	TOTALS	2,096		£2,280		£13,110	

The above table clarifies the level of impact upon each specific category. With a total requested financial contribution of £13110.

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 visual amenity of the area, the amenities of neighbouring residents and highway safety. Accordingly, the proposed development is in accordance with Policies SP1, SP2, SP3, SP5, SP8, SP15, SP16, SP20, SP21, SC1, AH1, EN6, EN7, EN8, TR2 , OS2, I1 and BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

It is further considered that the decision complies with Future Wales - the National Plan 2040, specifically Policy 6 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 To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions and upon the signing of a Section 106 Agreement with the following Heads of Terms:

- To secure the contribution of £13110 for the provision of public open space and play facilities to serve the ward of Coedffranc Central, to accord with LDP Policy OS1;
- To secure an on-site affordable housing provision of a minimum of 25%, (2 units) to accord with LDP Policy AH1

If within 3 months of the date of this resolution the S106 Agreement is not signed, the application shall be refused for the following reason:

“Through the failure to sign the required S106 agreement to secure the required open space and affordable housing , the application fails to accord with Policies AF1 and OS1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan”.

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:

PWA_657 - A105 (-) - Proposed ground floor layout

PWA_657 - A108 (-) - Proposed block plan

PWA_657 - A106 (A) - Proposed upper floors

Existing first and second floor Plan
Location Plan
Existing upper floors
Communal and private areas layout

Reason:
In the interests of clarity.

- 3 No development shall take place until a scheme to enable the provision of gigabit capable broadband infrastructure from the site boundary to the dwellings/buildings hereby permitted has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
Reason
To support the roll-out of digital communications infrastructure across Wales in accordance with Policy 13 of Future Wales.
- 4 Prior to the commencement of work on site, a detailed scheme shall be designed for the flats that demonstrates how the layout and the sound insulation performance of the building achieves the relevant values detailed in Table 4 of British Standard BS8233:2014, and the scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be designed in full accordance with the approved details. .

Reason:
In the interest of residential amenity and to accord with Policy BE1 of the Local Development Plan.

Action Conditions

- 5 The proposed boundary treatment as detailed on plan no. PWA 657 - A105 - Proposed ground floor layout shall be erected prior to the first occupation of flat 2 and flat 3 and retained as such thereafter.

Reason:
In the interest of visual amenity and to ensure compliance with Policy BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.
- 6 The cycle and bin storage provision shown on the approved drawing PWA_657 - A108 shall be provided prior to the first occupation of any of the residential units hereby approved and retained for the sole benefit of the residential units hereby approved as such thereafter.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety and to ensure adequate cycle and bin storage is provided for future residents and to ensure compliance with Policy BE1 and TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 7 The Ecological Enhancement Measures shall be undertaken in accordance with the recommendation of the approved Green Infrastructure Statement prior to first occupation of any of the flats and retained as such thereafter.

Reason:

In the interests of biodiversity and to provide Ecological Enhancement Measures on site in accordance with Policy 9 of Future Wales and so as to accord with Policy SP15 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 8 Notwithstanding the details submitted, prior to the first occupation of the flats hereby approved, all first floor windows to the side elevation adjacent to 151 New Road shall be fitted with obscured glazing which is at least equivalent to Pilkington Privacy Level 5 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.

- 9 No alterations or removal of the common boundaries with flats 153a, 153b and 151 New Road shall be undertaken until a scheme indicating the positions, height, design, materials and type of replacement or altered boundary treatment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any new boundary treatment shall be completed, as approved, within 2 months of its removal or alteration and retained as such thereafter.

Reason:

In the interest of visual amenity and to ensure compliance with Policy BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Regulatory ConditionsRegulatory Conditions

- 10 Prior to their use in the construction of the development hereby permitted, details of the materials to be used in the external alterations of the development shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

In the interest of the visual amenity of the area and to ensure the development complies with Policy BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 11 The car parking spaces as shown on the approved plans shall be used solely for the benefit of the occupants of the flats hereby approved and for no other purpose and permanently retained as such.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and to ensure the development complies with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

- 12 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.

These conditions have no heading! Go back,
do it again and try harder next time!

- 13 No development, including site clearance, shall commence until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall be made with reference to the requirements of British Standard BS5228-1:2009 - Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites. The CEMP should include the following information: -
- * Construction methods: details of the extent and phasing of development; details of construction materials or techniques to be used; details for the storage and management of plant and materials used in constructing the development
 - * General Site Management: details of the construction programme including timetable; details of site clearance; details for erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing; details of complaint investigation procedures
 - * Control of Nuisances: Identification of the significant construction and demolition noise & vibration sources; details of physical and operational management controls necessary to mitigate noise & vibration emissions; details of dust & odour control measures and measures to control light spill

* Traffic Management: details of site deliveries; details for the loading and unloading of plant and materials; details of wheel wash facilities; details for the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors

* Hours of working on site, including specified hours for deliveries; details of restrictions to be applied during construction and demolition works (including timing, duration and frequency of works) to prevent noise or nuisance amenity issues to surrounding properties

* Responsible Persons: details of the persons and bodies responsible for activities associated with the CEMP and emergency contact details
The CEMP shall be implemented as approved throughout the site preparation and construction phases of the development.

Reason:

In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety, the environment, and the amenity of residents, and to ensure accordance with Policies BE1, EN8 and TR2 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Case Officer Andrea Davies

Telephone No. 01639 686748

Date of Recommendation 14th August 2026