
PLANNING STATEMENT

Change of Use from Class A1 (Retail) to Class A3 (Food and Drink)
with Associated External Alterations
Landmark Stores, 188 Water Street, Port Talbot, SA12 6LL

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Complete CAD & Structural (CCS) Solutions Ltd in support of a full planning application for the change of use of an existing ground floor unit from Class A1 (Retail) to Class A3 (Food and Drink) at Landmark Stores, 188 Water Street, Port Talbot.

The proposal includes minor external alterations to the front elevation, comprising the installation of an extractor ventilation system, replacement shopfront and signage, and the formation of a new, independent entrance door serving the existing first-floor residential flat. No extension or increase in building footprint is proposed.

2. Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises an existing commercial unit located within an established urban area of Port Talbot. The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of retail, commercial and town centre uses.

The site occupies a sustainable location with good access to local services and public transport links.

3. Description of Development

The proposed development seeks to:

- Change the lawful use from Class A1 to Class A3
- Install an external extractor system to serve the proposed kitchen
- Alter the shopfront, including new signage, canopy and fenestration
- Form a new front entrance door to provide independent access to the existing first-floor residential flat
- Undertake internal alterations to facilitate the new use

No increase in floor area or external built form is proposed.

4. Planning Policy Context

The proposal has been assessed against relevant national and local planning policy, including:

- Planning Policy Wales
- Relevant Local Development Plan policies relating to town centres and commercial uses

- Relevant Local Development Plan policies relating to design, residential amenity and shopfront alterations

Planning Policy Wales promotes:

- The vitality and viability of town centres
- The re-use of vacant premises
- Sustainable development within established settlements
- High-quality, well-designed places

5. Principle of Development

The principle of the proposed change of use is considered acceptable for the following reasons:

5.1 Re-use of Vacant Unit

The unit has been actively marketed for a period exceeding 12 months without securing a tenant for retail (A1) use.

The lack of interest is attributed in part to changing retail dynamics, including the development of a new Aldi supermarket directly opposite the site, which has altered the commercial viability of smaller retail units in this location.

As a result, the continued use of the premises as A1 retail is no longer considered viable.

5.2 Supporting Town Centre Vitality

The proposed A3 use will:

- Bring a vacant unit back into active use
- Increase footfall and activity within the area
- Contribute positively to the local economy

Food and drink uses are recognised as important components of diverse and resilient town centres.

5.3 Suitability of the Applicant

The applicant has extensive experience operating A3 establishments, and is well placed to successfully operate the proposed use at this location.

This increases confidence that the unit will be occupied and sustained long-term, avoiding continued vacancy.

6. Design, Access and Residential Amenity of the Flat

The proposed external works are limited to the front elevation and are designed to be sympathetic to the character of the existing building and the wider streetscene. The new shopfront will incorporate white uPVC framing, a stallriser and fanlights, consistent with the scale and proportions of the existing frontage.

A new, independent front door is proposed to serve the existing first-floor residential flat. This formalises separate, dedicated access to the residential accommodation, ensuring the flat remains functionally independent from the ground floor commercial unit and safeguarding the amenity and security of its occupier. No changes to the layout or use of the first-floor flat itself are proposed.

Signage is proposed at a scale and position consistent with other commercial frontages in the vicinity and will be the subject of a separate advertisement consent application where required.

7. Flood Risk

The site lies within Flood Zone 3 (defended).

The proposal:

- Does not increase building footprint
- Does not introduce highly vulnerable uses such as residential accommodation
- Represents a change between commercial uses at ground floor level only

A Flood Consequences Assessment (FCA) has been commissioned and will accompany the application to demonstrate that the development is acceptable in accordance with TAN 15.

8. Amenity Considerations

The proposal is not expected to give rise to unacceptable impacts on neighbouring or residential amenity.

An extractor ventilation system will be installed, and appropriate mitigation measures will be incorporated to address:

- Noise
- Odour

The formation of a new, separate front entrance to the first-floor flat provides functional separation from the commercial premises below and safeguards the amenity of the residential occupier.

9. Green Infrastructure

A Green Infrastructure Statement accompanies this application.

While the site is constrained, the proposal includes biodiversity enhancements in the form of:

- Bat box provision
- Bird nesting boxes

10. Conclusion

The proposed development represents a sustainable and appropriate re-use of an existing commercial unit.

The continued vacancy of the unit for retail use demonstrates that the existing use is no longer viable. The introduction of an A3 use, together with the associated shopfront alterations and new independent entrance to the first-floor flat, will revitalise the premises, safeguard residential amenity and contribute positively to the local area.

The proposal accords with national and local planning policy and is therefore respectfully recommended for approval.