

OFFICER REPORT

Application Number: P2026/0399

Site Address: 5 Groves Road Neath Neath Port Talbot SA11 1YB

Proposal: Installation of external wall insulation (EWI), solar PV panels, removal of first floor bay window and replace with a flush window, and associated external alterations to the building.

Applicant: Mr Leon Paoletta

Agent: Mr Liam Jones

Ward: Neath South

Application Type: Full Plans

Valid Date: 29th June 2026

Statutory Expiry Date: 23rd August 2026

Ext. of Time / PPA date:

Publicity Expiry Date: 22nd July 2026

RECOMMENDATION - Approved

SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site, located at 5 Groves Road, Neath, comprises of a detached mixed-use building containing five residential flats in addition to one office unit. A pair of semi-detached properties is located to either side of the application site, while Beaufort House temporary accommodation sits to the rear. To the north of the site is the unclassified road 'Groves Road'. The site is within a low-risk coal area.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

This is a full planning application proposing the installation of external wall insulation (EWI), solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, removal of first floor bay window and its replacement with a flush window and associated external alterations to the building.

The external wall insulation would be applied to all external elevations of the building and comprise an over-cladding system including insulation and render finish. The EWI system would be predominantly finished in dash render and would have a depth of approximately 0.05m. A black verge trim would be installed beneath the roof to accommodate the EWI system.

A total of 20 solar PV panels is proposed across two south facing roof planes, comprising 10 panels on each roof plane. Each panel would measure approximately 1.10m in width by 0.90m in height and would project approximately 0.08m above the existing roof plane.

The existing front bay window is located on the first-floor front elevation, positioned to the centre of the building which serves a living roof. This existing window would be removed as part of the proposal and replaced with a new flush window. The new window would be finished in white uPVC to match the existing fenestration.

Associated external alterations would include the removal of decorative corbels from the front and gable elevations, like-for-like replacement of the front and rear entrance doors, boiler flue and gas pipes to be extended, rain water pipes to be removed and relocated, window and door cills to be extended, existing fences, posts and gardens walls adjacent to external elevations to be cut back as required to accommodate the proposed external wall insulation system, new lead flashing at all roof/wall junctions, front door landing to be extended, front door landing to be extended and gable end ladder extension

NEGOTIATIONS

Invalid notice was sent given that no existing and proposed site plans were submitted.

PLANNING HISTORY

The application site has the following relevant planning history: -

- N1990/0056. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF FIVE FLATS. APPROVED 24/04/1990.

CONSULTATIONS

NEATH TOWN COUNCIL- Consulted on 30/06/2026. No response received.

ENERGY DEPARTMENT- Consulted on 30/06/2026. No response received.

BIODIVERSITY UNIT- Consulted on 30/06/2026. No objection to the proposal.

CONTAMINATED LAND- Consulted on 30/06/2026. The following comments were provided:

“Looking at the plans all of the works appear to be above ground and on the existing building and as such we would not need to comment from a contaminated land perspective”.

WARD MEMBERS- Notified on 30/06/2026. No objections to the application.

REPRESENTATIONS

The neighbouring properties were consulted on 01/07/2026.

A site notice was also displayed on 01/07/2026.

In response, to date no representations have been received.

REPORT

National Planning Policy:

[Future Wales: The National Plan 2040](#) is the national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. The development plan sets out a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and wellbeing of our communities.

The following policies are of particular relevance to the assessment of this application:

Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking

Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure

[Planning Policy Wales \(Edition 12, February 2024\)](#)

The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation and resultant duties such as the Socio-economic Duty. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places

PPW promotes action at all levels of the planning process which is conducive to maximising its contribution to the well-being of Wales and its communities. It encourages a wider, sustainable and problem solving outlook which focuses on

integrating and addressing multiple issues rather than on an approach which is fragmented, un-coordinated and deals with issues in isolation. It provides an opportunity to remove any actual or perceived problems in current approaches and stimulate and support innovative and creative ideas as well as high standards of evidence and assessment to underpin the preparation of development plans and strategies and individual proposals. Monitoring and learning from development outcomes so as to drive sustainable improvements in planning practice is also important.

PPW12 is supported by a series of more detailed [Technical Advice Notes](#) (TANs), of which the following are of relevance: -

- TAN 12 – Design

Local Planning Policies

The Local Development Plan for the area comprises the [Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan](#) which was adopted in January 2016, and within which the following policies are of relevance:

- **Policy BE1** Design
- **Policy TR2** Design and Access of New Development
- **Policy EN6** Important Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sites
- **Policy EN7** Important Natural Features

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

The following SPG is of relevance to this application: -

- [Parking Standards](#) (October 2016)
- [Design](#) (July 2017)

Issues

Having regard to the above, the main issues to consider in this application relate to the impact on the visual amenity of the area, the amenities of neighbouring residents and highway safety.

Impact on Visual Amenity

With regard to visual amenity, the proposed development would result in a number of alterations to the external appearance of the existing building through the installation of external wall insulation (EWI), solar PV panels, removal of the existing first-floor bay window and associated external alterations.

The existing building is predominantly characterised by facing brickwork. The proposed EWI would be applied across all external elevations and would mostly comprise a cream-coloured dash render. As such, the proposal would result in a noticeable change to the external appearance of the building. Given that EWI would be applied consistently across the elevations, it would consider complementing the host building. The EWI would project approximately 0.05m from the existing elevations and, given its limited depth, would not materially alter the overall scale, form or massing of the building.

With regard to the removal of the existing first floor bay window, whilst the removal of the bay window would alter the appearance of the existing building, the replacement window would remain appropriately positioned within the elevation and would be of a design and finish consistent with the existing fenestration.

In terms of the proposed solar PV panels, these would be positioned across two south-facing roof planes, comprising 10 panels on each roof plane. Given their 0.08m projection, they would be somewhat visible within the surrounding area, however their limited projection and positioning on the rear roof slopes would ensure that they would not appear unduly prominent or visually intrusive.

The associated works are predominantly consequential works required to facilitate the installation of the EWI. Given their relatively minor nature, these alterations would not consider resulting in any significant adverse visual impacts.

In light of the aforementioned information, it is not considered that the proposed development would undermine the overall appearance, design and finishes of the existing property, nor would it detract from the character and appearance of the streetscene. As such, it is considered that the proposal would comply with Policy BE1 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Impact on Residential Amenity

Due to the minor increase in the depth of the external elevations as result of the EWI, in addition to the limited projection of the solar panels, it is not considered that these elements would result in a material increase in the scale or massing of the building and would not give rise to any unacceptable overbearing, overshadowing. Furthermore, the replacement of the existing first-floor bay window with a flush window would not introduce any additional window openings or result in greater overlooking issues.

Accordingly, having regard to the nature of the proposed works, the development would not result in any unacceptable loss of privacy, overlooking overbearing or overshadowing impact upon the neighbouring properties of 3 & 9 Groves Road.

Taking the above into account, it is not considered that the development will adversely affect the residential amenity of any of the surrounding properties. It is therefore considered that the proposal would comply with Policy BE1 of the Local Development Plan.

Parking and Access Requirements and Impact on Highway Safety

Due to the nature of the works, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any highway and pedestrian safety issues. The development as such is sought to be in accordance with Policy TR2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

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) 12 sets out that;

The quality of the built environment should be enhanced by integrating green infrastructure into development through appropriate site selection and use of creative design. With careful planning and design, informed by an appropriate level of assessment, green infrastructure can embed the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services into new development and places, help to overcome the potential for conflicting objectives, and contribute to health and well-being outcomes.

A green infrastructure statement should be submitted with all planning applications. This will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed and will describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal. In the case of minor development this will be a short description and should not be an onerous requirement for applicants. The green infrastructure statement will be an effective way of demonstrating positive multi-functional outcomes which are appropriate to the site in question and must be used for demonstrating how the step-wise approach (Paragraph 6.4.15 of PPW 12) has been applied.

In this case the development will provide one bat box to be affixed to the west elevation of the property and 1 swift nest brick to be affixed to the east elevation of the property which will be secured by a suitably worded condition. A green infrastructure statement has been submitted in line with the planning application. The statement outlines that the proposed works represent a sustainable upgrade to the existing building. Green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement has been integrated into the scheme in a proportionate manner that is fully compliance with national and local policy.

A bat survey report was also submitted, to which the Authority's biodiversity provided no objection subject to the following condition to be attached to the decision notice:

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations outlined in:

Section 4 of the Bat Survey Report by I&G Ecological Consulting, dated 12th June 2026.

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 (Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking & Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure) and the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (2011–2026) adopted January 2016.

It is considered that the proposal represents an appropriate form of development that would have no unacceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring residents, visual amenity of the area or highway and pedestrian safety. Accordingly, the proposed development is in accordance with Policies BE1 (Design) and TR2 (Design and Access of New Development) of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

It is further considered that the decision complies with Future Wales - the National Plan 2040 (Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking & Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure) (and the Council's well-being objectives and the sustainable development principle in accordance with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

RECOMMENDATION

Approved

Subject to the following conditions/reasons, which have been imposed for the reasons stated:-

Time Limit Conditions

- 1 The development shall begin no later than five years from the date of this decision.

Reason:

To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

List of Approved Plans

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

-067-DOM-SITE LOCATION PLAN-XX-DR-N-B_Grove Road 005
-067-DOM-PLA-XX-DR-N-B_Grove Road 005_4805-SITE PLAN P2
-067-DOM-PLA-XX-DR-N-B_Grove Road 005_4801-EXISTING FLOOR
PLANS
-067-DOM-PLA-XX-DR-N-B_Grove Road 005_4802-PROPOSED FLOOR
PLANS
-067-DOM-PLA-XX-DR-N-B_Grove Road 005_4803-EXISTING
ELEVATIONS
-067-DOM-PLA-XX-DR-N-B_Grove Road 005_4804-PROPOSED
ELEVATIONS
-Bat Survey Report for 5 Groves Road 2026 -FINAL
-Planning and Green Infrastructure Statement - June 2026

Reason:
In the interests of clarity.

Action Conditions

- 3 The approved scheme of ecological enhancement measures indicated on document 'Planning and Green Infrastructure Statement - June 2026' shall be implemented and completed prior to the first beneficial use of the development hereby approved and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason:
In the interests of Biodiversity and to provide a net benefit to Biodiversity 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.

- 4 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations outlined in: Section 4 of the Bat Survey Report by I&G Ecological Consulting, dated 12th June 2026.

Reason:
In the interest of protected species and to accord with Policy SP15 of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.

Case Officer	Lowri Jones
Telephone No.	01639 686740
Date of Recommendation	21st August 2026