

**Application Number:** DM/2019/01804

**Proposal:** Change of use of ground floor from a gymnasium and exercise centre to a facility for rough sleepers provided by a project run in partnership with Monmouthshire County Council and Gwent Police. The facility will be operational in the winter months, initially from January to the beginning of March, but may run to the end of March according to need and the availability of suitably checked and trained volunteers

**Address:** Nelson Museum and Local History Centre, Old Market Hall, Priory Street, Monmouth

**Applicant:** The Revd. Catherine Haynes

**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE**

Case Officer: Mr. David Wong  
Date Valid: 04.11.2019

**This application is presented to Planning Committee because the premises is owned by Monmouthshire County Council**

**1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS**

1.1 This application is for a change of use of the ground floor from a gymnasium and exercise centre to a facility for rough sleepers. The premises in question was a back office space within the Old Market Hall on Priory Street, Monmouth, which is owned by Monmouthshire County Council. There will no alterations to the external appearance of the premises as a result of this proposal. The application indicates that this facility will operate in the winter months, from January to March, on a yearly arrangement.

1.2 In terms of the rules of the facility, the arrival time would be 6pm to 7pm every day of the week. The proposal is to provide an evening meal and the guests must leave the premises by 8am the next morning. Also, the guests must arrive free from the influence of alcohol and illegal drugs. It is proposed to have eight camp beds within the facility and there will be staff on site to manage the facility. There will be only be one entrance for the premises (onto Priory Street).

**2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (if any)**

<b>Reference Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Decision Date</b>
-------------------------	--------------------	-----------------	----------------------

DC/2007/01551	Proposed installation of a heritage blue plaque on the east end elevation of the building.	Approved	30.04.2008
DC/1994/00171	Installation of Roller Shutters And Gate Internally.	Approved	25.05.1994
DC/1974/00191	Internal Alts & Fittings APP_TYP 01 = Full DEV_TYP 05 = Alteration MAP_REF = 350880213000	Approved	21.05.1974
DC/1994/00105	Removal Of Medium Amosite, Asbestos.	Permission Not Required	10.03.1994
DC/2000/00047	Exterior Fascia Signing For Museum and Post Office.	Refused	09.05.2000

### **3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES Strategic**

#### **Policies**

S13 LDP Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment S16  
LDP Transport  
S17 LDP Place Making and Design

#### **Development Management Policies**

DES1 LDP General Design Considerations  
EP1 LDP Amenity and Environmental Protection HE1 LDP  
Development in Conservation Areas  
MV1 LDP Proposed Developments and Highway Considerations RET2 LDP  
Central Shopping Areas

### **4.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY Planning**

#### **Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 10**

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 as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation. A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places.

The planning system should create sustainable places which are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly. Development proposals should create the conditions to bring people together, making them want to live, work and play in areas with a sense of place and well-being, creating prosperity for all.

### **5.0 REPRESENTATIONS**

#### 5.1 Consultation Replies

**Monmouth Town Council** – response awaited.

#### **MCC Housing -**

1. The project is a Monmouth Churches project which is being supported by MCC. It's not an MCC project. Nor is it a project between MCC and the Police. The Police, however, are aware of the project and have no objections in principal to the proposal.
2. Housing & Communities are supportive of the proposal for the following reasons: It will mitigate against the need to sleep rough and will potentially offer emergency respite accommodation; the proposal will complement existing provision by the Council; the proposal will effectively extend and enhance emergency housing provision in Monmouthshire; the proposal will be operationally integrated into the Council's homeless procedures e.g. referrals will be through the Housing Options Team and in the event of anyone using the night-shelter, the Council will use the night-shelter to engage with any individuals and provide advice and assistance about moving on to more sustainable accommodation. In addition the proposal supports Welsh Government policy to tackle rough sleeping.

**MCC Environmental Health** – I have considered the information provided on the planning website in relation to this application and have no objections to make.

**MCC Heritage Management** – No objection. The application site is a building listed Grade II in 1952 for its special historic and architectural interest as 'part of an important piece of early C19 town planning in the Monmouth centre.' (Cadw 2005). The building is also within the Monmouth Town Conservation Area and Area of Archaeological Sensitivity. As such, any applications should seek to preserve the special interest for which the building is designated. However, as this application seeks no more than a change of use class and proposes no physical

change to the fabric or appearance of the building, no Listed Building Consent is required; nor is there considered to be any effect on the special interest for which the building is listed.

LERC Search Results - There are significant ecological records identified within close proximity of the site.

## **6.0 EVALUATION**

### 6.1 Principle of Development

6.1.1 This application supports Welsh Government policy to tackle rough sleeping. There is no specific planning policy within the Monmouthshire Local Development Plan (LDP) that relates to this particular type of application i.e. a night shelter. Therefore, the proposal is treated on its own planning merits.

### 6.2 Design

6.2.1 There is no physical alteration to the external appearance of the premises, which is in compliance with Policy DES1 of the LDP. Therefore, no issue of this kind is anticipated.

### 6.3 Impact on Amenity

6.3.1 This facility will be used by a wide range of customers. There would be strict 'house rules' for the users to comply with and the facility will be managed by trained staff on site who will oversee the facility, including dealing with any potential anti-social behaviour which may occur. In addition, the Police have no objections in principle to the proposal. They are aware of this project and are working closely with the staff.

6.3.2 The Council's Housing Department has advised that it is in support of this application as it will mitigate against the need to sleep rough and will potentially offer emergency respite accommodation. This proposal will effectively extend and enhance emergency housing provision in Monmouthshire. In addition, the Council will use the night-shelter to engage with any individuals and provide advice and assistance about moving on to more sustainable accommodation. Furthermore, the proposal supports Welsh Government policy to tackle rough sleeping.

6.3.3 In conclusion, there are strict rules for the staying guests and the facility will be managed by trained staff. The Police are aware of this project and would provide assistance when necessary. In addition, this project is being supported by the Council's Housing Department. Therefore, it should be a well managed facility that would not harm the amenity of nearby households in flats opposite the site. The proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy EP1 of the LDP.

### 6.4 Access/ Traffic generation

6.4.1 This is a change of use application with no alteration to the external appearance of the premises. In addition, the nature of the application means there is unlikely to be significant vehicular movements associated with the proposal. Staff would be able to park at the rear of the premises if needed. Thus, the proposal would be in accordance with Policy MV1 of the LDP.

### 6.5 Retail & Commercial Centres

6.5.1 The site is within the Central Shopping Area (CSA). Therefore, Policy RET2 of the LDP is relevant in this instance. The thrust of this policy is to maintain active frontages at the ground floor for safeguarding the vitality, attractiveness and viability of the defined CSAs. The premises is located on the edge of the Monmouth CSA and has no direct shopfront on Priory Street, only a door entrance. In addition, there will be no change to the appearance of the premises. Furthermore, the opening hours of the facility are between 6pm and 9am the next morning. Therefore, this facility should have minimal impact upon the vitality, attractiveness and viability of the Monmouth CSA.

### 6.6 Historic Environment

6.6.1 The site is within the Monmouth Conservation Area (Policy HE1 of the LDP) and is a Grade II listed building. There is no change to the external appearance of the premises and the internally

there would only be a re-arrangement of furniture. Therefore, this application will preserve the setting of this part of the Monmouth Conservation Area and the character and appearance of the listed building. The Council's Heritage Management Department has no objection to this application; an informative is requested. The site is also within an Archaeologically Sensitive Area. However, this is a change of use application with no ground disturbance proposed. Therefore, no archaeological implications are involved.

#### 6.7 Biodiversity

6.7.1 There are significant ecological records identified within close proximity of the site through the LERC Search Results. However, this is a change of use application and there will be no disturbance to the fabric of the premises. Therefore, no further ecological assessment is requested.

#### 6.8 Flooding

6.8.1 The site is not within a flood zone.

#### 6.9 Water (including foul drainage / SuDS)

6.9.1 There is no change to this element.

#### **6.10 Response to the Representations of Third Parties and Monmouth Town Council**

6.10.1 The response from Monmouth Town Council is awaited.

#### **6.11 Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

6.11.1 The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales has been considered, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the WBFG Act). In reaching this recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been taken into account and it is considered that this recommendation is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers' well-being objectives set out in section 8 of the WBFG Act.

#### **6.12 Conclusion**

6.12.1 It is considered that this application is in accordance with Policies DES1, EP1, HE1, MV1 and RET2 of the LDP. Therefore, this application is recommended for approval.

#### **7.0 RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE**

1 This development shall be begun within 5 years from the date of this permission.

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

2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the list of approved plans set out in the table below.

REASON: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings, for the avoidance of doubt.

3 There shall be no more than eight staying guests staying overnight during the hereby approved months and no other means of sleeping accommodation on the site at any one time.

REASON: To ensure compliance with the approved plans.

4 Only one entrance for the premises shall be allowed at any time once the facility is in operation.

REASON: To ensure a coordinated layout.

5 The premises shall not be used for the approved purposes outside the following months, January to March, of each calendar year.

REASON: To reflect the nature of this planning application.

## **INFORMATIVES**

1 Due to the minor nature of the proposed development (including any demolition) and the location of the proposed development, it is considered that the proposals did not need to be screened under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.

2 Please note that Bats are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This protection includes bats and places used as bat roosts, whether a bat is present at the time or not. If bats are found during the course of works, all works must cease and Natural Resources Wales contacted immediately. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) (0300 065 3000).

3 All birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The protection also covers their nests and eggs. To avoid breaking the law, do not carry out work on trees, hedgerows or buildings where birds are nesting. The nesting season for most birds is between March and September.

4 Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust's record is not definitive in the area of the proposal and features may be disturbed during the course of the work. In this event, please contact the Trust on 01792 655208.

5 Please note any physical changes to the buildings fabric should first be confirmed with MCC Heritage Department as not requiring consent before implementing. Fixtures, fittings and general decoration are not controlled under consent and can be carried out as required.