

Application Number: DM/2019/00362

Proposal: Proposed internal alterations and external amendments to South West corner.

Address: Caldicot Library, Woodstock Way, Caldicot, NP26 5DB

Applicant: Monmouthshire County Council

Plans: Location Plan Location Plan - , Elevations - Proposed PL001 - , Floor Plans - Proposed A9469/02 - A,

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Case Officer: Mrs Helen Hinton
Date Valid: 08.03.2019

This application is presented to Planning Committee as it involves alterations to a Council owned building

1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS

1.1 The application seeks full planning permission for extensions and alterations to the Caldicot Library building.

1.2 The plans submitted in support of the application detail the following alterations:

External -

* Development of a new entrance lobby in the north-western corner of the building to replace an existing right angled window feature. The new entrance would measure at its greatest 7.4m wide, 3.4m deep with a maximum height of 2.4m which would fit beneath the existing roof canopy overhang. The lobby would be fully glazed.

* Removal of existing raised planters adjacent to the north-western corner of the building to facilitate the provision of a new level access with drop kerb and tactile paving as required and erection of a 2.5m high screen panel, constructed from a low level wall with cedar louvre panel above, to the south of the new entrance.

* Removal of two existing windows in the western elevation and development of a 2.3m wide, 0.6m deep, 2.4m high, bay window feature;

* Installation of a wrap around brise soleil on parts of the northern, western and southern elevation;

* Replacing parts of the existing brick finish with render panels and timber cladding on parts of the northern and western elevations;

* Provision of new landscaping adjacent to the western and part of the southern elevation and a bench seat

Internal-

* Development of a number of enclosed offices, interview rooms, conference/ meeting rooms and staff facilities;

* Removal of the existing internal glazed lobby, adjacent to the southern elevation opening

Site Appraisal

1.3 The building the subject of the current application comprises a detached, single storey building, located within the Central Shopping Area and development limits of Caldicot. The building is positioned to the south-east of the primary retail frontage and to the north-west of the Asda supermarket.

1.4 Vehicular access is gained via Woodstock Way to the south-west, with a pedestrianised area to the south-east of the building linking with Asda and Chepstow Road.

1.5 The building is finished externally with brick-faced elevations, a concrete tile roof and powder coated aluminum frame windows and doors. Pedestrian access to all of the facilities is currently gained via a set of double doors in the southern elevation.

1.6 The building is a multi-use space, currently accommodating the library, council enquiries, housing benefits and council tax advice departments, community education facilities, gateway credit union and various advice and drop-in sessions.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (if any)

Reference Number	Description	Decision	Decision Date
DM/2019/00362	Proposed internal alterations and external amendments to South West corner.	Pending Determination	
DC/2017/00177	Non material amendments in relation to planning permission DC/2015/00233 (materials)	Approved	09.03.2017
DC/2015/00233	Public realm and pedestrian linkage improvement works.	Approved	07.05.2015

3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Strategic Policies

S5 LDP Community and Recreation Facilities
S13 LDP Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment
S17 LDP Place Making and Design

Development Management Policies

RET2 LDP Central Shopping Areas
EP1 LDP Amenity and Environmental Protection
NE1 LDP Nature Conservation and Development
MV1 LDP Proposed Developments and Highway Considerations
DES1 LDP General Design Considerations

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

Caldicot Town Council - Recommends approval

SEWBRc Search Results - No significant ecological record identified.

5.2 Neighbour Notification

The application has been advertised by direct neighbour notification and the erection of a site notice.

No objections or representations have been received.

6.1 EVALUATION

6.2 Strategic & Spatial Choices

Strategic Planning/ Development Plan context/ Principle of Development

6.2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for a number of external and internal alterations to the existing Caldicot Library building. The building is located within the central shopping area (CSA) and development limits of Caldicot as defined by the proposals map of the Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan (LDP).

6.2.2 The works proposed as part of the application constitute one of the strategic schemes proposed as part of the Caldicot Town Centre Regeneration Programme which seeks to unlock new economic opportunities in the south-east Severnside area. After a full assessment of priority towns by Cardiff Capital Region, Caldicot has been identified as a key priority for the region. This is in response to growth opportunities recognised via the confirmation to abolish the Severn Bridge

Tolls in December 2018, its centrality, road infrastructure and close proximity to the high growth border areas of the South West and the 'Midlands Engine'.

6.2.3 Although the library building already serves as a multi-use facility/ service space, the alterations indicated also seek to facilitate the development of a local enterprise and co-working space within Caldicot's Community Hub which will enhance access for residents, visitors and employees to local services and advice and also support existing and new businesses in the town.

6.2.4 Being mindful that the works would provide enhanced community facilities within the established settlement and CSA which in turn would help attract, encourage and maintain footfall to the benefit of the CSA's vitality, attractiveness and viability, the principle of development is considered acceptable and compliant with the requirements of policies S5 and RET2 of the LDP.

Good Design/ Place making

6.2.5 Public access to the building is currently gained via a set of double doors in the southern elevation adjacent to the pedestrianised part of Woodstock Way and the side elevation of Asda. Although there are a number of large feature windows around the building, it is not immediately apparent where the principal access is located. It is therefore considered that the additional entrance in the western elevation would address Woodstock Way and the parking area to west and in turn may make the building more legible and inviting to use.

6.2.6 The alterations indicated are considered de minimis in their overall scale and impact. Although the works would introduce new materials, these are considered to be in-keeping with the overall palette of material in the wider area and the vision of the CSA as a whole. The application is therefore considered compliant with the requirements of policies S17 and DES1 of the LDP.

Impact on Amenity

6.2.7 It is considered that the alterations proposed as part of the development would help update the external appearance and attractiveness of the building and make the centre a key venue for accessing information and services. It is felt that the provision of enhanced facilities and services from the premises would bring benefits to the vitality and general amenity of the building and wider area. The application is therefore considered compliant with the requirements of policies S17 and EP1 of the LDP.

The Welsh Language

6.2.8 The building already provides a number of community education services. However the alterations proposed would enhance meeting and conference room facilities which could in turn be used to provide education courses including those for Welsh learners.

6.2.9 The future well-being of the Welsh language is dependent upon a wide range of factors, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities and places. It is felt that the alterations proposed in conjunction with the wider regeneration scheme could help facilitate and foster these provisions and in doing so could contribute to the use of Welsh language within the area.

6.2 Active and Social Places

Access / Highway Safety

6.2.1 Although the application seeks de-minimis alterations to the external fabric of the building, the internal alterations and intensified use of the building could generate increased trips to the site. Being mindful of the scale of the extensions and alterations proposed, the site's location within the CSA which benefits from a number of bus stops, good pedestrian links to the wider area and the existing parking provision in close proximity, it is considered that the development proposed would not generate a significant increase in the number of vehicle movements or demand for parking that could not be accommodated within the immediate area. The provision of enhanced facilities and services at the site, in conjunction with the building's location within the CSA may encourage users to make multi-location visits as part of the one trip. It is therefore considered that the development would not have a detrimental impact on the highway safety and free flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the area and is compliant with the requirements of policies S16 and MV1 of the LDP.

Retail & Commercial Centres

6.2.2 The building is located within the CSA of Caldicot as defined by the proposal map of the LDP. It is considered that the alterations and developments indicated would help increase footfall to the building which in turn could transfer into the CSA to the benefit of the viability and viability of the area, in compliance with the requirements of policies S5 and RET2 of the LDP. It is considered that the alterations to the building indicated would help preserve and enhance community and recreational facilities for the wider community, in compliance with the requirements of Policy S5 of the LDP.

6.3 Productive and Enterprising Places

Economic Development and Tourism

6.3.1 It is considered that development and alterations proposed would make an efficient use of the building and provide enhanced facilities and services for residents. The inclusion and signposting of The Hub in association with the more visible entrance would provide a more attractive offer for tourists seeking a centralised and single point of access for advice and information.

6.4 Distinctive & Natural Places

Landscape/ Visual Impact

6.4.1 It is considered that the alterations to the external appearance of the building would help visually update the premises and would make use of a palette of materials already in use throughout the area and proposed as part of the wider regeneration works. It is felt that the use of a consistent palette of colours, texture and materials can help provide a visual consistency and flow between buildings to the benefit of the wider landscape and visual amenity of the area, in compliance with the requirements of policies S13, EP1 and DES1 of the LDP.

Green Infrastructure and biodiversity

6.4.2 Although the development may result in alterations to the eaves of the building with the insertion of the new entrance, brise soleil and bay window, being mindful of the well maintained status of the building, the internal arrangement of the building, with parts of the accommodation being open to the roof and the site location in the centre of Caldicot with a lack of connecting green infrastructure, it is considered unlikely that the development and alterations proposed would have a detrimental impact on a protected species or the biodiversity value of the site. The application is therefore considered compliant with the requirements of policies S13 and NE1 of the LDP.

6.5 Response to the Representations of Third Parties and/or the Town Council

6.5.1 Following consultation Caldicot Town Council has recommended approval of the application.

Following direct neighbour notification and the erection of a site notice, no public objections or representations have been received.

6.6 Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

6.6.1 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.

6.7 Conclusion

6.7.1 On the basis of the above, it is considered that the development and alterations proposed

would not have a beneficial impact on the character and appearance of the application site and wider area and would not have a detrimental impact on the highway safety and the free flow of traffic in the area. It is considered that the intensified use of the building to provide additional and enhanced community facilities would be beneficial to residents and visitors to the town, and in turn could have a beneficial impact on the vitality and viability of the CSA, within which the site forms part.

6.7.2 On the basis of the above, the application is considered compliant with the relevant policies of the Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

7.1 RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Conditions:

- 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 Samples of the proposed external finishes shall be agreed with the Local Planning Authority in writing before works commence and the development shall be carried out in accordance with those agreed finishes which shall remain in situ in perpetuity unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The samples shall be presented on site for the agreement of the Local Planning Authority and those approved shall be retained on site for the duration of the construction works.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory form of development takes place and to ensure compliance with LDP Policy DES1.