

**Application Number:** DM/2024/00549

**Proposal:** Full planning application for a change of use from C2 (Residential Care Home) to Sui Generis for temporary emergency accommodation for the homeless and associated works

**Address:** Severn View Residential Home, Mounton Road, Chepstow, NP16 5BS

**Applicant:** Monmouthshire County Council Housing

**Plans:** Other SV TRANSPORT PLAN FINAL - , Other MANAGEMENT PLAN - , Floor Plans - Proposed 409/01 - , Other PLANNING STATEMENT - , Block Plan 23008 (05) 001 - , Floor Plans - Proposed 409/02 - , Location Plan - , Other Green Infrastructure Statement by TDA - May 2024, Landscaping Plan TDA 2964.01 Soft landscape proposals

## **RECOMMENDATION: Approve**

Case Officer: Jo Draper  
Date Valid: 07.05.2024

### **1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS**

#### 1.1 Site Description

The site's current use is a residential care home providing 32 bedrooms, with associated parking areas and curtilage. The site measures approximately 0.62 ha, and currently has two access points; a primary access direct from off Mounton Road to the south, and a secondary access via Regent Way. Part of the secondary access to the site via Regent Way lies within the Chepstow Conservation Area, while the main site buildings and associated curtilage lies outside of this Conservation Area.

#### 1.2 Proposal Description

This application submitted by Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) is for the change of use of the building to temporary accommodation for single homeless people. The proposed occupancy of the building would be 17 occupants sleeping in the south wing only. This proposal does not include use of the north wing.

The supporting information makes reference to the north wing potentially being utilised over time and increasing the occupants to 32 but this is not part of this planning application and if proposed would require a separate planning application.

The supporting information makes reference to Monmouthshire Meals as using the commercial kitchen, but this element was removed from the scheme from the outset. This application is for 17 occupants only with supporting staff.

The current buildings on site would be utilised to accommodate the proposed change of use, with no additional built form or extensions proposed to facilitate this. There are minor changes proposed, the south facing windows on both floors looking out onto Mounton Road are to be obscure glazed to protect privacy for both the residents of Severn View and the neighbouring properties to the south that face onto Mounton Road.

Within the site it is proposed to erect internal boundaries to restrict movement to the western part of the site. Residents will not have access to the rear of the site without supervision; all access will

be directed via Regent Way. Mounton Way will provide vehicle access for staff, support services and deliveries. Further management measures proposed include appropriate external lighting to be installed, an emergency number is to be given to neighbours of the site, as well as an evening number for any issues that may arise during the night.

Currently, the building is empty following Social Care vacating the building in March 2024. (Residents of the Care Home have been moved from the site and are due to move into a new modern facility, which has been developed at Crick).

A Transport Plan has been submitted with this proposal.

During the previous use by Social Care there were an estimated 15 staff on the premises each day, with the addition of family, contractors, visiting professionals and agencies visiting throughout the day. There is ample parking on site to allow for this.

This proposal sets out that there would be between four/ five support workers visiting the site on a regular basis to provide housing-related support to the 17 occupants. Residents are not permitted personal visitors to the site. Visiting professionals and staff from various agencies and projects may call at the site each day for support visits.

The proposal seeks to provide the following ancillary services:

1:1 Housing support for residents;

A support hub accessed by the local community by prior arrangement;

A hub for professionals delivering homeless, housing support;

This 1:1 housing support is delivered through a floating support arrangement during normal office hours. (From 1st April 2025, it is intended that a dedicated and bespoke support package will be available and procured through the impending recommissioning of the Housing Support Grant Programme).

The supporting information provided with the application states that as this is Council-owned property with available space and facilities this is an opportunity to deliver a significantly improved support system for residents. MCC are currently using a number of B&Bs across Monmouthshire; the intention is to close one of these should the Severn View facility open.

The information below shows the difference in staff presence and management of this use between B&B accommodation currently provided compared to that delivered at Severn View.

Proposed staffing of the B&B

The B&B is privately owned. Overall management of the B&B is the responsibility of the owner.

The Council supports the owner with the management through:

- 2 x concierge/security in attendance 24 hours per day.
- A visiting Accommodation Officer during office hours who visits regularly.
- The Senior Accommodation Officer visits periodically during office hours essentially to support the Accommodation Officer and the owner.
- Floating Support Workers attend regularly during office hours. The number of Floating Support Workers varies from week to week. The Floating Support Workers are allocated to individuals and not the building and have no responsibilities towards the building or its management. Support Workers and the Accommodation Officer may work jointly with individual residents.
- Staff from other statutory agencies may visit residents at the building.

Proposed Staffing of Severn View.

Being a MCC owned asset the management of the building is the complete responsibility of MCC.

- A full-time Scheme Co-Ordinator will be appointed to directly oversee the management of the building and co-ordinate its use during office hours, including overseeing maintenance and service arrangements.

- 2 x concierge/security will be in attendance 24 hours per day, responsibilities include operating the door system, logging of all visitors throughout the day and providing overnight security for the property and grounds monitoring of external and internal CCTV (which is to be installed as part of this proposal).

- 2 x Housing Support Workers will be appointed. The Support Workers will be based at Severn View and will be a dedicated resource for residents at Severn View. They will be required

to have a knowledge of the building and in the context of supporting residents, will be expected to support the use and running of the building.

- The property will be absorbed into the management patch of one of the Accommodation Officers. They will be required to attend and visit as close as possible to daily. The Accommodation Officer will be required to work from the building and use it as a hub for wider community visits in the local area.
- The Senior Accommodation officer and the Housing Options Team Manager will visit regularly.
- A part-time cleaner will be allocated to Severn View through the Council's building cleaning support services, who will work closely with the Scheme Co-Ordinator.
- The wider Accommodation Officers, homeless staff and Housing Support Grant Team will be encouraged to use the building e.g. case meetings, team meetings, strategy meetings.
- Staff from other statutory agencies are expected to visit residents at the building.

(Communal areas will also be cleaned. Residents will be required to sign an Occupation Contract, setting out their obligations. Failure to meet these obligations could result in the Council serving notice and applying to the courts for possession, with a view to being evicted. This will be in line with the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 homeless duties and the Homeless Code of Guidance).

The supporting information states this scheme looks to deliver a much-needed temporary accommodation service, seeking to provide the following outcomes and benefits:

- The provision of temporary accommodation on a more cost effective and sustainable basis
- Reduced use of B&Bs and reduced associated expenditure;
- The delivery of more effective individual housing support, improving preparation to move-on to independent living. The aim is to reduce the time people spend in temporary accommodation;
- Improved continuity for the delivery of housing support;
- Increased access to housing and other types of support;
- Improved professional networking; and
- Contributing to the Council's Trauma informed approach to homelessness and Rapid Rehousing.

The supporting information states that the Council has a requirement to transform the delivery of homelessness to a Rapid Rehousing approach and as part of this, the Council's Housing Options Team are seeking to minimise the use of B&B Accommodation for homeless households due to financial limitations. It is also the Council's ambition to offer up temporary accommodation, which is more fit for purpose and in line with the Council's statutory responsibilities under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 imposes duties on Local Housing Authorities to develop strategies to prevent homelessness whilst also providing help for those threatened with homelessness. Accordingly, the re-use of the site for temporary housing would allow MCC to house those individuals most in need within the region and to meet immediate housing pressures.

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

<b>Reference Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Decision Date</b>
DM/2024/00549	Full planning application for a change of use from C2 (Residential Care Home) to Sui Generis for temporary emergency accommodation for the homeless and associated works.	Pending Determination	

## **3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES**

### **Strategic Policies**

S1 LDP The Spatial Distribution of New Housing Provision  
S13 LDP Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment  
S17 LDP Place Making and Design

## **Development Management Policies**

HE1 LDP Development in Conservation Areas  
DES1 LDP General Design Considerations  
EP1 LDP Amenity and Environmental Protection  
GI1 LDP Green Infrastructure  
NE1 LDP Nature Conservation and Development  
LC5 LDP Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character  
EP3 LDP Lighting  
MV1 LDP Proposed Developments and Highway Considerations

## **4.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY**

### **Future Wales - the national plan 2040**

Future Wales is the national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a development plan with 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 well-being of our communities. Future Wales - the national plan 2040 is the national development framework and it is the highest tier plan, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a framework which will be built on by Strategic Development Plans at a regional level and Local Development Plans. Planning decisions at every level of the planning system in Wales must be taken in accordance with the development plan as a whole.

### **Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 12**

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.

## **5.0 REPRESENTATIONS**

### 5.1 Consultation Replies

**Chepstow Town Council:** Refusal on the basis that there has not been enough public consultation and echoes the concerns of the objections of local residents online. Members discussed the application at length and noted the number of objections online. In addition, concerns were raised regarding proximity to children's nursery, access to the site, position near to a pharmacy and safe space for the residents. It was also noted that there is an issue of homelessness within the County and the Town and that the County Council have an obligation to provide provision at that wherever this is located it will be an issue.

**MCC Ecology:** No objection subject to conditions

The site is a former residential home that is proposed to be used as temporary accommodation for homeless people. There are no proposed structural changes or changes to the grounds of the property. There is unlikely to be a direct impact on features suitable for use by protected or priority species, and no loss of habitat. As stated by the planning statement some cosmetic works to the building may be required; the applicant is reminded that active bird nests are protected features and timing of works must be undertaken to avoid impacts on nests, if present.

All planning decisions must result in maintained and enhanced ecological networks and must deliver net benefits for biodiversity. The proposal includes existing grass areas to be converted to

wildflower habitat and new tree planting to provide ecological enhancements. The biodiversity officer is satisfied this is a suitable intervention at this site to provide net benefit for biodiversity, and recommend the relevant plans are secured with a condition if you are minded to grant this permission.

**MCC Landscape:** No objection subject to conditions

The site is located in an urban setting within the Chepstow settlement and currently consists of an existing complex of buildings within generally amenity landscaped grounds. The existing buildings are generally brick with concrete tiled roofs, white framed windows and doors, boundaries are a mix of hedge, metal fence and stone walls with slight topographical slopes across the site from Mounon road to Deans hill. Residential areas bound the site with ROW pedestrian access via links from Mounon road to Deans hill to the west of the site, open space to the north of the site and operational fire station and health centres the east of the site. The proposal seeks a COU of the site. The planning statement highlights that there is to be no additional built form or requirement for additional parking. All works proposed are primarily internal. Existing landscaping is to be maintained, retained and enhanced through improvements to GI.

The statement 5.22 indicates no removal of any on site GI and features such as trees. The applicant has provided detailed planting plan which is welcome which indicates 3 new tree species (8 trees as per plan ref TDA.2964.01) . The plan also indicates changes to the management regime of existing grassland areas to that of wildflowers with an inclusion of overseeding with yellow rattle. The plan indicates broad aftercare prescriptions for the proposed landscaping. The GI statement provided describes the existing GI assets. The proposals indicated in the statement are for 7 new trees and 650m<sup>2</sup> of improved grassland for the benefit of pollinators with establishment and aftercare.

It is considered from a Landscape and GI perspective that the proposal is acceptable and the additional landscaping interventions will be proportionate to the development scale and impact. It is noted that the grounds are relatively extensive and also include boundary hedges, trees, shrubs and amenity grassland. The management prescriptions relate to the proposed interventions only and it is not clear who will be responsible for aftercare and how the GI assets identified for the whole site will be managed within the context of new proposals. It is suggested that a GI management plan be produced for the whole site that includes all GI assets both existing and proposed so that management of existing takes into consideration aims and objectives. This can be provided prior to determination or as a condition of approval should the application progress.

With regard to the landscaping the scheme presented is proportionate and acceptable for the proposed development. The only additional measures required relates to bolstering the common boundary for the stretch between Deans Hill and the internal access way connecting to Regent Way.

Suggestions in terms of suitable plants to bolster boundaries for the development site the following could be considered:-

Bolstering existing hedging

The plans indicate an existing hedge to the W/NW boundary which could be enhanced both width and density with additional planting in the form of suitable evergreens, not necessarily native, in 2L pots (or larger for more immediate impact) for this urban setting such as:-

Laurel (*Prunus lusitanica*)

Photinia ( *Photinia red robin x fraseri*)

Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)

Bolstering boundary with additional smaller trees (std trees in pots or bare root for winter planting )

Ornamental crab apple (*Malus x robusta red sentinel*) and (*Malus sylvestris*)

Ornamental cherry (*Prunus cerasifera 'nigra'*)

Amelanchier canadensis (*Snowy Mespilus*)..can be multi-stemmed

It is proposed that this type of species is included in a revised scheme to be submitted by planning condition.

**MCC Heritage:** No objection

This application proposes a change of use at Severn View Residential Home. The site is located adjacent to Chepstow Conservation Area. It is understood that the application proposes minimal physical changes to the building externally. On that basis, there are no adverse comments in regard to the change of use.

**MCC Surface Water Drainage:** No comment

**MCC Active Travel:** Concerns

The site is located close to the town centre and directly abuts future active travel routes - ensuring that these routes are directly and comfortably accessible from the site will support sustainable transport choices and access to services and public transport from the town centre for residents. MCC-C08A connects the site to the town centre along Mounton Road to the south of the site and is classed by Transport for Wales's Route Impact Tool as a Very High Impact route. MCC-C08B runs along a pedestrian path to the west of the site, and is a High Impact route. It connects to MCC-17A, a Very High Impact route. These routes are labelled as future routes and so require some work to bring them up to active travel standards.

As identified in the transport statement, the location and use-case of the site would support active travel for residents and staff. We would request the following measures to maximise the location's great potential for active travel:

Gradients in the area are steep. This should be considered in designing for walking, wheeling and cycling.

**Pedestrian access points**

To allow direct and convenient active travel connections to trip attractors, pedestrian access should not be limited to the vehicle access. Pedestrian access should provide a safe and direct connection to the building's pedestrian access, and be signed as appropriate. We would suggest as many as possible, points of connection are shown of 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the map above. For point 1, adding a handrail to steps (point 'a'), on Public Right of Way 355/10/1 between Deans Hill and Welsh St would further improve the accessibility of this short, car-free link route from the site to the library and north town area. For point 2 (vehicle access), either open the separate pedestrian entrance or ensure that pedestrians and wheelchair users are safe using the vehicle access. Currently, pedestrians must walk in the road access to enter the site.

**Cycling access points**

Cycle/wheeled access should not be limited to the vehicle access. It should provide a safe and direct connection from the site's cycle parking to site-edge route connections to trip attractors, and be signed as appropriate.

**Wayfinding**

Signs at access points should support trip planning and wayfinding by active travel.

**Sustainable Travel information pack**

Residents and staff should receive a Sustainable Travel information pack as early as possible in site use/residency - this should include a local walking and cycling routes map and up-to-date public transport information, including how to buy tickets, access nearest bus and rail stops, and access relevant timetables.

**Cycle storage**

The site design should support cycling by making the cycle parking prominent and convenient. Given the use-case, there potential to convert some vehicle parking to cycle parking, and for this to be an efficient use of space for residents, staff and the other groups who share the site. A mix of short and long stay cycle storage could be provided by supplying ground-fixed Sheffield stands and either lockable cycle hangars alongside vehicle parking or a secure cycle storage room inside the building. An open-sided green roof would provide rain cover for cycles and would enhance the GI offer of the site.

**MCC Highway:** No objection

The application proposes the change of use of Severn View nursing Home to emergency accommodation for the homeless. The development is well established with a suitable means of access via Mounton Road and Regent Way with existing parking laid out providing 23 parking spaces. The proposal is located in a sustainable location and within walking distance to all the major amenities and attractors located in Chepstow. If the change of use is delivered as detailed in the Transport Plan, the highway authority do not object, the proposed change of use can be accommodated on site and will not adversely affect the existing local highway network

**MCC Public Rights of Way:** No objection

**MCC Tree Officer:** No objection

There are 25 trees on site with none affected by this development

**Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust:** No objection

The proposed works involve a change of use from C2 (Residential Care Home) to Sui Generis for temporary emergency accommodation for the homeless and associated works. As noted, the building is not listed, and the proposed works do not involve extensive groundworks, therefore, the potential for encountering buried archaeology is considered low.

Given our understanding of the historic environment in the immediate area, it remains our opinion that it is considered unlikely that significant archaeological remains would be encountered during the proposed development, and no adverse impact on the setting of designated assets.

Consequently, as the archaeological advisors to your Members, we have no objections to the positive determination of this application.

**ONR Land Use Planning:** No objection

The proposed development does not present a significant external hazard to the safety of the nuclear site. Therefore, ONR does not advise against this development.

5.2 Neighbour Notification

There have been 183 representations received to date; with the exception of one these forming objections to the proposal. The grounds for objection are summarised below

Concerns for safety of family and property

Deans Hill is a very quiet residential street. There have been many issues with the homeless that are housed with Drugs and alcohol.

Query regarding the security provisions that will be put in place to manage any potential issues; will there be CCTV cameras put into the surrounding streets to ensure neighbour's safety?

Deans Hill has many young families with small children, are there any reassurances that no sex offenders will be housed here, also is this going to be a permanent thing - will it be used to house the homeless indefinitely?

No communication around this at all, one notice on a lamppost outside the building.

We are aware that there will be staff on site during the week but none available on weekends.

Noise disruption from residents.

Noise and light disruption from the amount of vehicles coming and going that will be delivering meals etc.

Reduction in property values.

The use is out of character with area.

There is an economic and social disparity between residents of homeless accommodation and neighbouring properties will cause further social unrest.

Council Tax of existing neighbours to be reduced.

More appropriate locations for this use.

The area does not have the support structure in place.

There is a continuous pattern of the Council approving developments without any evidence of infrastructure improvements to accommodate the new arrivals; roads, doctors, dentists, school places etc. None have increased alongside the population growth. Developers should be paying into a fund to improve the local area, previously Section 106 funding.

There are already a large number of homeless in the town already, some of whom are veterans. It would be outrageous if this proposed accommodation was not being earmarked for them and instead was handed to new arrivals. This needs to be made clear.

Concern expressed about redaction, this implies secrecy. Request that the temporary accommodation is reserved exclusively for homeless people from the local Monmouthshire area, and not an underhand way of homing other people.

The Action Notes clearly detail an expectation of drug use/abuse (with specific provision made for opioid overdose) as well as anti-social behaviour both on-site and in the local area. There is no consideration of prevention merely response, and it suggests only 2 staff will be on-site providing security at any time compared to a capacity of 17- 32 residents. In contrast to the current use as a residential care home for those with dementia, the statement at 5.31 of the Planning Statement (it is considered that the proposed development would not harm residential amenity over and above the existing residential use of the site) would therefore appear to be patently false.

Very little details of the proposed residents are supplied which is very concerning. This is a quiet, family friendly area with a school and many residential properties close by.

Owner of Riverside Nursery School on Regent Way directly impacted by the proposal for a change of use of Severn View Residential Home. Object to the change of use to house the homeless specifically in light of the fact that there is a high probability of drug users and drug use and very little supervision or security proposed.

Shortage of care facilities, should have stayed as this use.

The welfare of the local community could be jeopardised and members of the public put at risk for the following reasons:

No restrictions/legal controls on the type of people accommodated at Severn View (potentially ex-offenders, drug users, sex offenders).

Occupants could re-offend in the immediate area. UK gov data suggests that 25% of offenders re-offend, meaning 4 out of 17 occupants on a continuous basis as and when new people are moved out and in.

People in the immediate vicinity are vulnerable and should be safeguarded including children at Riverside Nursery, those seeking mental health treatments at Hywel Dda, elderly and other vulnerable groups collecting medication at Merricks pharmacy. Residents would have to walk past these facilities to get in and out of the home.

No consultation with residents disrespectful and unacceptable.

No confirmation of delivery and waste collection times. SV confirmed deliveries/collections would be 7am-7pm. Outside these hours is unacceptable. Previously awoken by PHS collections at 3am. No detail on number of security lights and positioning. Existing lights glare through our windows left on, not linked to motion sensors.

No data to evidence the £400k pa saving which is optimistic given the setup and running costs of the facility.

This appears to be driven by MCC's ambition for savings as opposed to housing homeless in a suitable facility and location. What other options have been discounted? The funds generated from the sale of SV could be used to build the required facility in a suitable location where the public are not at risk.

"Homeless" is not defined in proposal. Are these people simply down on their luck? Fleeing domestic abuse? Or perhaps those recently out of incarceration?

No information on the duration of this change of use. Is this for a month? Six months? Indefinitely? Why would the local community be in favour of something, which we do not know enough about.

The other site within Chepstow town centre that houses the "homeless" is without a doubt one of the roughest, least inviting pubs in the area.

The application states that it is only for one wing of the present property to house 30+ "residents" but as soon as this is given the green light the other wing will then be converted for another 30+"residents.

It has been shared publicly that staff training includes specific training in administering Naxalone - a medicine for overdoses on Class A drugs.

A large number of both primary and secondary aged children walk past the site, through The Danes, to their respective schools each day. There is a nursery only 150 yards from the proposed site and residents will be required to walk immediately past parents dropping off young children.

The council not paying the money to better the home for the elderly but will for the homeless.

The redevelopment of the site to house potential offenders will have a direct impact on parents' desire to send their child to the nursery setting as well as cause potential harm to the young people at that setting. There is high risk of anti-social behaviour in the area, which, the children of Chepstow do not need to be subjected to

If this was a zero-tolerance shelter - no drugs, no alcohol, anti-social behaviour was not tolerated and strict vetting occurred prior to residents being allocated a place then my view would be different. However, as it is not I strongly object to this proposal.

It is clear from the management plan that they expect residents to be substance users as it mentions sharps bins (for disposing of needles for IVDU and training staff to use naloxone, which is needed in opiate overdose). It also states the CADRO (Crime and Disorder Reduction Officer) will be involved suggesting that people are likely to be ex-offenders. I do not believe the proposal provides adequate support for 17-32 people and the risk assessments are not capable of managing them safely and definitely do not ensure the safety of the public, in particular the vulnerable members of our community which include the children at the local nursery and schools.



Dean's Hill is not offered any privacy from Severn view overlooking from residents into neighbouring properties and public footpaths.

Site should be redeveloped for residential development in keeping with the area.

Better suited to an affordable housing development with great links to public transport for people who work.

Two security guards are not going to be enough to look after/ manage this amount of people in one facility.

The traffic situation will worsen as people choose to take cars as opposed to walking in proximity of this use.

Witnessed anti-social behaviour outside existing hostel in town centre.

Annual rise in crime figures in area - direct correlation with influx of use of hostels in area.

Chepstow does not have the infrastructure to deal with the many issues that will arise from this use.

The claim this is brown build site and vacant is misguided and dishonest. It has only been vacant since March 2024, a brownfield site implies this is a run-down building but reading the report the building is in good condition as only cosmetic work is needed.

The need for security raises many questions.

An establishment away from a town would better aid their recovery and avoid temptation.

The proposal fails to provide any evidence that the costs and subsequent operational costs have been fully evaluated. Apart from stating that the use of B&Bs is not financially viable no evidence has been provided to support this assertion.

The reports fail to provide any information on the number of homeless people in Monmouth yet this detail is fundamental to the proposal. MCC needs to disclose the average number of individuals who have been provided with B&B accommodation on a quarterly basis over the last 3 years.

The residents will have access to a shared / communal kitchen / lounge, bathroom and laundry facilities. Who will maintain these facilities?

It is doubtful if there is sufficient parking space if another wing is used for families and the kitchen is converted for community meals which will require parking for the staff and vans. The capital costs of converting the buildings need to be quantified. The report mentions the installation of CCTV facilities. What other changes are proposed? What will the services costs be for heat, light etc.

The report refers to a 24 hour concierge service. Why not operate a curfew after 11pm? What other third party providers will be utilised? It is difficult to comprehend how the residents will fund their weekly rent in addition to their living expenses when they are homeless and presumably out of work.

The reports in support of the application have not been written objectively but seek to portray the project in its most favourable light. The conversion of Severn View to a facility for the homeless is a long term commitment but the reports lack sufficient information to demonstrate that the financial costs of the proposal have been fully considered. To claim that the cost of B&Bs is not financially sustainable is not an acceptable evaluation.

I support safe accommodation for homeless people. However location is paramount. I am a substance misuse worker and there is always drug use and antisocial behaviour near these sites regardless of set up. Having this on the door step of a nursery is wildly inappropriate and will impact safety at collection time and what children are exposed to. Even with sharps collection and there are sharps on the floor, broken glass, fights and an increase in theft. This will severely undermine child and parent safety. Not an appropriate location.

Would residents' forensic history be reviewed too? Many homeless people have been through the prison system. Will people convicted of child related offences be included? Or those with convictions relating to arson and property damage?

We will pull our child out of nursery if this goes ahead.

Locating near a pharmacy where softer drugs will be readily available could also be too much temptation leading to relapse.

Nursery caring for over 100 children under 4 years old that sits within 200yds of Severn View.

This tenure of housing exists due to central and local government failures.

Town needs rejuvenation, this proposal is at odds with this.

Many alternative uses for this site that would be of better use to the community, and improve Chepstow for its residents.

Since Mon CC have started to house homeless in the hotel in Chepstow there has been an increase in:

- anti social behaviour.
  - shoplifting.
  - threatening and intimidating behaviour.
  - the use of illegal drugs.
  - the Palmer community centre has been broken into twice and patrons of the Palmer Centre who are elderly and some with dementia have been verbally abused.
  - incidents of affray outside Merrick's chemist on Moun-ton Road have increased between people queuing for the chemist.
- If the redevelopment of the Severn View site were to proceed then the above issues are very likely to get worse.

### 5.3 Other Representations

No further comments received

### 5.4 Local Member Representations

No comment received to date

Please note all representations can be read in full on the Council's website:  
<https://planningonline.monmouthshire.gov.uk/online-applications/?lang=EN>

## **6.0 EVALUATION**

### **6.1 Principle of Development**

The site is located within the settlement boundary for Chepstow within which the principle of development is acceptable, subject to compliance with all other material considerations. The relevant LDP Policy is S1 (The Spatial Distribution of New Housing Provision), this states that the focus for new housing development is within or adjoining the Main Towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth. This proposal is for the re-use of an existing building, currently vacant and previously used for care purposes. Planning policy positively encourages the development at such sites rather than the development of new ones.

The existing use of the site as a Residential Care Home is established. This proposal represents a change of use from social and health care accommodation to accommodation for the homeless. The numbers are less than potential previous occupation as the proposal is for the one wing only. The proposal offers temporary accommodation to individuals in need of such housing in a sustainable location within the settlement boundary of Chepstow, which is in close reach to a range of services, and facilities within Chepstow Town Centre.

The principle is acceptable; the detailed issues to consider are addressed below.

### **6.2 Sustainability**

The site lies in a very sustainable location - in the LDP Chepstow is a 'Main Town'. The site offers ample communal amenity space and associated green infrastructure which is all to be retained. Local facilities are located within a short walking distance and future residents and employees would not be reliant on a car to access essential day-to-day services. The site lies in close proximity to Chepstow Railway Station and nearby bus stops that provide services to nearby towns and villages, and beyond. The site is a sustainable location to accommodate this use.

#### 6.2.1 Good Design

There are no design issues arising from the proposal, as there are no extensions or alterations proposed, the changes proposed are very minor and do not require planning permission. This is a re-use of an existing building,

#### 6.2.2 Place Making

There are neighbour objections that argue that this proposal reduces their sense of place, making residents feel unsafe in their neighbourhood, and concern is driven from perceived problems that currently arise from existing homeless accommodation currently situated within the town centre causing anti-social behaviour. There is concern that this is shifting the problem from the town centre to this location.

There is significant concern regarding how close this use is to a local nursery and a health centre/clinic and neighbours feel that this use has been thrust upon them with little consultation in a bid to save money without consideration of what they consider the implications will be upon the local area.

It is essentially about achieving the right development in the right place; with many objecting to the proposal because they consider that this is not the right place for this type of development.

There are a number of issues to consider when addressing whether this proposal meets the place making agenda. The financial viability of the proposal is not a consideration in this case; the impact of this proposal upon existing neighbouring properties, users and future occupiers of Severn View is what is key in the consideration of this proposal. There is an issue of how this use sits alongside other uses, namely existing residential areas and local facilities including a children's nursery.

A key part of place making is 'people and community'; proposals must "create, integrate, protect, and /or enhance a sense of community and promote equality" (PPW 12). This is a balance; this delivers significantly improved accommodation for homeless residents in a sustainable location. There is integration with this proposal to a point, as this proposal sets out measures to manage pedestrian movement and visitors into the site to minimise impact upon both neighbouring dwellings and services.

There is only one access that is to be used by the residents; this is along Regent Way and there would be surveillance proposed throughout this route with the provision of additional CCTV to ensure this access from Severn View to the main junction with Mounton Road/Thomas Street is monitored by staff from Severn View. It is important to note that Regent Way is a public highway and is not used solely by the residents of Severn View. This is an active street frontage populated by people/users in association with the fire station and the health centre that are served from this highway (the fire station immediately fronts onto the highway). The nursery located at the bottom of Regent Way is on a busy junction with active surveillance from people using the adjacent uses.

There would be 17 Severn View residents as well as staff using Regent Way. This is not a significant intensification over and above the current use that would compromise how this area functions. The concern relates to anti-social behaviour that may arise in the immediate area around the nursery where residents and visitors may meet or congregate and cause disturbance that provides an unsettling environment for users of the nursery. There are limited opportunities along this stretch of Regent Way to stop and meet, it is a route to a destination, be it the Town Centre or returning to Severn View. The health clinic is set back and served off the highway by the car park. A view of the amenity space for Severn View can be seen above this car park from Regent Way, but the levels are radically different, with the car park set well below Severn View. There is also a difference in levels with the nursery, this rises up with a ramped access, the primary entrance point to the nursery is at a much higher level to Regent Way. There are physical obstacles providing a level of separation of the nursery and the highway. The outside space serving the nursery is to the rear of the building. There is also surveillance provided, with a further option for neighbouring properties and local services to contact the team at Severn View directly to address immediately any instances of anti-social behaviour that might cause concern. It is stated in the supporting information that "Incidents of ASB will be tackled promptly through the Senior Accommodation Team Officer and the Accommodation Officer and suitable action taken".

When this is considered alongside the other aspects, namely the change in levels between the nursery and the highway together with the presence of existing and proposed CCTV, this access does not present itself as an area within which anti-social behaviour can easily take place without being immediately noticed and therefore addressed with the measures identified.

The site can also be managed by removing other potential external connection points around the site from access to Severn View residents, containing the site within a given area. It is noteworthy that the other routes are less desirable in terms of distance to local services and shops and potential conflict with traffic, so this does not compromise the residents of Severn View.

The interaction between the proposed use and Deans Hill is restricted to staff movements and deliveries from the Mounton Road vehicle access. The accommodation is in the south wing at the furthest point away from this residential area and screened from this area by the existing building with no external windows facing Deans Hill.

The existing buildings also enclose the outside amenity area. The area to the west of the site (which Deans Hill fronts onto) is restricted to residents and is accessible by staff only. This enables the Severn View residents to enjoy the outside areas and link into the town centre, but this does not filter into the peripheral areas namely to the south and west adjacent to Deans Hill (covered internally by surveillance).

The occupiers at Deans Hill have quoted potential anti-social behaviour on their doorstep as a key reason for concern. However, the resident's amenity space is contained to the east of the buildings, physically separated by the existing buildings. The internal access connecting Severn View to Regent Way to the north east of the site is partly obscured from properties along Deans Hill by the existing landscape buffer with a reasonable separating distance. Furthermore, this area is monitored by surveillance. In addition to the retention of existing landscaping a stronger landscape buffer further bolstering this boundary would be beneficial to increase privacy for both existing neighbouring properties and residents of Severn View, and to reduce noise and disturbance. (A pre-commencement condition requiring a comprehensive scheme of landscaping is recommended should Members approve this proposal).

There is a significant amount of supporting information with this application to demonstrate how the site is to be managed, stating that it is the "Council's aim to create a safe community for both its residents in Severn View as well as those households living in the local area. The Housing Options Team wants to foster an open-door approach for anyone in the community who may want to communicate with the Council about Severn View".

When consideration is given to the site features, including land levels, how the site is to be physically managed to control points of interaction and surveillance and a responsive team of staff, the accommodation of 17 homeless residents in Severn View is not considered to adversely compromise the sense of place and safety currently experienced in this area. There are potentially wider benefits that help to develop a sense of place in the town centre where the current temporary accommodation is located. The residents here will be living in an improved, more supportive and spacious environment where there are opportunities to access on site the required help and support needed to enable these residents to relocate into permanent accommodation.

### 6.2.3 Green Infrastructure

The Green Infrastructure Statement submitted indicates that there is no removal of any on site Green Infrastructure features such as trees. In total the proposals indicated in the statement are for seven new trees and 650m<sup>2</sup> of improved grassland for the benefit of pollinators with establishment and aftercare.

With regard to the landscaping, the scheme presented is proportionate and acceptable for the proposed development. The only additional measures required relate to bolstering the common boundary for the stretch between Deans Hill and the internal access way connecting to Regent Way.

The plans indicate an existing hedge to the west/ north west boundary, which could be enhanced both in width and density with additional planting in the form of suitable evergreen planting with this type of species included in a revised scheme to be submitted by planning condition. This will serve to distract all viewpoints from both within the site looking out and looking in from Deans Hill. Relevant planning conditions are proposed securing a revised detailed landscaping plan to secure this additional planting, a GI Management Plan and the implementation of hard and soft landscaping.

Indeed give the details submitted which sets out the retention of all GI assets, together with additional planting, the proposal complies with relevant planning policy.

### **6.3 Historic Environment**

The site is located adjacent to Chepstow Conservation Area although as the application proposes minimal physical changes to the building externally, therefore the development would not fail to preserve or enhance the character/appearance of the Conservation Area and complies with Policy HE1 accordingly.

### **6.4 Biodiversity**

As there are no proposed structural changes or changes to the grounds of the property. It is unlikely that there will be a direct impact on features suitable for use by protected or priority species, and no loss of habitat.

The proposal includes existing grass areas to be converted to wildflower habitat and new tree planting to provide ecological enhancements. The Council's Biodiversity officer is satisfied this the proposal delivers suitable net benefit for biodiversity subject to a planning condition securing the planting. The proposal complies with relevant planning policy.

### **6.5 Impact on Amenity**

This is partly covered under the section on Placemaking above regarding how the site is managed to minimise noise and disturbance upon neighbouring residential properties, with a view to how the proposal impacts upon the sense of place.

Appropriate separation distances exist as the accommodation is in the lower south wing at the furthest part of the site away from the properties at Deans Hill, screened from viewpoints by the existing building. The amenity space is on the east side, again screened by the existing building. Any potential disturbance arising from the access to the north west of the site is to be further minimised by additional landscape screening secured by condition.

It is proposed to obscure glaze the south facing windows on both the ground and first floor of the south wing. This is essentially to protect the privacy of the residents of Severn View as the neighbours opposite facing onto Mounon Road are situated at a much higher level and have an elevated viewpoint down into the resident's bedrooms. A condition is required to secure this. These windows also have restrictors in place that prevent the windows from opening full width; privacy is therefore protected in both cases.

The site is to be internally managed to prevent access by residents to the west of the site. The impact upon the neighbouring properties is considered to be acceptable in this case and compliant with policies DES1 and EP1 of the Local Development Plan.

In terms of noise pollution, the traffic generation serving this development is not materially different to the previous use. It is not considered that the proposed change of use would generate a level of noise significantly over and above that generated by the existing C2 residential use.

### **6.6 Transport**

#### **6.6.2 Active Travel**

The Council's Active Travel team have made comments requesting greater permeability for the site, as access to the site is concentrated to the north east of the site via Regent Way, this not providing access directly onto other routes. However, this is a direct route into the town centre and the local transport connection points. The residents would be highly unlikely to have cars, and will be dependent upon active travel for transportation. The pedestrian route will be clearly laid out and interpreted.

There is currently no cycle parking on site, but it is proposed that bike storage is appropriately and conveniently located within the site to be detailed on drawings. This is to be delivered prior to occupation and to be covered by planning condition.

### 6.6.3 Access / Highway Safety

The development is an established care facility with a suitable means of access via Mounon Road and Regent Way with existing parking laid out providing 23 parking spaces. A Transport Plan sets out the traffic movements that resulted from what was previously a 32-room provision care facility. The previous social care use generated traffic with an estimated 15 staff on the premises each day, with the addition of family, contractors, visiting professionals and agencies visiting throughout the day. In this proposal, as the residents do not have cars, the deliveries and visitors related to visiting professions providing support services and staff; there is ample parking on site to allow for this.

Furthermore, the proposal is located in a sustainable location and within walking distance of all the major amenities located in Chepstow. The proposed change of use can be accommodated on site and will not adversely affect the existing local highway network. The proposal is compliant with relevant planning policy.

### **6.7 Surface Water Drainage**

There are no surface water drainage implications, as this is a reuse of an existing building.

### **6.8 Response to the Representations of Third Parties and/or Community/Town Council**

6.8.1 Many of the representations received are addressed in the paragraphs above. The majority cover well-being and safeguarding matters with concerns for safety of family and property raised frequently.

The points that require further clarification or not considered above are addressed below:

There is concern regarding expansion of uses to a 34-bed accommodation and community meals service

This is not included within this application; this is a change of use of the building to accommodate and provide support service to 17 homeless single people. The accommodation is exclusively within the southern wing of the site.

Reference to alternative ways to manage the site, replacement of 24 hour concierge service with a curfew after 11pm?

This is a housing services matter in terms of how they manage the site; the stated management of the proposal has planning implications in terms of understanding the intensity of use and staff vehicle movements, which are addressed above.

Concern has been raised about the level of local consultation

A site notice has been posted at the entrance to the site on Mounon Road, which is currently the main access to the site. All adjoining landowners/neighbours have been consulted by letter in respect of this planning application. This goes beyond what is required with regard to publicity of a planning application. Any advance public consultation outside the planning process is not a material planning consideration.

Reduction in Council Tax

This is not a material planning consideration.

Alternative more appropriate locations for this use

This application is considered on its own merits, alternative locations are not relevant in this case.

Support structure in not in place

This application has evidenced in the supporting information the significant uplift in staff to be provided at Severn View compared to that at the existing bed and breakfast use.

Reduction in property values

This is not a material planning issue.

Very little details of the proposed residents given

It is not possible to provide information on the residents, this is personal information and not relevant or appropriate for a planning application.

No data to evidence the £400k pa saving which is optimistic given the setup & running costs of the facility

Financial Viability is not a planning issue in this case.

Temporary use, duration of time this use will be operational

This is an application for a permanent use, not a temporary use. The accommodation is temporary for the residents until they are moved into accommodation that is more permanent.

Shortage of care facilities should have stayed as this use

This care facility use has been replaced with the purpose-built care facility in Crick.

Site should be redeveloped for residential development in keeping with the area. Better suited to an affordable housing development with great links to public transport for people who work  
Alternative uses of this site are not subject to consideration as part of this application. This application is being considered on its planning merits.

Two security guards are not going to be enough to look after/ manage this amount of people in one facility

The staff arrangements proposed in the supporting information provide clear information and comparison about staff numbers.

Concern expressed about redaction this implies secrecy.

Redaction is applied to documents to accord with GDPR requirements.

Request that the temporary accommodation is reserved exclusively for homeless people from the local Monmouthshire area, and not an underhand way of homing other people. Concern expressed that this will lead directly to a greater number of homeless persons in Chepstow, with people being re-homed from outside Monmouthshire.

This relates to the relocation of existing homeless people in Monmouthshire currently accommodated in Chepstow in hotel accommodation.

The Action Notes clearly detail an expectation of drug use/abuse (with specific provision made for opioid overdose) as well as anti-social behaviour both on-site and in the local area. There is no consideration of prevention merely response, and it suggests only 2 staff will be on-site providing security at any time compared to a capacity of 17-32 residents. In contrast to the current use as a residential care home for those with dementia, the statement at 5.31 of the Planning Statement (it is considered that the proposed development would not harm residential amenity over and above the existing residential use of the site) would therefore appear to be patently false

The occupation would be for 17 residents as a maximum. The residency of the care home was higher as it had a maximum capacity of 32. The supporting information provides an indication of staff numbers, which provides help and support. The supporting information has also sought to provide information on how the site will be managed to allay concerns about anti-social behaviour.

What are the security provisions that will be put in place to manage any potential issues, will there CCTV cameras put into the surrounding streets to ensure our safety

It has been confirmed that CCTV covers the streets around Severn view. It is proposed that in addition CCTV will be installed to cover both external entrances, which will be monitored by the concierge service.

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

6.9.1 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.

## **6.10 Conclusion**

The proposal offers temporary accommodation in a sustainable location within the settlement boundary of Chepstow, which is in close reach to a range of services, and facilities within Chepstow Town Centre. Local facilities are located within walking distance including Chepstow Railway Station and nearby bus stops, which provide services to nearby towns and villages, and beyond.

The site offers ample communal amenity space and associated green infrastructure, which is all to be retained and bolstered.

The proposal is to use the south wing only, there are no overlooking windows or aspect to Deans Hill. Any potential overlooking on the south elevation is minimised by the window restrictors and proposed obscure glazing ensuring that privacy and amenity is protected by the scheme.

The relationships that will be created with existing properties in the area have been considered, appropriate separation distances will be maintained through the location of the accommodation block and the amenity areas. This enhances privacy to both the new residents and the existing neighbouring properties. Internal management strategies containing the site keeps the residents to the east side of the site maximising separation and privacy distances.

In terms of noise pollution, given the measures proposed this change of use would not generate a level of noise significantly over and above that generated by the existing C2 residential use; especially as the number of residents would be less than the previous use and the proposal incorporates management measures to minimise any potential for anti-social behaviour.

The impact of this proposal outside the site is relation to neighbouring uses, in particular the children's nursery on Regent Way, has been fully assessed. This is a public highway and is not used solely by the residents of Severn View, and is an active street frontage populated by people/users in association with the fire station and the health centre that are served from this highway (the fire station immediately fronts onto the highway). Indeed, when coupled with physical change in levels between the nursery and the highway as well as the presence of existing CCTV, this removes concern that the area would be subject to anti-social behaviour without being immediately noticed and addressed with appropriate measures.

The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets out seven 'well-being' goals: two being:

A healthier Wales: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

A more equal Wales: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances)

This proposal delivers 17 units of accommodation for single homeless people, with spacious communal facilities and providing easy access to local amenities and services. The building offers the space to deliver 1:1 housing support; MCC staff and support agency 'hot desking' and networking; as well as group support (such as life skills) activities due to the layout and facilities in the building. The potential impact upon well-being, amenity and sense of place is acceptable and compliant with relevant planning policy. The proposal is recommended for approval with relevant conditions that limit the residents to the south wing, secures obscure glazing on the south elevation, delivers cycle provision and alongside other landscape and biodiversity objectives, bolsters the common boundary with Deans Hill.

## **7.0 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. Prior to commencement of development details of on-site cycle storage shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, the scheme as approved shall be implemented and completed prior to occupation and retained in perpetuity.

REASON: To facilitate active travel in accordance with National Planning Policy

4. An appropriately scaled Green Infrastructure Management Plan shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of the development. The content of the Management Plan as a standalone document shall include the following;

- a) Description and evaluation of Green Infrastructure assets to be identified, protected and managed in the GI management plan.
  - a. Boundary buffers including trees, hedge and shrubbery
  - b. Green corridors including those within the site
  - c. Grassland areas including mown grass, wildflower areas
- b) Opportunities for enhancement to be incorporated
  - a. Management of treed and planted boundaries for GI and biodiversity including interfaces with GI corridors connection the wider landscape
  - b. Maintain habitat connectivity through the site for species
- c) Trends and constraints on site that might influence management of above features.
- d) Aims and objectives of management.
- e) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
- f) Prescriptions for management actions.
- g) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a twenty year period).
- h) Details of the body or organization responsible for implementation of the plan.
- i) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The Management Plan shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery as appropriate. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the Green Infrastructure Management Plan are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning Green Infrastructure objectives of the originally approved scheme. The details shall include a timetable for implementation. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details within the approved timetable.

REASON: To maintain and enhance Green Infrastructure Assets in accordance with LDP policies, DES1, S13, GI1, NE1,. (Legislative background - Well Being of Future Generations Act 2015, Planning (Wales) Act 2015 Environment (Wales) Act 2016

5. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority additional measures required relating to bolstering the common boundary for the stretch between Deans Hill and the internal access way connecting to Regent Way. This shall feature a scheme of landscaping, which shall include indications of all existing

trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of the development.

REASON: To safeguard the landscape amenities of the area and to ensure compliance with LDP Policy G11.

6, All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice. Planting of Trees shall be in accordance with BS8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the timetable agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscape in accordance with the approved designs and ensure the provision afforded by appropriate Landscape Design and Green Infrastructure LC5, DES 1, S13, and GI 1 and NE1

7. Existing and new landscaping shall be retained and provided as shown on "Detailed Soft Landscape Proposals, TDA Drawing Number TDA.2964.01. Dated May 2024". Landscape features shall be retained, managed and replaced as necessary to provide net benefit in perpetuity.

REASON: To maintain and enhance ecology on the site as required by the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Planning Policy Wales and LDP Policy NE1

8. The south wing of the application site shall be used for residential accommodation only.

REASON: To protect local residential amenity in accordance with LDP Policy EP1

9. All windows in residential use on the south elevation facing Mounton Road shall be obscure glazed to a level equivalent to Pilkington scale of obscurity level 3 prior to the development being brought into beneficial use and maintained thus thereafter in perpetuity.

REASON: To protect local residential amenity and to ensure compliance with LDP Policies DES1 and EP1.