

Application Number: DM/2024/01199

Proposal: Change of use from funeral directors at ground floor and first floor flat to a 6 bedroom, 6 person house in multiple occupation (C4 Use)

Address: 90 Newport Road, Caldicot, Monmouthshire

Applicant: Mr J Bishop

Plans: Block Plan 4319.PL.02 - , All Proposed Plans 4309.PL.04 - Rev A, All Existing Plans 4309.PL.03 - , Location Plan 4319.PL.01 - , Other PLANNING STATEMENTGREEN - , Other GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STATEMENT

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

Case Officer: Ms Kate Young
Date Valid: 26.09.2024

This application is presented to Committee at the request of local members

1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS

1.1 Site Description

90 Newport Road is a two storey semi-detached property which has been extended to the rear. It was previously used as a funeral directors on the ground floor with a three-bedroom flat above. The property is located within the Caldicot Development Boundary but is outside of the central shopping area. There are two off-street parking spaces to the front. The rear access is shared with several other properties and there is parking for a further two cars as well as a large outbuilding.

1.2 Proposal Description

Planning permission is sought for the change of the use of the property from a funeral directors and first floor flat to create a 6-bedroom, six person house in multiple occupation (a C4 use). Bin and recycling storage is proposed at the side with a dedicated bike store at the rear. An area of amenity space for future occupants is proposed at the rear. The car parking provision will be retained. The only external changes would be some minor alterations to the fenestration at the rear of the property. A small lawned area will be provided at the rear and this will contain one new cherry tree.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTOREY (if any)

Reference Number	Description	Decision	Decision Date
DM/2024/01199	Change of use from funeral directors at ground floor and first floor flat to a 6-bedroom, six person house in multiple occupation (C4 Use)	Pending Determination	

3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Strategic Policies

S1 LDP The Spatial Distribution of New Housing Provision
S12 LDP Efficient Resource Use and Flood Risk
S13 LDP Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment
S16 LDP Transport
S17 LDP Place Making and Design

Development Management Policies

H9 LDP Flat Conversions
NE1 LDP Nature Conservation and Development
EP1 LDP Amenity and Environmental Protection
MV1 LDP Proposed Developments and Highway Considerations
DES1 LDP General Design Considerations

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Monmouthshire Parking Standards (January 2013)
<http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2015/07/Mon-CC-Parking-Standards-SPG-Jan-2013.pdf>

4.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

Future Wales - the national plan 2040
Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 12

5.0 REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 Consultation Replies

Caldicot Town Council - No reply to date.

Highway Authority - No objection.

Welsh Water - No objection subject to conditions.

MCC Environmental Health - No objection to the development providing it meets with current building regulations and standards.

5.2 Neighbour Notification

Three representations received.

The two car parking spaces at the rear of the property will be difficult to access.

Vehicles will have to reverse into the shared space.

Insufficient parking provision that may adversely impact on nearby commercial properties.

Health and safety concerns with regards to pedestrians and cyclists using a shared commercial space.

Anti-social behaviour may harm the safety of businesses and their customers.

If successful, this proposal would reduce the opportunity for a new business on the site and will also have a negative impact for other business that trade in this location by dint of reduced footfall.

5.3 Local Member Representations

None.

6.0 EVALUATION

6.1 Principle of Development

Although the property currently has an A1 (retail) use on the ground floor, the site is not within a defined Central Shopping Area so there is no policy requirement for the A1 use to be retained. The loss of the A1 use in this location would not affect the vitality and viability of the town centre. On the ground floor of the properties to the north of this site there are commercial businesses and there is a public house on the opposite side of the road. The adjacent property to the south is a detached residential dwelling. In this area of Caldicot there is a mix of commercial and residential uses and the loss of an A1 unit in this location would not have an adverse impact.

There has recently been a change in legislation in Wales so that now a change of use to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) requires planning permission. The Council has no specific policies relating to HMOs, but LDP Policy H9 (Flat Conversions) could be used as a guiding principle. Policy H9 of the LDP states that the conversion of properties into flats within town development boundaries will be permitted provided that the development:

- Does not adversely affect the particular qualities of the street scene,
- Will not adversely affect the qualities of the building particularly where they make a positive contribution to the characters of conservation areas
- Provides reasonable levels of amenity and privacy to adjacent properties and where they ensure that car parking and service requirements are met in a manner which preserves the character and appearance of the area
- Does not have an adverse impact on highway safety.

In this case the building has no particular architectural merit and the only external alterations proposed are some minor changes to the fenestration to the rear of the property. There would be no impact on the street scene. The site is not located within a Conservation Area. Four parking spaces will be retained (this will be considered fully later in the report). A small, lawned amenity space will be provided for residents at the rear of the property. The proposal therefore accords with the objectives of Policy H9 of the LDP and therefore the principle of the property being used as an HMO is considered to be acceptable.

6.2 Sustainability

Caldicot Town Centre is one of the most sustainable locations within the County with good public transport links, including bus and train services within walking distance of the site. The occupiers of this property would also be able to walk to all of the facilities within the town centre. The LDP and PPW 12 encourage sustainable development. The proposal accords with a key objective of PPW12 providing residential accommodation in a sustainable location.

6.3 Good Design and Place Making

Policy DES1 of the LDP requires that the development contributes to a sense of place while its intensity is compatible with existing uses. The proposal would have no impact on the appearance of the area - there are no external physical alterations required to the front of the property that faces the road and only minor alterations to the rear. The dwelling would be subdivided internally to provide two bedrooms, a communal kitchen/ dining area and bike store on the ground floor. The existing three-bedroom flat at first floor level would be reconfigured to provide four additional ensuite bedrooms. No additional infrastructure is required externally. The small lawned area to the rear will provide amenity space for the residents but there will be no subdivision of the garden or any additional fences or outbuildings. The change of use would have no impact on the design of the existing building, would retain the building's presence and not alter the street scene. The design of the proposal is respectful of the prevailing character of the area and would contribute

towards a sense of place. The proposal therefore accords with the objectives of Policy DES1 of the LDP.

6.4 Biodiversity/Green Infrastructure and Landscape

Net Benefit for Biodiversity

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 12 sets out that "planning authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. This means that development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity" (para 6.4.5 refers). This policy and subsequent policies in Chapter 6 of PPW 12 respond to the Section 6 Duty of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

In this case a bat nesting box is to be provided in the side elevation and a bird nesting box on the rear elevation. In addition to this a small area of land will be laid to grass and a new cherry tree will be planted. This is proportionate to the scale of the proposal and is sufficient to achieve net benefit for biodiversity given the low ecological value of the site at baseline conditions. A condition is recommended to secure evidence of net benefit for biodiversity.

6.5 Impact on Amenity

This part of Caldicot consists off a mix of residential and commercial properties. To the south of the site is a detached residential property that contains one first floor window on the side elevation facing into the application site. The window faces onto the blank gable wall of the application property. As a result of this proposal there would be no additional windows on the side elevation. The change of use from a funeral directors with a flat above to a HMO would not result in additional overlooking or disturbance, and residential amenity for the existing occupiers of the neighbouring property will not be adversely affected. To the north of the site is a mix of commercial and residential properties. The proposed change of use would not intensify the activity at no 90 Newport Road to an unacceptable level. The HMO would be used as a residential property, not unlike the surrounding residential properties. The proposal accords with the objectives of policy EP1 of the LDP as it does have regard to the privacy, amenity and health of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

6.6 Highways

The building would be accessed directly off the classified R138, Newport Road. There would be no alterations to the vehicular access into the site. The site benefits from two parking spaces to the front, and the plans indicate a further two to the rear, accessed via a non-public highway lane. For a standard six-bedroom single family dwelling the existing parking provision of four spaces meets its requirements under the current MCC Car Parking Standards which is one car parking space to be provided per bedroom per dwelling with a maximum of three car parking spaces per dwelling. However, the Highway Authority considers that a multiple occupancy dwelling is not dissimilar to a development of self-contained flats therefore the same parking standards of one car parking space per bedroom within the dwelling would be applied.

Notwithstanding this view, Highways acknowledge the site's location adjacent to Caldicot Town Centre which is a sustainable location with ease of access to all amenities as well as public transport, including a train station within walking distance. Furthermore, Newport Road is controlled by double yellow lines and therefore there is no opportunity for overspill on-street parking. There is a free town centre public car park within a short distance. The Highway Authority offers no objection to the proposal.

Given the nature of the proposal, the sustainable location and where there is evidence of lower levels of car ownership, the level of parking is considered acceptable. The proposal is considered to accord with the objectives of Policy MV1 of the LDP in providing adequate on-site parking.

6.7 Active Travel

With regards to active travel the applicants are proposing to install bike storage on the site.

6.8 Drainage

The foul water discharges to mains drains. There will be no increase in discharge as a result of this change of use. Welsh Water have suggested a condition that no additional surface water shall discharge to the public sewer. There will be no increase in the amount of hard surfaces on the site as a result of this proposal. There will be no increase in the size of the footprint of the building and no increase in the parking area. Rates of surface water flow will remain unchanged because of this change of use and SAB approval will not be required.

6.9 Flooding

The site is not in a designated Flood Zone according Development Advice Map (DAM) contained in TAN15.

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

One local resident has objected to the proposal on grounds of dangerous access and lack of parking. Both these issues have been addressed in the main body of the report and the Highway Authority have offered no objection to the proposed change of use. There are no alterations proposed to the existing parking arrangement. No 90 Newport Road shares a vehicle access from Newport Road with several other properties including commercial ones. There is already pedestrian and vehicular access to the rear of 90 Newport Road and this includes two car parking spaces; this will not change as a result of this proposal. Four car parking spaces for this six-bedroom HMO is considered sufficient in view of the sustainable location of the site and the generally low car ownership rates associated with HMO's. There is no evidence to suggest that cyclists and pedestrians would be endangered by crossing the commercial yard.

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

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 WCFG Act). In reaching this recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WCFG 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 WCFG Act.

6.12 Conclusion

Having regard to the policy context above, the proposal is considered acceptable and planning permission is recommended subject to conditions.

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 No surface water from any increase in the roof area of the building /or impermeable surfaces within its curtilage shall be allowed to drain directly or indirectly to the public sewerage system.
Reason: To prevent hydraulic overloading of the public sewerage system, to protect the health and safety of existing residents and ensure no pollution of or detriment to the environment.

4 The biodiversity net benefit feature in the form of bat and bird nesting boxes and a new cherry tree as shown on Block Plan 4319 PL 02 and Proposed Elevations 4309 PL 04 Rev A shall

be implemented prior to the approved use commences and shall be retained as such in perpetuity.

Reason: To provide biodiversity net benefit and ensure compliance with PPW 12, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and LDP Policy NE1.