

**Application Number:** DM/2025/00495

**Proposal:** The proposed development includes a change of use of land, now used as a car park to site one temporary food/drink van/trailer in the NRW managed car park. The van/trailer will be located on the existing hardstanding within the car park. No new hardstandings or permanent structures will be created. The van/trailer will not be located on the grass or any other vegetation to minimise disturbance to the surrounding green infrastructure. The van/trailer will not be permitted to park overnight, we anticipate seasonal opening hours of 9am to 5pm. A licence will be issued to the concession holder to ensure that they adhere to specific obligations.

**Address:** Whitestone/Bargain Wood Car Park, Wye Valley, Llandogo, NP16 6SN

**Applicant:** Cathrin Jones

**Plans:** Photography - , Location Plan - , All Drawings/Plans Whitestone Wood Block plan - , Other Green Infrastructure Statement

**RECOMMENDATION: Approve**

Case Officer: Ms Jo Draper  
Date Valid: 08.10.2025

**This application is presented to Planning Committee due to there being 5 or more objections**

**1.0 APPLICATION DETAILS**

1.1 Site Description

The application site relates to a car park that serves Bargain Wood. The site is accessed via a length of track (approx. 225m,) that joins the public highway along the unclassified highway. The proposed site forms a small part of an existing car park located over 200m from the public highway and forms a space equivalent to three car parking spaces. The existing car park is informal, and spaces are not delineated.

The proposed site is located within Bargain Wood SINC an area of ancient semi-natural woodland. The site lies approximately 500m west of the River Wye SAC and SSSI, and approximately 600m west of Wye Valley Woodlands SAC. The application site is within the Wye Valley National Landscape.

1.2 Proposal Description

The proposed development includes a change of use of land, to site one temporary food/drink van/trailer in the NRW managed car park. The van/trailer will be located on the existing hardstanding within the car park. No new hardstanding or permanent structures are proposed. The supporting information states that the van/trailer will not be located on the grass or any other vegetation.

The van/trailer will not be permitted to park overnight with anticipated seasonal opening hours of 9am to 5pm. A licence will be issued to the concession holder to ensure that they adhere to specific obligations. Trees and grass areas would not be impacted. There will be no losses to green infrastructure

The supporting information has provided more detail on the responsibilities and obligations of the permit holder that operates the proposed van/trailer. This includes:

The successful applicant will be issued with a licence. The licence will state that the licensee is responsible for adhering to all waste regulations, including recycling and we therefore anticipate that the licensee will have recycling bins on site, and they will be responsible for disposing of the waste legally. They will also be responsible for ensuring that the site is tidy and free of litter. The Licence will also include requirements to comply with the Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023. Recyclable or biodegradable food and drink containers should be used. NRW are also looking for eco-solutions, as diesel generators will not be permitted on site.

There are areas of grass and trees located in and around the edges of the car park, however these will not be impacted by the proposed development. Ecological enhancement is proposed in the form of 4 Bat Boxes to be sited on trees surrounding the car park.

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

| <b>Reference Number</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Decision</b>       | <b>Decision Date</b> |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| DM/2025/00495           | The proposed development includes a change of use of land, now used as a car park to site one temporary food/drink van/trailer in the NRW managed car park. The van/trailer will be located on the existing hardstanding within the car park. No new hardstandings or permanent structures will be created. The van/trailer will not be located on the grass or any other vegetation to minimise disturbance to the surrounding green infrastructure. The van/trailer will not be permitted to park overnight, we anticipate seasonal opening hours of 9am to 5pm. A licence will be issued to the concession holder to ensure that they adhere to specific obligations. | Pending Determination |                      |

## **3.0 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES**

### **Strategic Policies**

S13 LDP Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment  
S10 LDP Rural Enterprise  
S17 LDP Place Making and Design

## **Development Management Policies**

LC4 LDP Wye Valley AONB  
LC5 LDP Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character  
DES1 LDP General Design Considerations  
EP1 LDP Amenity and Environmental Protection  
RE6 LDP Provision of Recreation, Tourism and Leisure Facilities in Open Countryside  
NE1 LDP Nature Conservation and Development  
GI1 LDP Green Infrastructure

## **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.

### **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**

#### **Wye Valley Community Council – Objects.**

Objected on the grounds of increased traffic on a narrow and dangerous country lane, potential for more fumes and reduction in air quality as a result of drivers accessing the site for refreshments before they walk. Detrimental to the local ecology and overall presence of the area to allow the siting of a refreshment vehicle, no additional amenities available.

#### **MCC Highways - No objection**

The truck takes the space of approximately three vehicles. However, the car park is informal, and spaces are not delineated. There are no proposed changes to the parking facility. Given the distance from the public highway, it is not expected to cause serious concern regarding parking or obstruction of the network. The MCC Local Parking Standards require only a single space for staff and adequate parking provision for customers. Given the location within a car park, it is the opinion of the highway authority that all standards are met. Given the location it is expected that customer visits will be incidental to the existing use and will not represent a significant increase or draw for additional trips. There are no highway grounds for an objection.

**Natural Resources Wales:** No ecological information has been submitted in support of this application. We note that there are records of bats in the vicinity of the site. We recommend you seek the advice of your Authority's internal ecological adviser about the requirement for further

information to be submitted in support of the application, the need for bespoke surveys and the scope of further information, where required.

**Wye Valley National Landscape:** No objection

Owing to the small and temporary nature of the proposals, there are no significant concerns regarding potential adverse landscape and visual impacts on the Wye Valley National Landscape.

**MCC Biodiversity:** No objection

It is understood that the proposed site is within an existing car park that already has picnic areas and is well used. It is also understood from communication with NRW (as the applicant) that the successful applicant will be issued with a licence.

**Designated Sites** The proposed site is located approximately 500m west of the River Wye SAC and SSSI, and approximately 600m west of Wye Valley Woodlands SAC. Several component sites of the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites are located within 10km, the closest being approximately 6.5km north. Given the small scale of the proposals, no adverse effects on these designated sites are anticipated.

The site is located within Bargain Wood SINC an area of ancient semi-natural woodland. No additional risk to sensitive habitats within proximity to the site is anticipated, as the van is proposed within an existing carpark that is already well used.

NRW have ruled out the use of diesel generators (minimising pollutions risks) and indirect impacts to the woodland from waste/litter will be addressed as operators will require a licence to operate, which includes responsibilities for managing waste appropriately.

**Protected Species** A variety of protected species including bats, dormice and breeding birds are likely to be present within the woodland. Given the use of existing hardstanding and controlled operational hours (seasonal 9am - 5pm), the proposal is ecologically low risk. The risk to protected species or habitats that support these species is considered to be negligible. Due to limited operational hours the use of artificial light is not anticipated and is unlikely to cause disturbance to protected species within the woodland. Should the vans operate in the winter and require artificial lighting to operate, any unavoidable external lighting must be low-level, directional, and restricted to the van footprint (designed in accordance with Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK (ILP, 2023).

**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. The Green Infrastructure Statement submitted as part of the application proposes 4 bat boxes on trees surrounding the car park.

These enhancements are proportional to the scale of the proposals. Evidence of implementation of mitigation and net benefit measures for biodiversity must be provided to the LPA no more than three months later than the first beneficial use of the development.

Conditions to control lighting and secure ecological implementation are proposed.

## 5.2 Neighbour Notification

One letter of support received

This is a great idea as apart from Tintern there aren't places to get a drink on the Wye Valley Walk. Whitestone is also a great destination for a walk from Llandogo and a coffee would be a nice reward.

Approximately 20 objections raising the following points:

This would cause traffic issues on a generally quiet, exceptionally narrow and unmaintained road (potholes everywhere on approach to Beacon View car park)

The approach to Beacon View car park is steep and sharp and would not facilitate an increase in cars entering and leaving on both sites

Increase in litter in what should be a protected natural area for wildlife

Litter could be detrimental to the no-fence grazing cows who are also there to support the natural habitat by reducing invasive species

No toilets or hand washing facilities

Doesn't support local businesses including pubs, cafes and restaurants, local businesses already suffering due to the floods. It will also take away business from our local pub in Trellech which a lot of walkers and visitors use when in this area. Car park itself is too small

Noise pollution from generators and engines impact on wildlife

Whitestone is an accessible site for those seeking a natural woodland experience. A food outlet would significantly change the wild woodland nature of the site, disadvantaging those unable to access other wild areas, especially if food outlets are agreed for other local sites

The site is already at capacity during peak periods with parking on nearby verges damaging the woodland surface and causing a road safety hazard

A food outlet would take up parking spaces, increasing the problem

There is no guarantee that people will consume food next to the food outlet, so even if bins are provided, an increase in litter in the woodland and surrounding roads is inevitable

Tintern village with a range of eating places is only 2 miles away

NRW should not be encouraging the idea that woodland cannot be enjoyed without a takeaway coffee or an ice cream. NRW should be promoting an understanding and appreciation of the woodland as somewhere that can be visited and enjoyed free, for its own unique peace and tranquillity

The car park is reached via a steep, narrow lane with no passing places. The road is fragile and unsuitable for extra traffic, creating safety risks

It is completely out of character with these woodland car parks in remote rural areas. Local businesses a short drive or ride away can provide the same facility in a more satisfactory manner with the additional benefit of supporting local employment. The food facilities will take up valuable parking space and reduce the amenity value of the location for those who visit to enjoy peaceful undeveloped countryside

There is already an issue with litter (mainly food and drink packaging, but also dog waste) in the car park and surrounding paths

The statement in the application ("The concession holder will be responsible for ensuring that waste is managed appropriately and to adhere to any legislation") is insufficient. There needs to be a clear plan on how this extra waste will be managed

The only reason I can see for multiple applications for food vending in rural beauty spots is the potential for additional income. What little income NRW could achieve is negligible to the damage these vending operations would cause

This is a peaceful green space

People do not need to eat and drink every minute of the day

The unsafe disposal of grey water, oils and cleaning chemicals would pose a risk to the environment. It is unrealistic to think that they would be able to operate, powering coffee machines, fridges and potential heating appliances in the forest without the need for additional power, and who is going to monitor them when they do use a generator or run their engine for hours on end

Food/Drinks vans are seldom aesthetically pleasing and would therefore be an eyesore and not in keeping with the environment

Visitors go to Whitestone for nature led activities, the potential increase in traffic from people coming to sit in the forest and drink coffee will potentially cause more vehicles & less parking spaces for those coming to enjoy the forest - it is a nature escape not a leisure destination. In general it would undermine the character and goals of a AONB

The constant unnatural noise and smells in a currently beautiful environment

This application begins to reshape the character of this natural woodland space. Not every green space needs a point of sale attached to it nor do we need to consume before or after every nature-focused excursion. Some woods should simply remain woods, without the expectation that visitors are able to buy something

The value of this place lies in its quietness.

### 5.3 Other Representations

No representations have been received to date

### 5.4 Local Member Representations

No representations have been 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 application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of part of the woodland car park to site a catering van between the months of March and October from 9am to 5pm every day during that time. The site is in an area of open countryside.

In this instance the proposed catering van is a use not a building and is considered for the purposes of supporting leisure and tourism. LDP Policy RE6 is the applicable policy in this case, this states that 'Development proposals for recreation, tourism and leisure uses in the countryside will be permitted provided that they are of a small-scale, informal nature and subject to detailed planning considerations, including adequate safeguards for the character and appearance of the countryside (particularly its landscape, biodiversity and local amenity value)'.

The intensity of the operation is limited by its scale, hours of operation, operational constraints (no toilets, running water etc), the siting is well into the site out of view from the main highway. The result of these factors is that the proposed use is very small scale, will be sited on a seasonal basis, and is restricted to day time hours with no overnight stays, the use is ancillary to the overall woodland tourism use and the principle of the development is acceptable in that this provides refreshments and supports tourism by offering drinks and food to visitors to this woodland. The detailed issues are considered below.

### **6.2 Sustainability**

The change of use will be limited to mostly daylight hours and only during the tourist season. This is small in scale and, given it is a removable van/trailer, informal in nature with no permanent imprint left on site. The van will not be sited in any area of high ecological or landscape value. The area is used as a car park and therefore vehicles being parked there is a common feature of the area.

The issue of possible litter and other rubbish resulting from use of the catering van would be for the landowner, in this case Natural Resources Wales, to monitor with the person/company operating the van.

#### 6.2.1 Good Design

There are no design issues as it relates to the use of a small part of the car park for a mobile refreshment van/trailer, the appearance of this vehicle cannot be controlled under planning legislation

#### 6.2.2 Impact on Amenity

There are concerns raised in representations that the siting of a food/drink van/trailer will have a detrimental impact upon the overall environment and ambience of the place, with a change in noise and people visiting. The supporting information states that there would be no diesel generators allowed under the license and littering is controlled by the operators. The scale, location and operating instructions that apply limit this use and would result in it being small scale and ancillary to this woodland tourism use. This would provide refreshments for visitors during the hours of visiting; beyond daytime hours and during winter months the proposed use would not operate. There is no adverse impact upon the sense of place in this case - to the contrary, this is a small scale offering that enhances the experience of people visiting this site.

### **6.2.3 Green Infrastructure**

Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) 12 highlights that a Green Infrastructure (GI) statement should be submitted with all planning applications and will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development. The statement which will need to be informed by a GI assessment of the site will describe how green infrastructure will be incorporated into the proposal and how the step wise approach to protecting biodiversity, habitats and GI onsite will be managed. A step wise approach considers what impacts may occur as a result of development activity to any identified biodiversity, habitats and green infrastructure assets and networks that may be present on or bounding a site. The approach then seeks to manage any harm that may occur by (a) avoiding (b) minimising (c) Mitigate / Restore.

The proposed van and trailer are to be sited within the existing gravel parking area and no green infrastructure will be impacted by the change of use. Given this, it is considered that the development would not have an adverse impact on green infrastructure at the site.

### **6.3 Landscape**

With the addition of a condition restricting the seasonal use of the site and not allowing overnight parking of the catering van/trailer overnight, the change of use would have an acceptable impact on the local landscape

### **6.4 Biodiversity**

6.4.1 PPW 12 sets out that the planning system has a key role to play in helping to reverse the decline in biodiversity and increase the resilience of ecosystems, at various scales, by ensuring appropriate mechanisms are in place to both protect against loss and to secure enhancement. It is clear that planning system should ensure that overall there is a net benefit for biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, resulting in enhanced wellbeing.

In respect of designated sites, the proposed site is located approximately 500m west of the River Wye SAC and SSSI, and approximately 600m west of Wye Valley Woodlands SAC. Several component sites of the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites are located within 10km, the closest being approximately 6.5km north. Given the small scale of the proposals, no adverse effects on these designated sites are anticipated. It is noted that Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have commented stating, 'we do not consider that the proposed development affects a matter listed on our Consultation Topics, Development Planning Advisory Service: Consultation Topics (September 2018)'. The site is located within Bargain Wood SINC, an area of ancient semi-natural woodland. No additional risk to sensitive habitats within proximity of the site is anticipated, as the van is proposed within an existing car park that is already well used.

NRW have ruled out the use of diesel generators (minimising pollution risks) and indirect impacts to the woodland from waste/litter will be addressed as operators will require a licence to operate, which includes responsibilities for managing waste appropriately. Given that the van would be sited within the existing parking area there should be no impact on the ecology of the site. The hours of operation and season will be such that there should not be light spill or disturbance from the use of the van during darkness. Trees and grass areas would not be impacted. There would be no losses to green infrastructure. There are four bat boxes proposed to be sited on trees surrounding the car park. Conditions are proposed controlling lighting and ensuring ecological enhancement is implemented.

## **6.5 Access / Highway Safety**

The proposed van/trailer is to be located within an existing car park located over 200m from the public highway. The van/ trailer takes the space of approximately three vehicles; however, the car park is informal, and spaces are not delineated. As there are no physical changes proposed to the parking facility, the proposal is not considered to take up a significant amount of space, the highway engineer has confirmed that this proposal will not compromise the existing highway or parking areas.

The proposed use is incidental to the existing use and will not represent a significant increase or draw for additional trips and is not considered to result in an increase in visiting traffic.

## **6.6 Drainage**

### 6.6.1 Foul Drainage

As there are no toilets proposed there are no foul drainage implications or considerations that apply in this case.

### 6.6.2 Surface Water Drainage

There are no surface water drainage implications as there are no physical changes to the site and the proposal relates to a vehicle parked within a given area for a temporary period of time.

## **6.7 Noise**

As there are controls on diesel generators and the proposed use will be parked up with no engine running, there would be no vehicles or machinery that would have an impact upon noise levels within the local area.

## **6.8 Tourism**

The van would support tourism in the area offering hot drinks and food to users of the woodland. Whilst retail competition is not a planning matter in this case, it is noteworthy that there is currently no provision for refreshment within close proximity of the site.

### 6.9 Response to the Representations of Third Parties and/or Community Council

There are concerns about the impact on wildlife.  
MCC Ecology has raised no objection to the proposal.

Litter is controlled by the landowner - regardless of licence requirements people will leave litter, and take refreshments / food with them, maybe for a walk.  
This is to be monitored by the landowner and cannot be controlled by the planning authority.

Concern raised about the car park filling up as this proposal takes up space and will generate more traffic - this is addressed under 6.5 above. Although it is noteworthy that the car park becomes congested during the peak season and the van will be taking up one or two parking spaces, there are currently no time restrictions for users of the woodland car park so any car/vehicle could be parked there for long periods of time. This issue would be for the landowner, NRW, to monitor and is considered to be grounds to refuse this application.  
Impact on amenity of woodland - The woods are somewhere people go to enjoy a bit of time away from all the usual pressures. The use of the van will be at the discretion of the users of the woodland.  
Impact on other local food outlets, competition is not a planning consideration, although it is noteworthy that there is no other retail or tourist sites within proximity of the site that deliver the service proposed with this application.

Concerns raised about lack of toilet facilities and the impact this would have upon the hygiene of the proposed user. This is covered under separate legislation and is not a planning consideration in this case.

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

6.10.1 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.

## **6.11 Conclusion**

6.11.1 The proposal has been assessed against all relevant planning policy and is considered acceptable in this case. The proposal is recommended for approval accordingly

## **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 External Lighting (if required) Notwithstanding the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no lighting or lighting fixtures shall be installed on the site until an appropriate lighting plan which includes low level PIR lighting, provides detail of lighting type, positioning and specification, and ensures that roosting and foraging/commuting habitat for bats is protected from light spill, has been agreed in writing with the LPA.

REASON: To safeguard roosting and foraging/commuting habitat of Species of Conservation Concern in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), Section 6 of the Environment Act (Wales) 2016 and LDP policies EP3 and NE1.

4 All works shall proceed in accordance with proposed measures to secure no net loss and net benefit for biodiversity in accordance with The Green Infrastructure Statement. Evidence of implementation of mitigation and net benefit measures for biodiversity must be provided to the LPA no more than three months later than the first beneficial use of the development.

REASON: To provide no net loss and biodiversity net benefit and ensure compliance with PPW 12, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and LDP policy NE1.

5 No catering van/trailer shall remain on the site overnight and no catering van/trailer shall be permitted on the site between 1st November in any one year and 24th March in the succeeding year.

REASON: To ensure that the site is not used for touring camping and caravan purposes, in the interests of visual amenity and to ensure compliance with LDP Policy RE6.

