

Following up on my previous email, the owner has now provided me with updates regarding the marketing efforts for the proposed building and the duration the shop unit has been vacant. I'm told that the property was advertised as a lease opportunity for a retail unit on Facebook Marketplace for a considerable period. Additionally, the applicant has directly approached business owners to gauge interest in the space. Unfortunately, despite these efforts, they have encountered challenges securing potential tenants. The primary obstacles to finding tenants are the location of the building and the proximity of the Commercial Road District Centre, which already has numerous vacant shops that present more attractive business opportunities.

The property has been vacant for more than twenty years. During that time there has been no indication of interest in utilising the building for commercial purposes.

In 2017, the previous owner made the decision to convert the shop into a two-bedroom house and successfully obtained planning permission for this change. However, it is unfortunate that permission was not fully implemented.

While we acknowledge the concern raised by Natural Resources Wales regarding the flood risk posed by the developed site, the building has been vacant for too long and as a result, its disuse has detrimentally affected the overall appearance of the building and the character of the area. The applicant aims to restore the property to productive use, fulfilling a genuine need in the neighbourhood. The proposed development will be affordable housing which will contribute to addressing the growing shortage of residential accommodation in the area and across much of the city.

Should planning permission be refused, it is highly likely that the building will continue to remain vacant for the entirety of its lifespan. Such an outcome would not serve the interests of the community in any meaningful way. The applicant hopes that you will consider the application in a pragmatic manner and take into account the circumstances of the proposed development as well as the positive impacts it would have on the community as a whole.