

Design, Access and Heritage Statement

6A Station Road, Caerleon, Newport NP18 1NH

Proposal	Change of use of ground floor commercial unit from retail (Use Class A1) to financial and professional services (Use Class A2), for use as an independent financial adviser's office with clients seen by appointment only; and replacement of the existing corrugated steel roof covering with natural Spanish slate. All other external finishes to remain as existing.
Applicant	James Hawkins
Local planning authority	Newport City Council
Planning Portal reference	PP-15231184
Heritage designation	Caerleon Conservation Area
Date	September 2026

1. Introduction

This statement supports a full planning application for the change of use of 6A Station Road from retail (Use Class A1) to financial and professional services (Use Class A2), and the replacement of the existing corrugated steel roof covering with natural Spanish slate.

The proposal falls below the thresholds at which a Design and Access Statement is a statutory requirement in Wales. This statement is nonetheless provided, following the structure of Technical Advice Note 12: Design, because the site lies within the Caerleon Conservation Area and the Council will need to assess the effect of the roof works on its character and appearance.

It should be read alongside the submitted drawings: the site location plan, Drawing Ref 1 (existing elevations and ground floor plan), Drawing Ref 2 (proposed elevations for the roof change), and the existing and proposed floor plans. A separate Green Infrastructure Statement is also submitted.

2. The site and its context

6A Station Road is a small, single-storey commercial unit at the junction of Station Road and Usk Road, within the historic centre of Caerleon and within the Caerleon Conservation Area. The unit was last used as a florist's shop (Use Class A1) and is currently vacant.

The building is long and narrow, with a pitched roof, a front entrance, a secondary door on the side elevation and small high-level windows. Its internal floor area is approximately 42 m². The existing external finishes are:

- walls: white painted finish;
- roof: corrugated steel sheeting;
- windows and doors: white uPVC.

The unit adjoins the main roads through the centre of Caerleon and is clearly visible from the public highway. It sits among buildings of mixed age and use. Natural slate is the traditional and prevailing roof material in this part of the conservation area.

3. The proposal

3.1 Change of use

The unit will be used as the office of an independent financial adviser. The use is low intensity:

- clients will attend by appointment only, so there will be no walk-in customers and no queueing or congregation outside;
- proposed opening hours are Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 17:00, closed at weekends and on bank holidays;
- one full-time member of staff will work at the premises;
- there is no external storage, plant, trade waste or noise-generating activity.

A2 financial and professional services are a recognised town centre use. The change will bring a vacant unit back into active commercial use, generate daytime footfall that supports neighbouring shops and services, and secure the future maintenance of the building.

3.2 Replacement roof covering

The existing corrugated steel roof covering will be removed and replaced with natural Spanish slate. The roof pitch, form, ridge height and eaves line will remain unchanged. A slate of a blue-grey colour will be used, chosen to match the natural slate roofs nearby, with a matching ridge detail. The Council may wish to approve the final specification and a sample by condition.

No other external alterations are proposed. The walls, windows and doors remain as existing.

4. Design

4.1 Character

Amount	No new floorspace. The existing building of about 42 m ² internal floor area is reused.
Layout	Unchanged. The open-plan interior will be fitted out as an office and client meeting room.
Scale	Unchanged. There is no change to the height, footprint or massing.
Appearance	The unsympathetic corrugated steel roof is replaced with

	natural slate, the traditional roofing material of the conservation area. The walls, windows and doors are unchanged.
Landscaping	The site is fully built on. There is no existing soft landscaping and none is lost.

4.2 Environmental sustainability

Reusing an existing building avoids the carbon cost of new construction. The re-roofing works give the opportunity to improve roof insulation to current Building Regulations standards, reducing the building's energy use. Natural slate is a durable, low-maintenance material with a very long service life.

4.3 Community safety

Bringing a vacant unit back into daytime use increases activity and natural surveillance at a prominent junction. The appointment-only use will not attract anti-social behaviour.

5. Access and movement

- Pedestrian access is unchanged, through the existing front entrance directly off the public footway.
- No new or altered vehicular access is proposed and there is no on-site parking, which is also the case for the existing retail use.
- The site is in the centre of Caerleon, within easy walking distance of local bus services and residential areas. Clients and staff can reach it on foot, by bicycle or by public transport, in line with the sustainable transport hierarchy in Planning Policy Wales.
- An appointment-only office with one member of staff will generate fewer trips than an open retail use, so there will be no adverse effect on highway safety or on parking demand in the area.
- Level access will be kept where possible, and reasonable adjustments will be made for clients with mobility needs, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

6. Heritage impact assessment

6.1 Significance

The Caerleon Conservation Area was designated in 1970, extended in 1977 and reappraised in 2019. Its special interest comes mainly from Caerleon's outstanding Roman heritage, combined with its medieval and later townscape. Traditional materials, including natural slate roofs, make an important contribution to that character.

6A Station Road is not a listed building. In its current condition, its corrugated steel roof is a discordant feature that detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

6.2 Impact of the proposal

Roof covering	Positive. Natural slate replaces corrugated steel and restores a traditional roofscape visible from Station Road and Usk Road.
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Change of use	Neutral to positive. There are no external works for the use itself, and an active, well-maintained frontage replaces a vacant unit.
Setting of nearby heritage assets	Neutral to positive. There is no increase in scale, and the building's appearance improves.
Archaeology	No groundworks or excavation are proposed, so buried archaeology will not be disturbed.

6.3 Choice of Spanish slate

Natural Spanish slate is proposed rather than Welsh slate. It is a natural, split slate of similar colour and texture to the slate roofs found in the conservation area, and at normal viewing distances it gives a traditional appearance. It is also widely used on roofs in historic areas across Wales. For a small, single-storey commercial building, it achieves the conservation benefit of a natural slate roof at a proportionate cost, which makes the improvement viable. The applicant is happy to provide a sample for the Council's approval.

6.4 Conclusion on heritage

The proposal preserves, and in the case of the roof clearly enhances, the character and appearance of the Caerleon Conservation Area. It therefore satisfies the statutory duty to give special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing that character or appearance, now contained in the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023. It is also consistent with Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12), Chapter 6, and Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment.

7. Planning policy

The proposal accords with the relevant national and local policies, in particular:

- **Future Wales: The National Plan 2040** and **Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12)**, which support town centre uses in accessible locations, the reuse of existing buildings, and the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.
- **Technical Advice Note 12: Design** and **TAN 24: The Historic Environment**.
- **Newport Local Development Plan 2011–2026**: Policy SP9 (conservation of the natural, historic and built environment), GP2 (general amenity), GP6 (quality of design) and CE7 (conservation areas), together with the Plan's policies for commercial uses within district centres.

8. Summary

- A vacant retail unit is brought back into productive use as a low-impact, appointment-only professional office.
- There are no changes to scale, footprint, access or parking, and there are no adverse effects on neighbours' amenity or highway safety.
- The corrugated steel roof is replaced with natural slate, a clear enhancement to the Caerleon Conservation Area.
- The building has been inspected on several occasions, and no bats or evidence of roosting were found.

For these reasons, the Council is respectfully asked to grant planning permission.