

Delegated Decision Report

Application No:	25/0949	Statutory Period Expires:	10th February 2026
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Site:	<i>Mezzanine Floors Exchange House At The Corn Exchange High Street Newport South Wales</i>		
Proposal:	<i>CHANGE OF USE OF FIRST FLOOR FROM B1 OFFICE SPACE TO D2 RECREATION & GAMING SPACE FOR LIVE ACTION IMMERSIVE GAMES (ESCAPE ROOMS)</i>		
Applicant:	<i>E Chopping</i>		
Type:	Full	Ward:	Stow Hill
Decision:	GRANTED WITH CONDITIONS		

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 None.

2. SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

2.1 The site is located within the city centre in an area characterised by businesses that contribute toward the night time economy. The site is located in the city centre conservation area and forms part of the Grade II listed old Post Office building.

3. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Change of use of first floor to a live action immersive games room, also known as an *escape room*.

4. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

App Number	Proposal	Decision	Decision Date
23/1096	CHANGE OF USE OF GROUND FLOOR FROM B1 OFFICE TO LIVE MUSIC VENUE, COMMUNITY SPACE AND NIGHTCLUB	Granted with conditions	22.02.2024
23/1097	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR ALTERATIONS TO CONVERT THE PROPERTY TO A LIVE MUSIC VENUE AND THE INSTALLATION OF INTERNAL STUD WALLS, TWO BARS, A STAGE AND WCS	Granted with conditions	01.02.2024

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023

5.2 THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: FUTURE WALES - THE NATIONAL PLAN 2040

Future Wales sets out the Welsh Government's land use priorities and provides a national land use framework for SDPs and LDPs. Future Wales concentrates on development and land use issues of national significance, indicating areas of major opportunities and change, highlighting areas that need protecting and enhancing and helping to co-ordinate the delivery of Welsh Government policies to maximise positive outcomes.

Policy 1 - Where Wales Will Grow

Policy 2 - Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration - Strategic Placemaking

Policy 6 – Town Centre First

Policy 9 - Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure

5.3 PLANNING POLICY WALES (EDITION 12) 2024

5.4 NEWPORT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2011-2026)

- SP1 – Sustainability

- SP9 – Conservation of the Natural, Historic and Built Environment
- SP12 – Community Facilities
- SP18 – Urban Regeneration
- GP2 - General Amenity
- GP4 – Highways and Accessibility
- GP6 – Quality of Design
- GP7 – Environmental Protection and Public Health
- CE6 – Archaeology
- CE7 – Conservation Areas
- EM3 – Alternative Uses of Employment Land
- T4 – Parking
- R4 – Non-Retail Uses in Other City Centre Shopping Areas
- W3 – Provision for Waste Management Facilities in Development

5.4 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

- Sustainable Travel
- Waste Storage and Collection
- Archaeology and Archaeologically Sensitive Areas
- Wildlife and Development
- Parking Standards

6. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 6.1 Principal Heritage Officer: I have had previous discussion with the applicant regarding these works and, following inspection of the site it is considered that, due to the modern construction of the interiors (which formed part of a substantial C20 rebuild behind the street-facing frontage), the special interest of this Grade II Listed asset appears to be reserved solely for the grand south-eastern elevation, as identified within the list entry - which states: "Included for the contribution of its good early C20 facade to High Street. The very large modern attached blocks are not included."

The proposed consists of "self-contained rooms, with self-standing walls and false ceiling about 10cm below existing hanging ceiling tile system". I would, however, say that we need clarification that:

- None of the proposed partitions will impact unduly upon existing windows (and therefore impact upon the external views of the principal frontage).
- Whether any external signage is proposed to be attached to the listed front elevation.

Provided this is not the case, it would be considered that the proposed would not result in any impact upon special interest – and no LBC for internal works would be required.

- 6.2 Ecology Officer: No response.

- 6.3 Drainage Manager: No response.

- 6.4 Environmental Health Officer: No response.

- 6.5 Waste Manager: No response.

- 6.6 Newport Civic Society: No response.

- 6.7 Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust: No response.

- 6.8 Highways Officer: No objection.

7. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

Neighbour and Ward member notification letters were sent on the 18th December 2025 and a Site Notice was put up on the 26th December 2025.

- 7.1 NEIGHBOURS: No response.

7.2 COUNCILLORS: No response.

8. ASSESSMENT

8.1 Principle of Development:

8.1.1 The application site is located within a settlement boundary and in the city centre, therefore, the principle of development is considered acceptable in accordance with Policy SP1.

8.2 Impact on the Listed Building, Conservation Area and Archaeology

8.2.1 The proposal seeks to use existing pedestrian accesses to gain entry to the first floor of the building. No external alterations are proposed, and the internal partition walls would not impact views of the external windows. Further information confirms that no signage is proposed to be attached to the building.

8.2.2 The Principal Heritage Officer raises no concerns regarding impact upon the listed building or conservation area, and notes that the scheme of works would in themselves not require listed building consent. In terms of the duties to preserve or enhance the listed building and conservation area as set out within the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023, the proposal is considered to fulfil those duties and ensure the continued use of the heritage asset.

8.2.3 The proposal is located at first floor, therefore the proposal would not disturb any below ground deposits. The proposal is considered to result in no adverse impact on archaeology in accordance with Policy CE6.

8.3 Town Centre First, Community Facilities and Urban Regeneration

8.3.1 The proposed indoor leisure use and reuse of the existing city centre building, is considered to accord with the aims of Policy 6 of Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 which seeks to focus commercial and leisure facilities within town centres and be accessible by public transport. Policies SP12 and SP18 also seeks to focus development in sustainable locations and the regeneration of the city centre. The scheme is considered to accord with national and local planning policies.

8.4 Impact on Amenity

8.4.1 The proposal does not include any additional built form, or window openings, therefore the scheme would not alter any existing relationships regarding, overshadowing, overlooking or daylight and sunlight levels entering existing properties.

8.4.2 The wider use of the building contains no residential uses. The hours of operation are proposed to be 1200 – 2200 hours Monday to Sundays (incl. Bank Holidays). Given the absence of residential uses and the city centre location adjacent other uses which also open late into the evening, it is considered that the hours of operation would not result in an adverse impact with regard to residential amenity. The proposal accords with Policy GP2.

8.5 Impact on Highways and Parking

8.5.1 The Highways Officer has raised no objection to the scheme, noting the existing secure bicycle storage shall be utilised with the provision of the wider Corn Exchange live music venue. The scheme would not alter existing vehicle accesses to the site nor would the scheme alter the existing car parking provision provided by the NCP car park above the site. The site location is inherently sustainable being located in the city centre. The proposal accords with Policies GP4 and T4.

8.6 Alternative Uses of Employment Land

8.6.1 The proposed development would result in the loss of established employment space therefore Policy EM3 is applicable. No marketing information has been submitted, but the applicant confirms that the site was previously tenanted by a housing associated. The proposed use seeks to extend the existing use of the ground floor of the Corn Exchange (D2 use class) as previously permitted. The marketing information submitted with application 23/1096 directly relates to the current application and concluded that despite being marketed for over 3 years, no enquiries were received for the whole accommodation. The property was marketed widely for a period of approximately three years, during which

time there was very little interest from potential occupiers. Criterion (i) of Policy EM3 is therefore satisfied.

8.6.2 Criterion (ii) requires that there is a sufficient range and choice of employment land available, there are a range of sites in close proximity, including the former Royal Mail site (40,000sqft), Admiral HQ (60,000sqft), and Chartist Tower (15,000sqft). The Employment Land Review (2013) produced to inform the preparation of the Local Development Plan indicated that there is 7.5 – 9 years' worth of supply of available office accommodation within Newport; and there is an over-supply of second-hand accommodation relative to demand, with a significant proportion located within the city centre. Additionally, since the pandemic, working practices for traditionally office-based roles have adapted resulting in more people working from home or hot desking existing facilities which has reduced the intensity of office use. As such, there is less of a demand for such office use which as noted above, is in over-supply. Therefore, taking into account the market information above, it is considered that criterion (ii) of Policy EM3 is met.

8.6.3 Whilst the application site is situated in close proximity to the Godfrey Road employment site, it is not considered that the proposed change of use would have any adverse impacts on this allocation. Criterion (iii) of Policy EM3 is satisfied.

8.7 Non-retail Uses in Other City Centre Shopping Areas

8.7.1 The site is located within the city centre, but outside the designated primary and secondary shopping frontage areas. As set out in section 8.4 of this report, the proposal would not result in any adverse impacts upon residential amenity. Any environmental disturbance is considered to be suitably controlled by way condition relating to hours of operation. The site location is conveniently sited near the train station and bus stops. The proposal is considered to accord with Policy R4.

8.8 Waste and Recycling

8.8.1 The supporting statement confirms that the existing waste and recycling arrangements of The Corn Exchange are to be used. No objections have been received from the Waste Officer, and the waste and recycling arrangement is considered acceptable given the intrinsic link between The Corn Exchange and the application site. The proposal accords with Policy W3.

9. **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

9.1 ***Crime and Disorder Act 1998***

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. This duty has been considered in the evaluation of this application. It is considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable increase in crime and disorder as a result of the proposed decision.

9.2 ***Equality Act 2010***

The Equality Act 2010 identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership.

9.3 Having due regard to advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these differ from the need of other people; and
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

9.4 The above duty has been given due consideration in the determination of this application. It is considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impact upon persons who share a protected characteristic, over and above any other person, as a result of the proposed decision.

9.5 ***Planning (Wales) Act 2015 (Welsh language)***

Section 31 of the Act clarifies that impacts on the Welsh language may be a consideration when taking decisions on applications for planning permission so far as it is material to the application. This duty has been given due consideration in the determination of this application. It is considered that there would be no material effect upon the use of the Welsh language in Newport as a result of the proposed decision.

9.6 ***Newport's Well-Being Plan 2018-23***

The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 imposes a duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development in accordance with the sustainable development principle to act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This duty has been considered during the preparation of Newport's Well-Being Plan 2018-23, which was signed off on 1 May 2018. The duty imposed by the Act together with the goals and objectives of Newport's Well-Being Plan 2018-23 have been considered in the evaluation of this application. It is considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of wellbeing objectives as a result of the proposed decision.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The proposal accords with relevant national and local planning policies and is hereby granted subject to conditions and notes.

**11. DECISION
GRANTED WITH CONDITIONS:**

01 The development shall be implemented in accordance with the following plans and documents:

- First Floor Plans and Window Positions (Received: 16.01.2026)
- CEM Ground Floor Plan (Received: 07.01.2026)
- Internal Floor Plans (Received: 15.12.2025)
- Site Location Plan (Received: 05.11.2025)

Reason: In the interests of clarity and to ensure the development complies with the submitted plans and documents on which this decision was based.

02 The hours of operation shall be limited to 1200 – 2200 Monday to Sundays (incl. Bank Holidays).

REASON: In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with Policy GP2 of the Newport Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (Adopted January 2015).

NOTE TO APPLICANT

01 The development plan for Newport is the Newport Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (Adopted January 2015). Policies SP1, SP9, SP12, SP18, GP2, GP4, GP6, GP7, CE6, CE7, EM3, T4, R4 and W3 were relevant to the determination of this application.

02 Due to the minor nature of the proposed development (including any demolition) and the location of the proposed development, it is considered that the proposals did not need to be screened under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.