

Delegated Decision Report

Application No:	25/1062	Statutory Period Expires:	3rd March 2026
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Site:	2 - 4 Skinner Street Newport South Wales NP20 1GY		
Proposal:	CHANGE OF USE FROM RETAIL UNIT TO PRIVATE HIRE TAXI OFFICE		
Applicant:	Z Abbas		
Type:	Full	Ward:	Stow Hill
Decision:	REFUSED		

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 None.

2. SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

2.1 The application site is located within the defined urban boundary and City Centre. The unit faces onto Skinner Street and is surrounded by mixed uses including commercial and residential. The site is located within a defined Archaeological Sensitive Area and is allocated as a Secondary shopping frontage as shown on the proposals map that accompanies the Newport Local Development Plan. Furthermore, The units form part of Gloucester Chambers which is a grade II listed building and they are located in the Town Centre Conservation Area.

3. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The application is seeking consent for the change of use of the unit from a A1 retail to a Sui Generis private hire taxi office. The business will operate on a pre-booked basis but will also accommodate walk-in customers. Externally no alterations to the front shopfront elevation are proposed.

3.2 The proposed hours of opening are Monday to Wednesday 10:00 – 18:00, Thursday to Friday 12:00 – 00:00, Saturday to Sunday and bank holidays 14:00 – 00:00

4. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

89/0881	ALTERATIONS TO FRONT ELEVATION BY REPOSITIONING OF MAIN ENTRANCE DOORS	G
02/1339	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATION FOR REPLACEMENT SHOPFRONT	GC
02/1340	INSTALLATION OF SHOPFRONT	GC
03/0320	INSTALLATION OF REPLACEMENT SHOPFRONT (AMENDMENT TO PLANNING PERMISSION 02/1340)	G
03/0321	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATION FOR INSTALLATION OF REPLACEMENT SHOPFRONT	GC
06/0351	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR RETENTION OF SHOP SIGN	R
22/0249	REPLACEMENT OF 3 NO. SHOPFRONTS TO GROUND FLOOR RETAIL UNITS	GC
22/0357	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR REPLACEMENT OF 3 NO. SHOPFRONTS TO GROUND FLOOR RETAIL UNITS	GC

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 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
- Policy 33 - National Growth Area – Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys

5.2 PLANNING POLICY WALES (EDITION 12) 2024

3.3 - Good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise.

3.4 - Meeting the objectives of good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process and should be applied to all development proposals at all scales.

4.1.45 Manual for Streets and the Active Travel Design Guidance provide advice on reducing the speed and volume of motor vehicles. This includes creating connected and permeable road networks, with filtered permeability to prioritise walking and cycling, and careful consideration of issues such as street layout and dimensions, and the design and location of footways (including use of continuous footways at side streets), crossings, parking, trees, planters and surface materials.

4.1.50 Car parking provision is a major influence on how people choose to travel and the pattern of development. Where and how cars are parked can in turn be a major factor in the quality of a place.

4.1.51 - Parking provision should be informed by the local context, including public transport accessibility, urban design principles and the objective of reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. Planning authorities must support schemes which keep parking levels down, especially off-street parking, when well designed. Parking provision should be informed by the local context, including public transport accessibility, urban design principles and the objective of reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. Planning authorities must support schemes which keep parking levels down, especially off-street parking, when well designed. The needs of disabled people must be recognised and adequate parking provided for them.

4.1.52 Planning authorities must require good standards of car parking design, which do not allow vehicles to dominate the street or inconvenience people walking and cycling. This includes preventing pavement parking through the design of the street. Car parking should be overlooked by surrounding properties to provide natural surveillance.

6.1.10 - There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage. For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

5.3 Technical Advice Notes

- Technical advice note (TAN) 4: retail and commercial development
- Technical advice note (TAN) 5: nature conservation and planning
- Technical advice note (TAN) 12: design
- Technical advice note (TAN) 15: development and flood risk (2004)
- Technical advice note (TAN) 23: economic development
- Technical advice note (TAN) 24: the historic environment

5.4 NEWPORT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2011-2026)

SP1- Sustainability
SP3- Flood Risk
SP9- Conservation of The Natural, Historic and Built Environment
SP17- Employment Land
SP19- Assessment of Retail Need
SP20- Waste Management
GP2- General Amenity
GP4- Highways and Accessibility
GP5- Natural Environment
GP6- Quality of Design
CE5- Locally Listed Buildings and Sites
R1- City Centre Schemes
R3- Non Retail Uses in Secondary City Centre Shopping Areas
T3 – Road Hierarchy.

5.4 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

- 5.4.1 The Newport City Council Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Guidance (adopted August 2015) was relevant to the determination of this application. Furthermore, the Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal was also relevant.

6. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

6.1 Heritage Officer:

2-4 Skinner Street is located within the Town Centre Conservation Area.

I cannot see that any external alteration is proposed as part of this change of use and, therefore, there will be no impact upon the character or appearance of that area.

I would, however, highlight that any proposals for new shopfront signage which require advertisement consent should give both our Shopfronts SPG and the conservation area location due consideration

6.2 Local Highways Authority:

The site is not suitable for a conventional taxi firm to operate. There are no appropriate parking or pick up areas. A conventional operation therefore raises objections.

The application suggests three personnel. It is not clear how many vehicles will be operated, or how many staff are on duty at any time, but Skinner St is designated as a pedestrian zone. There is a facility for loading (limited hours) but no parking at all.

The SPG requires 1.25 spaces for each taxi, plus 1/three staff but there is no provision for staff or taxi parking

Staff cycle parking and electric vehicle charging are also considered necessary for this operation along with other staff welfare facilities.

6.3 HENEB:

Thank you for notifying us of this application; consequently, we have reviewed the detailed information contained on your website and can confirm that archaeological mitigation is not required. We have reviewed the area against the information in the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) which shows as follows:

The works are within the Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA) of Newport and Conservation Area of Newport Town Centre. The property is part of a Grade II Listed Building (Cadw ref. 23123). A review of the 1st – 4th Edition (1883, 1902, 1920, 1937) historic Ordnance Survey map shows the footprint of the property. The proposal includes a change of use. The works are of small scale, and with our understanding of the historic environment, it is unlikely that significant archaeological features will be encountered or that existing features will be disturbed. Therefore, the potential impact is considered low.

As a result, there is unlikely to be an archaeological restraint to this proposed development and consequently, as the archaeological advisors to your Members, we have no objections to the positive determination of this application. The record is not definitive, however, and features may be disturbed during the course of the work. In this event, please contact this division of the Trust.

7. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 7.1 Neighbour and Ward member notification letters were sent on 09.01.2026. One comment was received which objected to the application. The key issues were the potential use class implications, highway and pedestrian safety concerns, neighbour amenity, visual amenity and sustainable transport

8. ASSESSMENT

8.1 Principle of Development:

- 8.1.1 The application site is within the defined settlement boundary and within the City Centre as shown on the proposals map that accompany the Newport City Council Local Development Plan, accordingly there is a presumption in favour of development and the efficient use of land is encouraged.

Policy R3 (R3 Non-Retail Uses in Secondary City Centre Shopping Areas) is applicable to the assessment and determination of this application and states the following:

PROPOSALS FOR NON-RETAIL USES IN NEWPORT CITY CENTRE AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL IN THE SECONDARY FRONTAGES IDENTIFIED WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- i) THE PROPOSAL, EITHER ON ITS OWN OR IN CONJUNCTION WITH ADJOINING UNITS, WOULD NOT RESULT IN A BREAK IN THE RETAIL FRONTAGE OF MORE THAN 20 METRES;
- ii) THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT RESULT IN A GAP IN THE RETAIL FRONTAGE OF MORE THAN 2 UNITS;
- iii) AT LEAST 60% OF ANY FRONTAGE LENGTH IS MAINTAINED IN RETAIL USE;
- iv) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT INVOLVE A PROMINENT OR CORNER UNIT;
- v) THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT LOCAL RESIDENTIAL AMENITY, EITHER IN ITS OWN RIGHT OR CUMULATIVELY WITH OTHER USES;
- vi) ANY ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL DISTURBANCE CAN BE EFFECTIVELY CONTROLLED THROUGH THE USE OF PLANNING CONDITIONS OR NOISE ABATEMENT ZONE CONTROLS;
- vii) THE DEVELOPMENT IS ACCESSIBLE IN TERMS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROVISION, AND ASSOCIATED PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT FOLLOWING OPERATING HOURS WILL NOT BE DIRECTED THROUGH RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

- 8.1.2 The proposal has been assessed against Policy R3 of Newport City Council Local Development Plan is deemed to be compliant with criteria (iv) to (vii) as the site is not considered prominent or a corner unit, will not adversely affect residential amenity, and is located in a highly sustainable location. Because the scheme is seeking consent for the change of use to a Sui Generis use, and the neighbouring properties while currently vacant, they have a lawful use of A1. Therefore, the proposal will also be compliant with criteria i to iii of Policy R3.

8.2 Visual Amenity/ Character and Appearance:

- 8.2.1 The proposals do not include any external alterations to the building and so would not result in an adverse impact to the visual amenity of the building or wider area. The use of the site as a Sui Generis commercial offering is compatible with its location and would not be harmful to the character of the area.

8.3 Residential Amenity:

- 8.3.1 The proposed development is considered to be acceptable avoiding any unacceptable

impact in respect of outlook, overbearing or overlooking impact. In addition, the business's opening hours are deemed appropriate for the nature of the proposed use of the site, ensuring no adverse effect on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

8.4 Highways:

8.4.1 Skinner Street is designed as a pedestrian zone, with the provision of laybys to facilitate loading under limited hour control but the street is not to be used for parking at all. The Parking Standards SPG states that 1.25 parking spaces should be provided for each vehicle in operation and 1 parking space for 3 employees. While information has not been provided to confirm the amount of vehicles in operation the nature of Skinner Street means no parking can be provided, no detail has been submitted to accompany this application to demonstrate where parking will/could occur and as a result the proposal is not compliant with the requirements of the SPG and policy T4 of the Newport Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (adopted January 2015).

8.4.2 The Local Highways Authority (LHA) were consulted on the application and objected as the scheme is not policy compliant and have raised concern due to the lacking information of how the scheme would operate including vehicle parking which is fundamental to the proposed use. The LHA stated there are no appropriate parking or pick up areas on Skinner Street and that staff cycle parking and electric vehicle charging are also considered necessary for this operation along with other staff welfare facilities. Accordingly, the proposed change of use to sui generis is deemed to be unacceptable.

8.5 Biodiversity:

8.5.1 Policy 9 of Future Wales states that in all cases, action towards securing the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity (to provide a net benefit), the resilience of ecosystems and green infrastructure assets must be demonstrated. Policy GP5 of the NLDP supports this and states that proposals will be expected to maintain, protect and enhance ecological networks and features of importance for biodiversity. In this case no enhancement has been proposed, therefore a condition requiring a biodiversity enhancement shall be attached to any consent requiring details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

8.5.2 In this case no enhancement has been proposed nor is the proposal supported by a Green Infrastructure statement as required by Chapter 6 of PPW 12. PPW12 6.4.12 states: *"Where biodiversity enhancement proportionate to the scale and nature of the development is not proposed as part of an application, significant weight will be given to its absence, and unless other significant material considerations indicate otherwise, it will be necessary to refuse permission"*. In accordance with the requirements of section 6.4.12 of PPW12 the absence of a biodiversity enhancement has been considered and as there are no other significant material considerations that would outweigh this requirement it is considered necessary to attach the lack of an enhancement as a further reason for refusal.

8.6 Heritage:

8.6.1 The Heritage Officer was consulted on the application. It was considered that the development does not include any external alteration and therefore there will be no impact upon the character or appearance of the area. As a result, there are no objections.

8.7 Archaeology:

8.7.1 The application site is within an Archaeological Sensitive Area, however as the proposal is limited to the use of the land and does not include any groundworks/physical alterations it is considered that any archaeological interest would be uninterrupted as a result of the development. Henneb have been consulted and stated no objection to the development.

8.8 Response to Third Parties:

8.8.1 The highway and pedestrian safety, neighbour amenity, visual amenity, and potential use class implications have been considered in an earlier section of this report.

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 proposed development is not accompanied by sufficient information to demonstrate that the use can operate without resulting in an unacceptable adverse effect on the highway safety. It is deemed to fail the requirement of the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Guidance and as a result, the proposal is contrary to Policy T4 and GP4 of the Newport Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (adopted January 2015) and is therefore refused.

11. **DECISION Refused**

01 The development has a significant adverse effect on interests of acknowledged importance, namely highway and pedestrian safety and the impact upon on street parking, the proposal is not supported by sufficient information to overcome the identified concerns and is therefore contrary to Planning Policy Wales 12, Technical Advice Note 12: Design and Policy GP4 of the Newport Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (adopted January 2015)

02 The proposal does not include a Green Infrastructure Statement or an appropriate

scheme for biodiversity net-benefit, contrary to Policy SP1 and GP5 of the Newport Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (adopted January 2015), Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) and Policy 9 of Future Wales.

NOTE TO APPLICANT

01 This decision relates to plan Nos: Site Location Plan and Existing Floor Plan, and Existing and Proposed Ground Floor Plan 1003(01)25

02 The development plan for Newport is the Newport Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (Adopted January 2015). Policies SP1, SP3, SP9, SP17, SP19, SP20, GP2, GP4, GP5, GP6, CE5, R1, R3 and T3 were relevant to the determination of this application.

03 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.