

DESIGN, ACCESS AND PLANNING STATEMENT



Property: 175A Commercial Street (Unit 3, Westgate Building),
Newport, NP20 1JN

Application Type: Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning
Act 1990 – Variation of Condition 1 (Approved Plans)

Proposal: Conversion of Approved Study Room to a Seventh Single-
Occupancy Bedroom

Relevant Planning Permission: 25/0706

Section 73 Application



175A Commercial Street, Newport

1. Introduction

This Design, Access and Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Tomilmeriad Limited in support of an application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary Condition 1 (Approved Plans) of the existing planning permission relating to 175A Commercial Street, Newport.

The property benefits from planning permission for its use as a six-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

The sole purpose of this application is to substitute the approved internal floor plan to allow the room presently identified as a study room to be used as a seventh single-occupancy bedroom.

The proposed seventh bedroom has an approximate usable floor area of 7.0 m² and is intended for occupation by one person only.

The proposal would therefore increase the accommodation from:

6 bedrooms

to:

7 bedrooms.

No other substantive changes to the approved development are proposed through this application.

In particular, the proposal does not involve:

- any extension to the building;
- any increase in the external footprint;
- any change to the principal elevation;
- any additional window or door openings;
- any alteration to the established access arrangements; or
- any change to the underlying HMO use of the property.

The proposal represents a limited internal amendment to an already approved residential HMO development.



Aerial view of the site and surrounding city-centre context.



Entrance to the building marked with red lines.

2. Site and Existing Development

175A Commercial street occupies part of the historic westgate building in the city center. The property is situated in a highly accessible city-centre location, close to shops, employment, services and public transport.

Planning permission has already established the acceptability of the HMO use at this location.

The current approved arrangement provides six bedrooms together with communal kitchen, living/dining, sanitary, circulation and ancillary accommodation.

The approved plans also identify a separate study room.

This application seeks to make more efficient residential use of that existing room by redesignating it as a seventh single bedroom.

The physical envelope of the property remains unchanged.

3. Proposed Amendment

The proposed amendments is:

Approved arrangement: Study Room

Proposed arrangement: Bedroom 7 – Single Occupancy

The proposed bedroom provides approximately 7.0 m² of usable floor area. No subdivision or extension of the room is necessary to facilitate the proposed use.

The amendment therefore makes efficient use of existing floorspace within the approved development rather than creating additional building volume or extending the property.

4. Principle of Development and Housing Need

The principle of residential HMO use has already been established through the existing planning permission.

The proposed amendment does not introduce a new land use. Instead, it represents a modest intensification of the approved HMO through the addition of one single-occupancy bedroom.

The proposal will provide one additional unit of good-quality rented accommodation within Newport city centre and make more efficient use of an existing building.

The amendment contributes, albeit at a modest scale, towards meeting the continuing need for a range of housing options within Newport.

The proposal is particularly appropriate within a sustainable city-centre location where residents have convenient access to employment, retail, services and public transport. Importantly, the additional accommodation is achieved entirely within the existing building envelope and therefore requires no extension, additional land take or alteration to the principal elevation.

5. Bedroom Size and Residential Amenity

The proposed Bedroom7 has an approximate usable floor area of 7.0 m² and is expressly intended for single-person occupation only.

This exceeds Newport City Council's published minimum bedroom area of 6.51 m² for a single occupant, subject to the Council's normal method of measuring usable floor area. The room will accommodate the normal furniture required for a single bedroom while maintaining appropriate circulation.

The proposed designation is therefore considered appropriate for one resident and will be reflected accordingly in the HMO licensing arrangements.

The change does not involve the loss of the principal communal living facilities within the property.

Residents will continue to have access to the approved communal kitchen and living/dining accommodation together with the sanitary facilities serving the development.

The proposal consequently retains a clear distinction between private bedroom accommodation and shared communal facilities.

6. Effect of the Additional Occupant

The principal planning consideration arising from the amendment is the increase in maximum occupancy from six to seven persons.

The applicant has therefore considered whether the additional resident would create unacceptable pressure upon:

- communal amenity space;
- kitchen facilities;
- bathroom and sanitary provision;
- fire safety and means of escape;

- ventilation;
- noise and acoustic amenity;
- refuse and recycling arrangements;
- access and movement; and
- the historic character of the building.

These matters are addressed below.

6.1 Communal Amenity

The approved development already incorporates dedicated communal kitchen and living/dining accommodation.

The seventh bedroom is created from a secondary study room rather than from the principal communal living accommodation.

The established communal facilities therefore remain available to all occupants.

The modest increase of one resident is not considered to result in an unacceptable reduction in the quality or functionality of the remaining communal accommodation.

6.2 Kitchen and Sanitary Facilities

The approved kitchen and sanitary facilities are retained.

The increase is limited to one additional person, and no further subdivision of the principal communal facilities is proposed.

The property will additionally be subject to the separate HMO licensing regime, through which Newport City Council can confirm that the kitchen, sanitary and management arrangements are suitable for the authorised number of occupants.

The applicant will ensure that the property satisfies the applicable HMO licensing requirements for a maximum occupation of seven persons prior to occupation at that level.

6.3 Ventilation and Internal Environment

Bedroom 7 will be treated as a habitable room and provided with appropriate ventilation in accordance with the applicable Building Regulations and the ventilation strategy for the development.

The additional bedroom does not require any alteration to the principal elevation.

The established approach to ventilation, which has been developed having regard to the heritage constraints of the building, will continue to be applied.

This ensures that adequate internal environmental conditions can be provided without unnecessary intervention to significant historic fabric.

6.4 Noise and Acoustic Amenity

The approved development is subject to an established acoustic strategy designed to safeguard the living conditions of HMO occupants.

The proposed seventh bedroom will receive the same appropriate consideration in respect of internal and external noise as the other habitable rooms.

Existing and proposed acoustic measures within the development include enhanced acoustic separation between relevant spaces and appropriate treatment of the building envelope.

The increase of one resident is modest and is not expected to materially alter the overall noise characteristics of the approved HMO.

The property will additionally remain subject to HMO management requirements, providing a further mechanism for ensuring that the occupation of the property does not result in unacceptable impacts upon residential amenity.

6.5 Waste and Recycling

The previous approved scheme incorporates arrangements for general waste and recycling storage.

The addition of a single resident would result in only a limited increase in household waste generation.

Existing waste-management arrangements will be retained and, where necessary, management capacity will be adjusted to accommodate the seventh resident.

Waste will continue to be appropriately segregated and presented for collection in accordance with Newport City Council requirements.

The additional occupancy therefore does not require any new permanent external refuse structure or alteration affecting the street scene.

6.6 Access and Sustainable Location

There is no alteration to pedestrian access into or through the building.

The property occupies a highly accessible city-centre location where residents can conveniently access shops, employment, services and public transport.

The increase of one resident is therefore unlikely to result in a material change in transport or highway impacts compared with the approved six-person HMO.

No alteration to the existing access arrangements is required.

7. Heritage and Design

The building is of recognised architectural and historic interest and the design approach throughout the development has sought to minimise unnecessary intervention to historic fabric.

The present proposal is particularly limited in heritage terms.

The change from study room to bedroom is principally a change in the designation and occupation of an existing internal room.

There will be:

- no extension;
- no alteration to the building footprint;
- no new external openings;
- no alteration to the principal elevation;
- no material change to the appearance of the building; and
- no additional visual impact upon the surrounding historic environment.

The proposal therefore represents an efficient use of the existing building while maintaining the heritage-sensitive approach established through the approved development.

8. Planning Policy Considerations

The proposal should be considered against the Newport Local Development Plan 2011–2026 and other relevant national and local planning guidance.

Particular consideration is given to:

Policy H8 – Self Contained Accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation

The principle of HMO use has already been established. The proposal retains that use and provides an additional single-person bedroom within the existing building.

Policy GP2 – General Amenity

The additional occupancy can be accommodated without unacceptable effects upon the amenity of existing or future occupants. Appropriate bedroom space, communal facilities, sanitary provision, ventilation, acoustic treatment and waste arrangements will continue to be provided.

Policy GP6 – Quality of Design

The amendment represents an efficient reuse of existing internal floorspace without requiring additional extensions or visually intrusive external works.

Policy GP7 – Environmental Protection and Public Health

Noise, ventilation, waste and general residential conditions continue to be addressed through the established design strategy together with Building Regulations and HMO licensing controls.

Policy SP9 – Conservation of the Natural, Historic and Built Environment

No external alterations arise directly from the conversion of the study into Bedroom 7. The proposal therefore preserves the architectural character and appearance of the building.

9. Scope of the Section 73 Application

For clarity, this application seeks to vary Condition 1 only in order to substitute the approved floor plan with the revised floor plan showing the study room as Bedroom 7.

The applicant is not seeking to vary the other conditions attached to the extant planning permission through this application.

Those conditions will continue to operate in accordance with their approved or discharged status.

The proposed amendment should therefore be considered as a focused variation to the approved plans rather than a reconsideration of the wider development.

10. Summary of Constraints and Mitigation

Planning consideration	Potential effect of seventh occupier	Proposed mitigation / planning response
Bedroom size & residential amenity	The proposed Bedroom 7 must provide an acceptable standard of private accommodation for a single occupier.	Bedroom 7 provides approximately 7.0 m ² of usable floor area and is intended for single occupancy only. This exceeds the relevant 6.51 m ² minimum bedroom standard, subject to final measurement in accordance with the Council's HMO licensing methodology.
Communal amenity & intensity of use	Increasing occupancy from six to seven could place additional demand on the communal kitchen and living/dining facilities and increase the overall intensity of occupation.	The approved 21 m ² kitchen and 20 m ² living room are retained without reduction. The seventh bedroom is formed from the existing study within the approved internal envelope, so no existing communal amenity space is lost. The increase is limited to one additional single occupier.
Sanitary facilities	A seventh occupier increases demand on bathroom/WC facilities.	Existing sanitary provision is retained, including the ensuite facilities serving relevant bedrooms and shared facilities available to the remaining occupiers. Final occupancy and sanitary provision will remain subject to the Council's HMO licensing requirements.
Noise & neighbouring amenity	One additional resident could marginally increase internal activity and potential noise transmission.	The approved acoustic strategy under 25/0706 will be retained. Bedroom 7 will be incorporated into the acoustic treatment strategy as applicable, with the development continuing to meet the internal noise and sound-insulation requirements imposed by the extant permission. No new external amenity area or external source of activity is introduced.
Waste & recycling	Seven occupants could generate a modest increase in domestic refuse and recycling.	The established refuse/recycling storage arrangement will be retained and managed for the increased occupancy. Sufficient containers will be maintained for the number of residents and managed as part of the HMO management arrangements. Newport requires HMO managers to provide sufficient waste and recycling capacity for occupiers.
Highways & parking	The seventh occupier could result in a marginal increase in trips or parking demand.	The proposal introduces only one additional occupier within an established city-centre HMO and involves no enlargement of the building. The application should emphasise the site's accessibility to shops, services and public transport and, where applicable, the existing absence/limited nature of on-site parking rather than suggesting additional parking provision.
Heritage / listed building	Conversion of the study could potentially affect historic fabric or the special architectural interest of the listed building.	The proposal is contained wholly within the existing building envelope and requires no external extension or alteration. The established heritage strategy will be maintained, including protection of significant historic features. Any works affecting listed fabric beyond the scope of the existing Listed Building Consent would be subject to the appropriate separate consent.
Design & character	Increasing the HMO from six to seven occupants could be considered an increase in the intensity of use.	The physical amendment is limited to the internal conversion of the existing study to a single bedroom. There is no increase in building footprint, massing, height or external alteration, and the established HMO use remains unchanged.

Planning consideration	Potential effect of seventh occupier	Proposed mitigation / planning response
HMO concentration / character of locality	An additional bedroom could be considered in relation to Policy H8's requirement to avoid harmful HMO concentration or changes to neighbourhood character.	The proposal does not create an additional HMO; it makes a limited amendment to an already-approved HMO at the site. The change from six to seven occupiers therefore does not increase the number of HMO properties in the locality. Any increase in intensity is limited to one additional resident.
Fire safety & licensing	Seven-person occupancy may affect the fire-safety and licensing requirements applicable to the premises.	The property will remain subject to Building Regulations, fire-safety requirements and Newport's HMO licensing regime. Any additional measures required as a consequence of the proposed occupancy will be addressed through the relevant regulatory process before occupation by seven residents.

11. Conclusion

This Section 73 application proposes a limited and proportionate amendment to the approved HMO at 175A Commercial Street.

The proposal would convert the previously approved study room into a single-occupancy seventh bedroom of approximately 7.0 m², increasing the maximum occupation of the property from six to seven persons.

The proposal makes efficient use of existing floorspace and provides an additional unit of rented accommodation within Newport city centre without extending the building or materially altering its appearance.

Importantly:

- the HMO use has already been established;
- the proposed room exceeds the published minimum floor area for a single-person bedroom
- the principal communal kitchen and living/dining facilities are retained;
- the increase is limited to one additional occupant;
- acoustic and ventilation measures continue to protect residential amenity;
- waste arrangements can accommodate the modest increase;
- existing access arrangements remain unchanged; and
- no adverse impact upon the historic external character of the building arises.

The proposal therefore represents a sustainable and efficient use of the existing property while contributing an additional bedspace towards Newport's housing accommodation needs.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that Newport City Council approves the proposed variation to Condition 1 (Approved Plans), allowing the existing study room to be used as a seventh single-occupancy bedroom in accordance with the submitted revised floor plan.