

Delegated Decision Report

Application No:	26/0139	Statutory Expires:	Period	24 th April 2026
-----------------	---------	--------------------	--------	-----------------------------

Site:	70 Bridge Street Newport South Wales NP20 4AQ		
Proposal:	CHANGE OF USE OF UPPER FLOORS FROM OFFICE TO ONE FLAT (RESIDENTIAL)		
Applicant:	A Greenland		
Type:	Full	Ward:	Stow Hill
Decision:	GRANTED WITH CONDITIONS		

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 None.

2. SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

2.1 The application site consists of a mid terraced, three storey property located within the Stow Hill ward of Newport.

2.2 The site is located within the settlement boundary as defined by the maps contained within the Newport Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (Adopted January 2015) (LDP). The LDP Proposals Map identifies the site as being within the Newport City Centre, the Town Centre Conservation Area and the Town Centre Archaeologically Sensitive Area. There are no constraints impacting the site on the Constraints Map.

2.3 Whilst the site is not individually listed, it is located in close proximity to, and visible from, several listed buildings, including the prominently sited Grade II listed Queens Hotel (19 Bridge Street) to the immediate south west.

3. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of the upper floors of the building from an office to one flat. The upper floors of the building consist of its first and second floors which currently contain a reception area, offices, an interview room and staff facilities. The proposed flat would consist of a living room, kitchen/dining area and shower room on the first floor and three bedrooms and separate W.C on the second floor.

3.2 The change of use would utilise the existing floor space, with no external alterations or extensions proposed.

3.3 A separate access serving the upper floors of the property is located at ground floor level directly off Bridge Street. This access would remain and would serve the proposed flat.

4. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

4.1 None.

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 9 - Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure

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.

5.3 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT ACT (WALES) 2023.

5.4 Newport Local Development Plan (2011-2026) (NLDP):

SP1 (Sustainability)

SP9 (Conservation of the Natural, Historic and Built Environment)

SP13 (Planning Obligations)

SP18 (Urban Regeneration)

GP2 (General Amenity)

GP4 (Highways and Accessibility)

GP5 (Natural Environment)

GP6 (Quality of Design)

GP7 (Environmental Protection and Public Health)

CE6 (Archaeology)

CE7 (Conservation Area)

H4 (Affordable Housing)

H8 (Self Contained Accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation)

T4 (Parking)

R4 (Non-Retail Uses in Other City Centre Shopping Areas)

W3 (Provision for Waste Management Facilities in Development)

5.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Guidance (Adopted August 2015)

Waste Storage and Collection (Adopted January 2020)

Flat Conversions Supplementary Planning Guidance (Adopted October 2021)

Sustainable Travel SPG (Adopted July 2020)

6. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

6.1 Local Highways Authority: No objection subject to conditions.

Cycle parking is indicated on the proposed plans but not detailed. Separate provision is needed for residential development and must be fully enclosed and secure.

The site will be sustainable (when cycle parking is provided) and no car parking is required.

6.2 Environmental Health: No response received.

6.3 Drainage: No response received.

6.4 Principal Heritage Officer: The property in question is located within the Town Centre Conservation Area and archaeologically sensitive area.

I cannot see that any external alterations are proposed. It is therefore considered that impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area will be nil.

Whilst I cannot see that there will be any impact upon below ground archaeology, I will leave this to Heneb.

6.5 Waste Manager: No response received.

6.6 Heneb – The Trust for Welsh Archaeology:

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 proposed works are within the Archaeologically Sensitive Area (ASA) of Newport and Conservation Area of Newport Town Centre. A review of the 1st – 3rd Edition (1883, 1902, 1920) historic Ordnance Survey maps show 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 The application was advertised by direct neighbour notification letter and a site notice was displayed. 7no. properties were consulted and no responses were received.

8. ASSESSMENT

8.1 Principle of Development:

- 8.1.1 In terms of the principle of the development, the application site consists of previously developed land within the defined urban boundary. It is considered that the reuse of the building would be consistent with Policies SP1 and SP18 and the general brownfield strategy within the Local Development Plan, which encourages the reuse of existing buildings.

- 8.1.2 Policy H8 (Self Contained Accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation) is relevant to the application and states:

Within the defined settlement boundaries, proposals to subdivide a property into self-contained accommodation, bedsits or a house in multiple occupation will only be permitted if:

- i. the scale and intensity of use does not harm the character of the building and locality and will not cause an unacceptable reduction in the amenity of neighbouring occupiers or result in on street parking problems;*
- ii. the proposal does not create an over concentration of houses in multiple occupation in any one area of the city which would change the character of the neighbourhood or create an imbalance in the housing stock;*
- iii. adequate noise insulation is provided;*
- iv. adequate amenity for future occupiers.'*

- 8.1.3 In addition to the above, it is noted that Policy R4 (Non-Retail Uses in Other Shopping Areas) encourages residential uses in vacant upper floors of City Centre premises.

- 8.1.4 Based, on the above, the general principal of the use of the site as a flat is acceptable, subject to the proposal meeting the relevant criteria, which will be assessed further below.

8.2 Character and Appearance:

- 8.2.1 In terms of criteria i) of Policy H8, this part of the streetscape is characterised by traditional three storey terraced properties, with ground floor shopfronts. Properties along this section of Bridge Street do not appear to benefit from off street car parking and there is a high incidence of on street car parking within nearby streets. It is noted that this part of Bridge Street is pedestrianised. The proposal seeks to create a residential use in the upper floors of the property, which would be largely compatible with the local area, where it is not unusual to find residential accommodation in the upper floors of a building of this type. It is not therefore considered that the use alone would adversely impact the character of the building or that of the locality.

- 8.2.2 There would be no changes proposed to the external elevations of the property, with the change of use utilising the existing floor space.

- 8.2.3 Based on the above, it is not considered that the proposed change of use would have any unacceptable adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the application site or surrounding area.

8.3 Residential Amenity:

- 8.3.1 Policies GP2, H8 and the Flat Conversions SPG require no adverse impact on local amenity in terms of noise, disturbance, privacy, overbearing, light, odours and air quality. There

should also be acceptable living standards for future occupants with particular regard to internal floor space, outdoor amenity space, parking, bin storage, bicycle storage and noise.

8.3.2 The application site is located in a mixed use area, which includes other residential accommodation. It is considered that the proposed development would be compatible with the surrounding land use.

8.3.3 There are no external works proposed and the use of the upper floors of the building as a single flat is not considered to result in any increased overlooking impact, neither would it be overbearing to nearby properties.

8.3.4 In terms of the amenity of future occupiers, the Flat Conversions SPG makes recommendations on internal space standards for new residential accommodation. It recommends a minimum of 74m² for the internal floor space of converted 3 bed flats. The proposed flat has a floor space of approximately 83m², therefore exceeding this standard. In addition, the proposal would be served by existing windows which are considered acceptable in terms of outlook as well as in terms of the level of natural daylight which would enter all rooms. With regard to noise, the Council's Environmental Health Officer has been consulted, however no response has been received. It is however noted that the Applicant will need to show compliance to the relevant Building Regulations regarding the passage of sound between dividing walls and floors. As such, it is considered that this matter can be adequately addressed by Building Regulation compliance. It is acknowledged that it is possible that there would be an element of noise given the City Centre location of the site and presence of night time activity, however residents occupying a residential property within a City Centre would typically expect this to be the case, and is a result of living within a highly sustainable location with direct access to associated amenities.

8.3.5 The proposed plans also show access to an external amenity area, which includes space for refuse storage and cycle parking. Notwithstanding this, this area is not private as it is used by the commercial unit. In addition, access to it is either via the ground floor commercial unit or via a lane that appears to have been enclosed. As such access is restricted and therefore it is not considered that the use of the amenity area is guaranteed for occupiers of the proposed flat. Although the amenity area is therefore discounted, it is not considered that this would warrant the refusal of the application, particularly given the highly sustainable location of the development

8.4 **Car Parking and Highway Safety:**

8.4.1 The application site is located within Parking Zone 1, which is regarded as highly sustainable and in close proximity to public transport links. Whilst no off road car parking would serve the new flat, given the highly sustainable location this is not considered to be of significant concern. In addition, parking demand is likely to be comparable with the existing commercial use of the upper floors.

8.4.2 It is noted that the Council's Highways Department have requested that bicycle storage be secured by way of condition, however as noted above the rear amenity space is utilised by the ground floor commercial unit, has restricted access and has been discounted for the purposes of this application. Whilst it is not therefore considered appropriate to include this condition should planning permission be granted, the lack of external cycle storage would not result in significant harm in this located and would not form the basis of a reason for refusal in this instance.

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. Furthermore, PPW indicates that a step-wise approach must be taken to maintain and enhance biodiversity, build resilient ecological networks and deliver net benefits for biodiversity by ensuring that any adverse environmental effects are firstly avoided, then minimized, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for. Evidence in the form of a Green Infrastructure Statement should accompany the application to ensure that the step-wise approach has been followed.

8.5.2 It is noted that the application has not been accompanied by a Green Infrastructure Statement and biodiversity enhancements have not been provided. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that biodiversity enhancements proportionate to the development proposed could be achieved within the wider site.

8.5.3 Based on the above, subject to the imposition of a suitably worded condition to secure biodiversity enhancement, it is considered that the proposal would comply with Policy 9 of Future Wales along with Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) (PPW) in so far as it relates to biodiversity, along with Policy GP5 of the LDP.

8.6 **Heritage:**

8.6.1 The building in which the change of use is proposed is located within the Town Centre Conservation Area and is also within close proximity to, and visible from, several listed buildings, including the prominently sited Grade II listed Queens Hotel (19 Bridge Street) to the immediate south west. Special regard must be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting of the listed buildings. Due to the fact that no external changes are proposed, it is considered that the proposal would preserve the historic assets. The development is therefore considered to comply with Policy CE7 of the Newport Local Development Plan and Section 160 of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023.

8.7 **Archaeology:**

8.7.1 The site is on land identified as archaeologically sensitive. Policy CE6 indicates that development proposals will normally be required to undertake an Archaeological Impact Assessment.

8.7.2 The application is not accompanied by a Written Scheme of Investigation, the works proposed would not impact upon below ground level. Consultation with Henneb has been undertaken, with the advice provided by them concluding that there is unlikely to be an archaeological restraint to this proposed development and consequently no objections to the positive determination of this application are raised.

8.8 **Section 106 Planning Obligation Matters:**

8.8.1 In 2010 the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010) came into effect. Reg 122 of these regulations sets out limitations on the use of planning obligations. It sets out three tests that planning obligations need to meet. It states that planning obligations may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission if the obligation is:

- a) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; (the obligations of the Section 106 Agreement are necessary to ensure adequate education provision, secure affordable housing on site and provide sufficient open space and ensure its continued maintenance).
- b) Directly related to the development; (the obligations of the Section 106 Agreement are directly related to the development).
- c) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development (the obligations as set out in the Section 106 Agreement, both in terms of scale and kind of obligations being required, are fair and reasonable to ensure the aforementioned contributions for the development of this site).

In accordance with Policy SP13 of the adopted Newport Local Development Plan 2011-2026 and the adopted Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance, development will be required to help deliver more sustainable communities by providing, or making contributions to, local and regional infrastructure in proportion to its scale and the sustainability of the location. In this case, section 106 planning obligations are required to mitigate the impact of the development in accordance with the table below.

Service Area that requires Planning Obligation	Purpose of Planning Obligation	Planning Obligation initially sought by Planning Authority	Summary Heads of Terms agreed by applicant(s)?	Viability Issues?
Regeneration, Investment and Housing	To provide affordable housing.	A commuted sum of £858 in accordance with Policy H4 of the LDP and the formulae in the adopted Affordable Housing SPG.	Agreed	N/A

8.8.2 The applicant has agreed to the Heads of Terms and the proposal will therefore provide the required affordable housing contributions in accordance with Policy SP13.

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 principle of the proposal is regarded as acceptable, as is the impact of the development on the amenities of neighbouring and future occupiers and on the character and appearance of the local area.

11. DECISION

GRANTED WITH CONDITIONS SUBJECT TO LEGAL AGREEMENT WITH DELEGATED POWERS AND DISCRETION TO REFUSE IN THE EVENT THAT THE AGREEMENT IS NOT SIGNED WITHIN THREE MONTHS OF THE COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION

1. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the following plans and documents:
Site Location Plan
KD2050 2 – Proposed Floor Plans
Reason: In the interests of clarity and to ensure the development complies with the submitted plans and documents on which this decision was based.
2. Prior to any part of the development being brought into use, a biodiversity enhancement scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The biodiversity enhancement scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans prior to the first beneficial use of the development hereby approved and maintained for the lifetime of the development
Reason: In the interest of protected species, in accordance with Policy GP5 of the Newport Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (adopted January 2015).
3. Prior to the beneficial occupation of the development hereby approved, the internal bin storage shall be provided on site in accordance with the approved plans and retained as such thereafter.
Reason: To ensure the provision of waste storage and recycling facilities within the application site.

NOTE TO APPLICANT

01 The development plan for Newport is the Newport Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (Adopted January 2015). Policies SP1 (Sustainability), SP9 (Conservation of the Natural, Historic and Built Environment), SP13 (Planning Obligations), SP18 (Urban Regeneration), GP2 (General Amenity), GP4 (Highways and Accessibility), GP5 (Natural Environment), GP6 (Quality of Design), GP7 (Environmental Protection and Public Health), CE6 (Conservation Areas), CE7 (Archaeology), H4 (Affordable Housing), H8 (Self Contained Accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation), T4 (Parking), R4 (Non-Retail Uses in Other City Centre Shopping Areas) and W3 (Provision for Waste Management Facilities in Development) are relevant to the determination of this application.

02 Newport City Council Parking Standards, Waste Storage and Collection and Flat Conversions Supplementary Planning Guidance are 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.