

Delegated Decision Report

Application No:	25-0043	Statutory Period Expires:	14th April 2025
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Site:	<i>Civic Centre Godfrey Road Newport South Wales NP20 4UR</i>		
Proposal:	<i>LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR THE REPAIR OF THE GLASS-BLOCK ATRIUM ROOF ABOVE ROOM 425 WEST OF NEWPORT CIVIC CENTRE. CLEAN AND TREAT CORRODING REBAR AND PATCH SPALLED MASONRY. APPLICATION OF A CLEAR POLYURETHANE COATING TO WATERPROOF THE EXTERNAL FACE OF THE ATRIUM ROOF</i>		
Applicant:	<i>D Cooke</i>		
Type:	Listed Building	Ward:	Allt-yr-Yn
Decision:	Granted with conditions subject to Cadw		

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Newport Council has had a variety of assessments and surveys undertaken over the past few years for the grade II* listed building. This includes a 2021 façade survey undertaken by Thomann-Hanry, (building restoration specialist) which investigated the elements that make up the building's façade and their condition. CARE accredited structural engineers, Mann Williams, were also engaged in 2023 to carry out comprehensive assessments of the building, including the clocktower. Cambria Consulting Ltd and Beton Bauen also completed structural and concrete assessments of the roofs, including undertaking tap tests. These assessments have led to a long-term plan for the civic centre's maintenance, which starts at roof level.

2. SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 Newport Civic Centre is a grade II* listed building situated within the Allt-yr-Yn ward of Newport. Construction of the building began in 1937 and was designed by Thomas Cecil Howitt following a national design competition. A highly significant element of the building is the central atrium, to which 12 murals are painted on to the first floor walls. These murals are by Hans Feibusch and were completed in 1964. The clock tower was added in the mid-60s. The building remains in use as offices for Newport City Council.
- 2.2 Most of building's roofs are flat and hidden behind parapets, an attractive feature of the building are the 'Old-Roman' style hipped clay tiled 'pyramid' roofs to the Tower, above Entrances 5, 6 and 1, and hipped roofs to each side of the Central Range. These emphasise the civic nature and Italianate aesthetic of the original design intent. The atrium roof on the West wing was originally designed to be much larger than the as-built, nevertheless is a unique feature of the listed building.
- 2.3 The plan consists of a central ceremonial block of two storeys, with a recessed third storey, and a tall, tapering, axial clock tower. The principal entrance is through a high, plain, round headed arch on the sw, uphill, side. Similar arches penetrate the downhill ends of the side blocks. All walls are faced with Portland stone.

3. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The application proposes to refurbish the glass-block atrium roof, which sits above room 425W. This includes the repairing of the concrete waffle structure and adjoining beams, the cleaning and treating of the corroded rebar, and the cleaning and recoating of the existing glass-blocks.

4. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

App Number	Proposal	Decision	Decision Date
25/0126	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR THE OVERLAYING EXISTING FLAT ROOF	TBD	

	COVERINGS WITH DERBIGUM OLIVINE, INTRODUCING TAPERED INSULATION, REPLACEMENT AND BOARDING OVER OF SELECT ROOFLIGHTS, REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING CAT LADDERS FOR NEW AND DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS		
24/0897	PROPOSALS TO REPAIR AND CLEAN NEWPORT CIVIC TOWER, INCLUDING PIECEMEAL RE POINTING WORKS, RE AFFIXING OF 2NO. DISPLACED STONE PANELS IN CORRECT ALIGNMENT; REMOVAL OF LOOSE/DETACHING STONE AND MORTAR REPAIRS; LOCALISED REPAIRS TO FRACTURED AND SPALLED STONE PANELS AND CLEANING OF MASONRY VIA FACADE GOMMAGE	GC	30.01.2025
24/0587	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR MINOR ALTERATIONS AND REPAIRS TO NEWPORT CIVIC CENTRE'S PYRAMID ROOFS OVER ENTRANCES 1,5 AND 6	Granted with conditions	21.08.2024
24/0118	RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR THE FIXING OF DOOR GEAR AND THE PAINTING OF THE PREVIOUSLY FIXED DOOR GEAR WITH A SATIN BLACK FINISH, TOGETHER WITH THE PROVISION OF FINGER GUARDS AT ENTRANCE NO.2 TO CIVIC CENTRE	Granted with conditions	25.04.2024
22/1172	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR THE CARRYING OUT OF INVESTIGATION WORKS	Granted with conditions	14.04.2023
20/0311	LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR WORKS TO THE CLOCK TOWER	Granted with conditions	23.12.2020

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.

6.1.6 Safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved.

6.1.9 Any decisions made through the planning system must fully consider the impact on the historic environment and on the significance and heritage values of individual historic assets and their contribution to the character of place.

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 statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest, which it possesses.

6.1.16 Preservation or enhancement of a conservation area can be achieved by a development which either makes a positive contribution to an area's character or appearance or leaves them unharmed.

5.3 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT ACT (WALES) 2023

5.4 NEWPORT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2011-2026)

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

5.5 Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: Historic Environment

5.6 FUTURE WALES

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. ecological enhancements are proposed as part of the development but are subject to condition. As such the proposal is currently compliant with the aims of Policy GP5 of the NLDP 2011-2026 (adopted January 2015).

6. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

6.1 ROYAL COMMISSION: No response

6.2 AMENITY SOCIETIES – No response

7. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

A Site Notice was put up on 21/02/2025, and Press Notice dated 08/03/2025. No responses received.

8. ASSESSMENT

8.1 The application seeks Listed Building Consent to repair and refurbish the existing glass-block atrium roof within the Grade II* Civic Centre. The concrete waffle structure, located on the flat roof on the western wing, has seen significant spalling due to prolonged water ingress. Beton Bauen's report notes that the existing seals at the interface between the glass blocks and the concrete have deteriorated, which has resulted in widespread leaking. Condensation, water leakage, mortar joint failure and lack of maintenance have all played a role in the concrete's failure. Their report provides a detailed assessment and documentation of the existing structure, highlighting the main areas of concern.

8.2 Repairs would be made to the concrete ribs to reinforce the roof structure. A methodology for the works has not been provided but can be conditioned to be provided prior to works commencing. It has been highlighted within the HIA that there would be a noticeable visual impact from the repairs to the concrete, with a slight difference in colour from the adjacent masonry. However, this would only be visible close up and is mitigated by the benefit of these repairs.

8.3 In order to preserve the existing glass blocks within the structure, which are original to the roof, it is proposed to clean each block and coat it with a clear polyurethane coating. Details

of this product have been provided within the application. The product forms an effective barrier to water penetration and the ingress of any chemicals. This has been identified as the most cost-effective and least disruptive remedial method for reinstating weather-tightness to this area of the roof. The coating would not change of appearance of the roof, and again, would only be visible close up.

- 8.4 The HIA states that a series of options were considered during the initial project stages. These options included the complete restoration of the roof, including removal of the glass, replacing cracked blocks and the replacing; overcovering of the existing roof fully; completely remove the glass-block atrium; remove concrete waffles and replace with structural glass; remove concrete waffles and insert PV panels. All options would result in the loss of historic fabric and alter the appearance of the roof. It is considered the proposed option is best for the historic and architectural interest of the listed building, as it is least intrusive, removes little fabric and is most cost-effective.

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 To conclude, the proposed repair and refurbishment works to the concrete and glass atrium roof above 425W would be considered acceptable, subject to a method statement from the appointed contractor. The works would ensure further water-ingress is prevented and safeguard this feature of the building for the future.

11. RECOMMENDATION

Granted with conditions subject to CADW

- 01 The development shall be implemented in accordance with the following plans and documents: ROOF PLAN - GLASSBLOCK ROOF; Pllanitop-Smooth and Repair-r4-zero; HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT - GLASS ATRIUM ROOF; decothane-clearglaze; CC2765-CAM-ZZ-XX-RP-S-0001; Newport Civic Centre Survey Report -BB. 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 Prior to the commencement of works, a methodology statement from the appointed contractor for the concrete roof repairs shall be submitted and agreed to in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Works shall then take place in accordance with the approved details. Reason: In the interest of preserving the historic and architectural interest of the listed building in accordance with section 96 of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023, and policy SP9 of the Newport Local Development Plan.

NOTE TO APPLICANT

- 01 This decision relates to plan Nos: ROOF PLAN - GLASSBLOCK ROOF; Pllanitop-Smooth and Repair-r4-zero; HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT - GLASS ATRIUM ROOF; decothane-clearglaze; CC2765-CAM-ZZ-XX-RP-S-0001; Newport Civic Centre Survey Report -BB
- 02 The development plan for Newport is the Newport Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (Adopted January 2015). Policy SP9 was relevant to the determination of this application. Section 96 of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 was also relevant.