



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE AND CONVERSION TO 12 RESIDENTIAL UNITS

75 – 76 LOWER DOCK STREET, NEWPORT



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement has been prepared to support our Clients' planning application for the change of use, extension and conversion of existing property to 12 self contained residential units at 75 – 76 Lower Dock Street, Newport.

1.2 This statement explains the concept and principles of the development in relation to accessibility, character, community safety, environmental sustainability, movement and assesses the proposal against the relevant Planning Policy framework. The statement demonstrates the proposal accords with relevant National and Local Planning Policy and other material planning policy considerations.

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2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy

- 2.1 The Wales Spatial Plan *People, Places, Futures* sets a strategic framework to guide future development and policy interventions. It integrates the spatial aspects of National strategies for social inclusion and economic development, health, transport and environment, translating the Assembly Government's sustainable development duty into practice.
- 2.2 Planning Policy Wales (PPW Edition 8) January 2016 sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Assembly Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes. Procedural advice is given in circulars and policy clarification letters.
- 2.3 Chapter 4 – *Planning for Sustainability*, Chapter 6 – *The Historic Environment*, Chapter 8 – *Transport*, Chapter 9 – *Housing*, are of specific relevance to the development of the site.
- 2.4 Chapter 4 states, “*Good design should promote the efficient use of resources, including land. It should seek to maximise energy efficiency and the efficient use of other resources, minimise the use of non-renewable resources and minimise the generation of waste and pollution. Mixed use development (of both built and open space) emphasising flexibility and adaptability, can provide particular design opportunities, adding interest and vitality to living and working environments. Good design is essential to ensure that areas, particularly those where higher density development takes place, offer high environmental quality, including open and green spaces Landscape considerations are an integral part of the design process and can make a positive contribution to environmental protection and improvement, for example to biodiversity, climate protection, air quality and the protection of water resources. The visual appearance of proposed development, its scale and its relationship to its surroundings and context are material planning*





considerations. **Local planning authorities should reject poor building and contextual designs. However, they should not attempt to impose a particular architectural taste or style arbitrarily and should avoid inhibiting opportunities for innovative design solutions**".

- 2.5 "Local planning authorities should assess the extent to which their development plan settlement strategies and new development are consistent with **minimising the need to travel and increasing accessibility by modes other than the private car**. Wherever possible, developments should be located at major public transport nodes or interchanges".
- 2.6 "Previously developed (or brownfield) land should, wherever possible, be used in preference to greenfield sites. Many previously developed sites in built-up areas may be considered suitable for development because their re-use will promote sustainability objectives".
- 2.7 Chapter 6 states "Local planning authorities and other public bodies have an important role in protecting and conserving the historic environment while helping it accommodate and remain responsive to present-day needs. Historic assets can make an important contribution to sustainable development objectives"
- 2.8 With regard to listed building and conservation areas, PPW states "Development plans should where appropriate include locally specific policies for the conservation of the built environment, including the protection or enhancement of listed buildings and conservation areas."
- 2.9 Chapter 8 states "Local authorities should promote public transport as a means to achieve environmental objectives, to assist in relieving congestion and to encourage social inclusion.





2.10 Chapter 9 states “The Assembly Government’s vision for housing is for everyone in Wales to have the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, to be able to choose where they live and to decide whether buying or renting is best for them and their families.

The objectives are to provide:

- homes that are in good condition, in safe neighbourhoods and sustainable communities; and
- greater choice for people over the type of housing and the location they live in, recognising the needs of all”.

2.11 Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 12: Design, sets out the Welsh Assembly Government’s detailed advice on how to achieve good design in all development at every scale throughout Wales.

2.12 The guidance sets out the Assembly’s objectives for good design, namely

- Access – ensuring ease of access for all.
- Character – sustaining or enhancing local character. Promoting legible development. Promoting a successful relationship between public and private space. Promoting quality, choice and variety. Promoting innovative design.
- Community safety – ensuring attractive, safe public spaces. Security through natural surveillance.
- Environmental sustainability – achieving efficient use and protection of natural resources. Enhancing biodiversity. Designing for change.
- Movement – promoting sustainable means of travel

2.13 TAN 18 - Transport and TAN 22 –Sustainable buildings are considered relevant to the site.





Local Planning Policy

- 2.14 The current development plan is the Newport Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (adopted January 2015).
- 2.15 The relevant policy for securing good design contained in the LDP is:

GP6 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES – QUALITY OF DESIGN

Good quality design will be sought in all forms of development. The aim is to create a safe, accessible, attractive and convenient environment. In considering development proposals the following fundamental design principles should be addressed:

i) Context of the site: all development should be sensitive to the unique qualities of the site and respond positively to the character of the area;

*ii) Access, permeability and layout: all development should maintain a high level of pedestrian access
Connectivity and laid out so as to minimise noise pollution;*

iii) Preservation and enhancement: where possible development should reflect the character of the locality but avoid the inappropriate replication of neighbouring architectural styles. The designer is encouraged to display creativity and innovation in design;

iv) Scale and form of development: new development should appropriately reflect the scale of adjacent townscape. Care should be taken to avoid over-scaled development;

v) Materials and detailing: high quality, durable and preferably renewable materials should be used to complement the site context. Detailing should be incorporated as an integral part of the design at an early stage;

vi) Sustainability: new development should be inherently robust, energy and water efficient, flood resilient and adaptable, thereby facilitating the flexible re-use of the building. Where existing buildings are present, imaginative and sensitive solutions should be sought to achieve the re-use of the buildings

- 2.16 Other policies of relevance to the determination of the application are:

H2 HOUSING STANDARDS

Residential development should be built to high standards of environmental and sustainable design, taking into account the whole life of the dwelling.

H8 SELF CONTAINED ACCOMMODATION AND HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION





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

SP1 SUSTAINABILITY

Proposals will be required to make a positive contribution to sustainable development by concentrating development in sustainable locations on brownfield land within the settlement boundary. They will be assessed as to their potential contribution to:

- i) The efficient use of land;
- ii) The reuse of previously developed land and empty properties in preference to greenfield sites;
- iii) Providing integrated transportation systems, as well as encouraging the co-location of housing and other uses, including employment, which together will minimise the overall need to travel, reduce car usage and encourage a modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport;
- iv) Reducing energy consumption, increasing energy efficiency and the use of low and zero carbon energy sources;
- v) The minimisation, re-use and recycling of waste;
- vi) Minimising the risk of and from flood risk, sea level rise and the impact of climate change;
- vii) Improving facilities, services and overall social and environmental equality of existing and future communities;
- viii) Encouraging economic diversification and in particular improving the vitality and viability of the city centre and district centres;
- ix) Conserving, enhancing and linking green infrastructure, protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment;
- x) Conserving and ensuring the efficient use of resources such as water and minerals

SP9 CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL, HISTORIC AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The conservation, enhancement and management of recognised sites within the natural, historic and built environment will be sought in all proposals

GP2 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES – GENERAL AMENITY

Development will be permitted where, as applicable:





- l) there will not be a significant adverse effect on local amenity, including in terms of noise, disturbance, privacy, overbearing, light, odours and air quality;*
- li) the proposed use and form of development will not be detrimental to the visual amenities of nearby occupiers or the character or appearance of the surrounding area;*
- lii) the proposal seeks to design out the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour;*
- lv) the proposal promotes inclusive design both for the built development and access within and around the development;*
- v) adequate amenity for future occupiers*

CE5 LOCALLY LISTED BUILDINGS AND SITES

Buildings and sites of local significance for their architectural or historic interest will be included on a local list and should be protected from demolition or inappropriate development.

CE7 CONSERVATION AREAS

Development within or adjacent to conservation areas will be required to:

- i) be designed to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area, having regard to the conservation area appraisal where appropriate.*
- ii) avoid the removal of existing historic features, including traditional shopfronts and joinery.*
- iii) use materials which are traditional, or appropriate to their context. iv) complement or reflect the architectural qualities of nearby buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the area. v) pay special attention to the settings of buildings and avoid the loss of any existing domestic gardens and open spaces which contribute to the character of the area. vi) avoid adverse impact on any significant views, within, towards and outwards from the conservation area*

T4 PARKING

Development will be required to provide appropriate levels of parking, within defined parking zones, in accordance with adopted parking standards

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 2.17 Supplementary Planning Guidance adopted by the Council which supplement Development Plan policies are also 'material considerations' to the determination of planning applications.





- 2.18 SPG Parking Standards (August 2015) seeks to ensure that a consistent approach is made to the provision of parking throughout the City. Parking standards are set in accordance with different zones and their requirements.
- 2.19 The application site is located within Zone 1: City Core, which is defined as *“Typically there will be a wide range of public transport services, bus and rail. There will be very little car parking within the curtilage of individual buildings and that which there is, is almost entirely operational parking. The area is likely to be the commercial focus of a large hinterland. All on-street parking is regulated; all public off-street car parking is charged for.”*
- 2.20 The proposed parking requirement as set out in the SPG would be 0.5 space per unit and no visitors parking requirement.
- 2.21 Sustainability points will be awarded to developments that meet the criteria below for their proximity as regards walking distance to local facilities, public transport, a cycle route and the frequency of the local public transport. The awarding of sustainability points or alternatively, for developments where clear evidence has been supplied that car ownership levels will be lower than normal, a more flexible approach to numbers of parking spaces may be taken, resulting in a reduction in parking requirement.

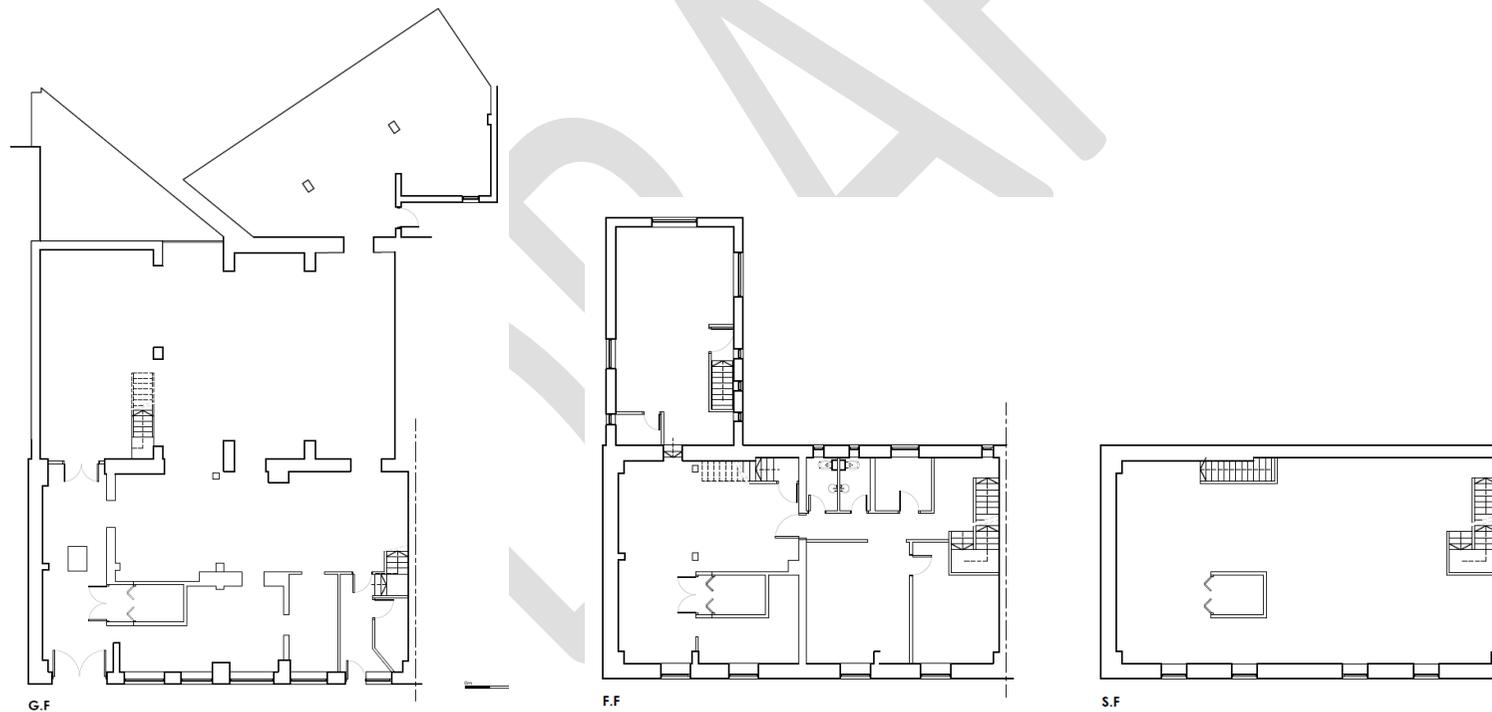
Flooding

- 2.22 The Development Advice Flood Maps confirm the application site lies within an area known to have been flooded in the past evidenced by sedimentary deposits – Zone B. A precautionary approach should be used to indicate where site levels should be checked against the extreme (0.1%) flood level. If site levels are greater than the flood levels used to define adjacent extreme flood outline there is no need to consider flood risk further.



SITE & SURROUNDINGS

- 2.23 The application site is located to the north-eastern side of Lower Dock Street, close to its junction with George Street, Newport. Lower Dock Street forms the surviving southern portion of the key arterial route way which connected the Town Dock with the mercantile centre of the town.
- 2.24 The application site comprises 75 – 76 Lower Dock Street, a former sock factory located within the Lower Dock Street Conservation Area (designated June 1995). The historic importance of the street is manifested in the architectural strength of the surviving frontages which illustrate development throughout the middle and later nineteenth century.



- 2.25 The northern section of the street is divorced from the Town Centre by Kingsway which acts as a significant barrier to both pedestrians and vehicles from the Town Centre by preventing vehicular access from Kingsway with the George Street intersection and although the street is in close geographic proximity to the Town Centre, the existing scheme of traffic management has served to separate the street from its geographic context, exacerbating the post war decline of the once vibrant commercial activities within the street frontage properties, disrupting the natural movements of both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- 2.26 The property is a listed building (CADW Ref. 21292) and is detailed as a *“Perhaps converted from pair of early C19 houses in mid-to-late C19. Three storey, 4-window stucco front with cornice to parapet, pilaster bands and banding between floors. Four round-arched windows to top floor; camber-headed windows to first floor. On ground floor, openings articulated by short pilasters with volute heads (derived from Egyptian sources?). Broad vehicle archway to L; entrance to R. Between these, 4 arched windows (2nd narrower-former doorway?). Modern glazing.”* The property was listed for group value with adjacent listed buildings.
- 2.27 To the rear of the property is an enclosed existing courtyard area.





- 2.28 The surrounding area is a mix of residential and commercial / office uses. Properties are predominantly large 3 storey originally commercial dock buildings. The northern half of the street retains a number of buildings in the Greek Revival style, dating from the 1840's with stuccoed elevations and door cases employing the fluted Doric order.
- 2.29 The adjacent former Custom House was built in 1857 and retains a dignified symmetrical facade with pedimented three bay central range with the Royal Arms of Queen Victoria set within a shallow pediment. The two storey frontage has channelled rustication to the ground floor, and quoining with reeded cornice and parapet and fine engaged, paired columns flanking the central doorway, each with superimposed rustication.
- 2.30 Lower Dock Street is a designated one way system for vehicles.
- 2.31 The application site is within a highly sustainable location, within walking distance of local and national retail facilities, entertainment centres, restaurants and supermarkets.

Constraints and Opportunities

- 2.32 A full assessment of the physical characteristics of the site and its context in relation to surrounding development was undertaken to identify opportunities and constraints presented by the site.
- 2.33 The key opportunities/constraints the site presented were considered to be:
- The need to maintain external elements of this attractive and important architectural feature.





- The need to protect existing architectural form and detailing to the interior of the listed building, minimise any changes to the fabric.
- The need to maintain neighbours' amenity.
- The need to create suitably sized and attractive accommodation capable of accommodating a range of people
- Ease of access to public transport and local facilities
- Ease of access to local highway and footpath networks

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3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1 As the application drawings illustrate, the proposal envisages the proposed change of use, rear extension and conversion of the existing property to form 12 self contained apartments, with new refuse facilities.

3.2 A full assessment of the physical characteristics of the site and its context in relation to surrounding development was undertaken to identify opportunities and constraints presented by the site.

3.3 The assessment identified the following 'constraints' and 'opportunities'

Main building

- The listed building element of the property appears generally in good structural condition.
- Internally, again the listed building appears generally in good condition.
- For the most part, the original doors, frames, architrave and skirtings have been removed / replaced with modern fixtures.

Building curtilage

- The curtilage of the building is limited to an irregularly shaped rear courtyard area.
- The pedestrian access to the western side of the building, affords access to and from Lower Dock Street.
- The absence of any direct vehicular access onto Lower Dock Street and limited extent of the curtilage prevents the creation of any on-site parking.

3.4 In an effort to find a long term viable use of the listed building the only viable long term use for the building was considered to be conversion to self contained residential accommodation.





3.5 The key factors determining the design process were:

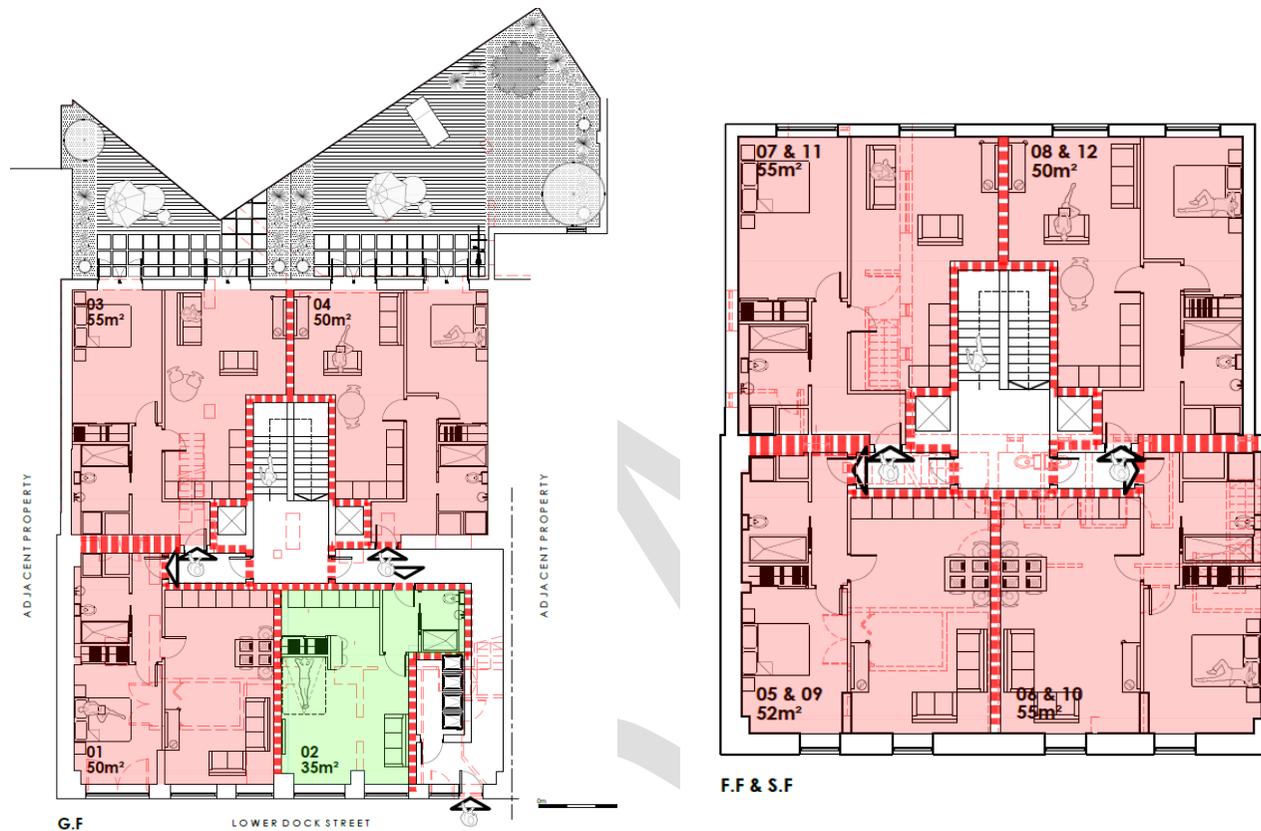
- The need to maintain external elements of this important architectural feature.
- The need to protect any remaining existing architectural form and detailing to the interior of the listed building, minimise any changes to the fabric.
- The need to maintain neighbours' amenity.
- The need to create suitably sized and attractive accommodation capable of accommodating a range of people.

3.6 In developing the application proposals, careful consideration was given to maintaining the character and appearance of the building.

3.7 The proposals seek to maintain the external fabric and form of the front elevation of the listed building without alteration and the change of use, rear 1st and 2nd floor extensions and conversion of the property to form 12 self contained studio and 1 bed apartments set over ground, 1st and 2nd floors, with bin storage facilities at ground floor level. Modern internal separating walls will be removed to enable the redevelopment of the building.

3.8 Access into the building will be via the existing pedestrian access adjacent to No. 77 at the southern corner of the site, leading to a central staircase allowing access to all proposed units. Communal refuse storage facilities will be positioned at ground floor level adjacent to the entrance.





- 3.9 At ground floor level, proposed accommodation will comprise three 1 bed self contained apartments and a studio apartment. The 1 bed apartments will consist of an open plan kitchen / dining / living room, bedroom and bathroom. both proposed units to the rear of the building will have direct access to private courtyard amenity area to the rear of the property.
- 3.10 Accommodation at 1st and 2nd floor levels will be replicated with four 1 bed apartments accessed from the proposed central staircase. The proposed 1st and 2nd floor extensions will enable the provision of further accommodation at both levels.



Access / Movement

- 3.11 The design approach adopted by the applicant is 'to provide a barrier free environment for all' within the limits of the form of the existing building.
- 3.12 Access will be interpreted to include access into and within buildings and the curtilage of the application site.
- 3.13 The position of the site on Lower Dock Street presents no potential problems for pedestrian and car borne visitors.
- 3.14 The site is within easy walking distance from Newport town centre and Kingsway and Friars Walk Shopping Centres. Newport train station is approximately 1 k m to the north west of the site providing regular links to Cardiff, London and the South of England. Regular bus routes are accessible along Kinsway to the west and Usk Way to the east.
- 3.15 This statement is intended to provide a broad indication of design philosophy in respect of the scheme at planning stage which will be augmented and amended as the detailed design progress to Building Regulation approval stage in accord with the requirements of Part 'M' of the 1990 Building Act.

Character

- 3.16 Original openings and features to the building are retained and where necessary refurbished.

Community Safety





3.17 The scheme has been designed within the confines of the existing building, with habitable windows positioned to afford natural surveillance of the building entrances.

3.18 The established nature of the area creates a sense of community and 'ownership' discouraging anti-social behaviour.

Perimeter wall

3.19 The proposed development will be defined by existing site boundaries.

Lighting

3.20 The site will be lit to BS5489 and be positioned to ensure an even spread of light over the pedestrian accesses.





4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- 4.1 The scheme was developed in response to a detailed assessment of the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area, as set out in this statement.
- 4.2 The scheme makes efficient use of the site whilst maintaining the privacy of adjacent neighbours. This site is located in a highly sustainable location with good access to local and city centre based facilities by foot and regular public transport.
- 4.3 The application site is within easy distance of extensive local and City Centre retail, commercial and recreation facilities, and established recreation facilities.
- 4.4 Local public transport is readily accessible, with bus routes to and from the City Centre. Newport Train Station is approximately 1k m away.
- 4.5 The scheme will explore the viability and where appropriate, seek to encompass renewable energy technologies and design, such as:

Design

- *Passive design in particular 'natural ventilation', 'natural daylighting and 'orientation'*
- *Whilst detailed assessment of potential renewable energy technologies will be undertaken prior to the commencement of work on site, it is recognised that certain technologies may impact on the external appearance of the buildings.*
- *Solar panels are considered to be most likely alternative technology which might prove to be a viable and practical energy source to be incorporated in this development.*

Fabric

- *Encourage the use of materials with lower environmental impact over their life cycle.*
- *Encourage the specification of responsible and where practical locally sourced materials for the basic building and finishing elements including re-use of materials, recycled materials, legally sourced timber and supply chain (ems).*





- *High levels of insulation exceeding current Building Regulation standards*

Services: Mechanical/Heating

- *Ground source heat pumps.*
- *Air source heat pumps*
- *Heat recovery systems*
- *Geothermal water heating systems*
- *Thermally efficient boilers*

Services: Electrical

- *Solar water heating and photovoltaics electricity generation*
- *Low energy lighting fixtures*
- *Energy metering*
- *Dual flush WC to reduce water consumption*

Services: Drainage

- *Sustainable drainage system (suds)*
- *Water conservation including water collection (water butts) and 'grey water' collection.*

Waste

- *Panned waste recycling*
- *Composting*
- *Adequate provision for domestic waste and recycling*

Alternative energy sources

- *Low or zero carbon energy sources*



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5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The proposed scheme will take maximum advantage of the site's position within this established mixed commercial and residential area to create an attractive and high quality sustainable development within the confines of the existing listed building.
- 5.2 The proposal is considered to both conserve and enhance the site, ensuring the future of this Listed Building. The external appearance of the building will remain unchanged.
- 5.3 The proposal would utilise a brownfield site, alleviating the current pressure placed on greenfield sites in accord with the objective of Planning Policy Wales.
- 5.4 The proposed application adheres to National and Local policies and guidelines and does not adversely affect the highway safety of neighbouring amenities of the area to warrant a refusal

