

MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

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Date: 19th March 2021

Report to Planning Committee 23rd March 2021

Subject: Planning Application DM/2021/00050

Prepared by: Caitlin Williams, Administration Officer

An application has been made for a Change of Use from A1 (retail) to an adult gaming centre at 2-4 Monnow Street (formerly DS Music) to be called "Carousel". The application has been made by Mr H Danter who is the owner of Symonds Yat Leisure Park and Barry Island Pleasure Park.

The adult gaming centre will consist of arcade gaming machines and will have an age limit of 18.

Councillors will be aware of the many views of residents of Monmouth with over 72 online comments submitted to the Monmouthshire County Council portal at the time this report was written. There has also been press coverage of this matter in local press.

A licensing application was made for the premises and was issued by Monmouthshire County Council on 8th March 2021 under section 164 of the Gambling Act 2005 and has no duration limit. The license is applicable from Monday to Sunday from 00.01 until 24:00 and allows "facilities for gambling".

Current Position

The retail unit is currently empty following DS Music vacating the building in December 2020 to continue their business online. It is not known whether the property or the lease has been advertised on the market for retail.

In terms of similar businesses in the town, there are currently 2 betting shops in Monmouth (Ladbrokes and Betfred). In each of the other large towns of Monmouth there are also 2 betting shops.

There are no similar facilities in any of the Monmouthshire towns. The closest facility to Monmouth is the Symonds Yat Leisure Park. There was an amusement arcade in Abergavenny some years ago but this is no longer in business.

Relevant Guidance and Regulations

Whilst such an application can often incite emotion it is important to remember that this application must be considered based on planning issues only. With that in mind, I have highlighted some relevant information that could be beneficial during consideration of the application:

a. [Update to Future Wales - The National Plan 2040 \(gov.wales\)](#)

The National Plan 2040 has been adopted as the development plan that will lead Wales into 2040. This is the most recent plan and policy and as such, its contents should be considered for this application. Whilst the LDP and SPGs for Monmouthshire are relevant, this development plan is the leading policy for planning applications from the date of adoption. The development plan takes into consideration the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) and it endeavours to fulfil the wellbeing goals by ensuring there is a sustainable and balanced development of Wales moving forward.

In particular, Policy 6 is relevant for this application (page 71). The policy deals with the point of “Town Centre First” and it states:

Significant new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure and public service facilities must be located within town and city centres.

It is likely that such an application as this, could be considered a leisure facility and that it could be included as a part of the high street.

Furthermore, the 2040 plan states:

...good planning can help us re-think the future of town and city centres, which are moving away from their traditional retail roles. The impact of COVID-19 on the retail sector is a further driver towards making our town centres multi-functional places.

The adoption of this development plan significantly changes how Councils are expected to look at the high street and its purpose. The LDP and SPG will feed into this policy to a certain extent, but, ultimately, this development plan supersedes them for future developments.

b. [Primary-Shopping-Frontages-SPG-April-2016-with-footer.pdf \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](#)

This is an adopted SPG from April 2016 regarding Primary Shop Frontages. An SPG is a material consideration in relation to planning applications and so the contents of this guidance could be considered as part of this application due to the location of the proposed facility whilst having consideration to the National Plan 2040 and the changes this plan brings.

It is particularly worth noting that this guidance states that the purpose of the SPG is:

Maintaining and enhancing the vitality, attractiveness and viability of primary shopping frontages in Monmouthshire’s main town centres of Abergavenny, Caldicot,

Chepstow and Monmouth is a key objective of the Monmouthshire Local Development Plan (LDP) and reflects the aims of national planning policy on retail and town centres.

c. [Adopted-Local-Development-Plan-with-PDF-tags.pdf \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](#)

This is the link to the currently adopted Local Development Plan for Monmouthshire that was adopted in 2014. It sets out the retail hierarchy on page iii which links to the relevant information later in the plan. Again, the LDP can be relied upon as a material planning consideration for planning applications. Page 107 onwards sets out the considerations for Primary Shop Frontages and Central Shopping Areas (CSAs). The following from the plan is relevant to the application:

A change of use from Classes A1, A2 or A3 on the ground floor with street frontage to uses other than Classes A1, A2 or A3 will not be permitted, unless it can be demonstrated that criterion (a) can be met by attracting footfall.

In light of the National Plan 2040, however, the above excerpt may not be as relevant because the updated plan for 2040 states that the Town Centre should have a mix of retail, leisure, business and public services.

d. [Gambling regulation: Councillor handbook \(England and Wales\) \(local.gov.uk\)](#)

This is a handbook compiled by Local Government Association for the benefit of Councils in England and Wales. A large portion of this handbook focuses on Licensing Applications which is not relevant to this application but there are sections that are more relevant particularly:

Councils have sometimes sought to use the planning system to prevent further openings of gambling premises (specifically betting shops) where they believe that additional premises will damage local high streets or economies. However, these decisions have been overturned, this time by the Planning Inspectorate, if councils have not been able to evidence that decisions have been reached on the basis of material planning considerations. (page 6 of the handbook)

Further to the above documents, Councillors will have the following planning considerations available to them, as with all applications:

- Noise
- Disturbance
- Overlooking & loss of privacy
- Nuisance
- Shading / loss of daylight
- Over-development or overcrowding of the site
- Adverse visual impact
- Detrimental effect on the character of the area
- Design issues such as
 - Bulk / massing
 - Detailing and materials
 - Over-bearing / out-of-scale or out of character in terms of appearance
- Highway issues

Conclusion

Councillors must ensure that the recommendation made by the Planning Committee is based on planning considerations only and that any reasons given feed into these considerations. On the face of the SPG and LDP, the type of application that is being proposed under reference DM/2021/00050 is not in-keeping with the plan for Monmouth.

Councillors could consider:

1. Whether the application would diversify the facilities available on the high street;
2. Whether the business furthers the Wellbeing Goals listed in the Well being of Future Generations Act 2015;
3. Whether such a business would attract footfall to the town and whether any footfall attracted would add to the economic prosperity of the town;
4. Whether the business would enhance the “vitality and attractiveness” of the town as per the purpose of the LDP and SPG;
5. Whether the approval of this application would have a detrimental effect on the character of the area, particularly being mindful of the location of the shop on Agincourt Square and its surroundings;
6. Whether the potential design of the building would be out of character in terms of appearance;
7. Whether any potential design of the building or advertising would have an adverse visual impact on the high street;
8. How the noise levels of the centre would be managed having particular consideration to the timings of the license that has been issued by the Licensing Committee; and
9. Whether any residents or other businesses in the area are likely to be impacted by disturbance from the centre.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Caitlin - Monmouth Council](#)
Subject: Proposal for gambling arcade
Date: 17 March 2021 12:04:54

I would like to add my disagreement to the proposal to allow an amusement arcade in Monnow Street Monmouth. It would be so wrong for our lovely town.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Caitlin - Monmouth Council](#)
Subject: Arcade
Date: 15 March 2021 22:01:57

Dear Caitlin

I hope you are all well and accept my email gratefully and not personally.

We have lived a supported monmouth town for many years and have experienced it as a very beautiful and well loved, stylish welcoming town. Over the years we watched surrounding towns grow from being 'messy' to desirable places to live, encouraging new shops, festivals, safe pedestrian areas, lovely farm markets, Christmas markets etc, while Monmouth, once a thriving beautiful, clean and quirky town has lost its mojo.

Dangerous beautiful historic buildings falling into despair, toilets being used to aid unsavoury behaviour etc. We ALWAYS thought Monmouth would NEVER let its self and its people down, it would come back bigger, better and more beautiful.

We had that sudden sense of security as the top of the highstreet/ square became a people friendly environment with a European feel.

Luckily we didn't hold our breath, Monmouth the gateway to Wales has decided to consider an over 21s adult gaming 'block' apposite the monumental Charles Rolls statue, the historical Shirehall and in the middle of the very expensive newly paved monmouth high street.

We only have one highstreet, what on earth goes through anyone's mind to think it's acceptable, sociable or intelligent to allow a seedy blacked out establishment to sit at the entrance of our beautiful town.

Is the council determined to destroy Monmouth, who in their right mind would let the people of Monmouth down, who in their right mind would allow this.

Regards

Angela [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Caitlin - Monmouth Council](#)
Subject: Change of use of DS Music, Monmouth
Date: 16 March 2021 20:45:44

Dear Sirs,

I used to live in Monmouth and am still a regular visitor (except when prohibited).

I have just heard of the proposed change of use of DS Music to a slot machine arcade. If approved, this would be an eyesore in the historic centre of the town, and be a major step towards making the town a dump.

Such a decision would be idiotic, and I very much hope that the Council will have the sense not to approve it.

Yours faithfully

Angus [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Admin - Monmouth Town Council](#)
Subject: FW: application for gambling license - Agincourt Square Monmouth
Date: 11 January 2021 16:55:23

To:
Monmouth Town Council
Licensing Committee Monmouthshire County Council

January 11th 2020

Dear Councillors,

I am writing to the Licensing Committee of Monmouthshire County Council and to Monmouth Town Council to ask you to **reject** the application by Henry Danter Ltd to open a gambling facility at the premises the former DS Music shop in Agincourt Square Monmouth and to urge your Committee members to study the Report **Gambling as a Public Health Issue in Wales** which was commissioned by Public Health Wales and Welsh Government.

I write as a Monmouthshire resident, a parent, and the prospective Labour Party Candidate for Monmouth for this year's Senedd elections.

I share the concern of those who are opposed to this application on the grounds that another gambling facility in the centre of Monmouth would add to the harm that gambling causes to individuals, families and local communities.

Can I draw your attention to the conclusions of the Report by Swansea and Bangor Universities commissioned by Public Health Wales, as follows:

'Over half of adults in Wales participate in some form of gambling. The advertising and accessibility of gambling activities have increased in recent years, with technology being a major driver of these increases. Young people are now exposed to high levels of gambling advertising on television, social media and other platforms. Public perceptions of gambling are becoming more negative.'

<https://www.bangor.ac.uk/psychology/research/gambling/docs/Gambling-as-Public-Health-Issue-Wales.pdf>

I urge all members of the Licensing Committee and Town Council to study this report.

I am disturbed by the rise in gambling advertisements on TV, the growth of gambling sponsorship in sport and the ease with which many people can gamble online. At a time when so many households are struggling in the Covid crisis it is wrong to encourage further opportunities to lose money through gambling, and I do not believe that Monmouthshire County Council should be enabling more gambling facilities to open.

I fully share the views of those who object to this application and I therefore urge you to reject it.

Yours

Dr Catrin [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

County Councillor Ruth Edwards
Chair
Monmouthshire County Council
Planning Committee

17 March 2021

Dear Councillor Edwards

Re: Planning Application Ref: DM/2021/00050

A change of use of former DS Music to an adult gaming centre, Monmouth

I wish to object to the above application. The information on the plan and application form submitted appears rushed and is minimal, lacking any detail. At Question 17 “Does your proposal involve the loss, gain or change of use of non-residential floorspace?” The applicant has answered “No”. This is incorrect; it does involve a change of use. Presumably if **false information** is given on an application it makes the application void?

In addition, I object to the change of use of this property for the following reasons.

- The building forms part of the vista of Agincourt Square, **an area of national historical importance** (birth of Henry V, trial of the Chartists) and is a **Listed building**. (You use a photo of that exact corner on your website under the heading “Heritage”.) An adult gaming centre is completely out of keeping with the appearance and ambience of that area.
- Much **public money has been spent upgrading** the Square to make it safer and a pleasing area for local people and tourists alike. An adult gaming centre is not in keeping with that.
- The granting of a change of use for this property is out of synch with Monmouthshire’s **Well Being Plan**.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

“This Act requires Local Authorities in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems, such as poverty, health inequalities ...”

There is already a betting shop in town and if people wish to play on gaming/gambling machines they are also available in local pubs. Children passing the building would see gambling normalised within our society. **If the local authority is to promote the well-being of its citizens, a gaming/gambling site with no other facilities certainly is not to the benefit of those citizens.**

I understand that the Licence has already been allocated. However, the following points are relevant:

Licensing Act 2003 - Policy Statement 2020 Monmouthshire County Council:

“The Licensing Authority wishes to encourage licensees to provide a wide range of entertainment activities in Monmouthshire throughout their opening hours and to promote live music, dance, theatre, etc. for the wider cultural benefit of the community.” **A site solely for gaming/gambling is not to the wider cultural benefit of the community.**

“Because of the rural nature of the County, premises and events licensed under the Licensing Act 2003 provide an essential contribution to the local economy, through tourism and cultural development.” **The gaming/gambling site does not provide an essential contribution to the local economy through tourism and cultural development.**

“The Licensing Authority will primarily focus on the direct impact of the activities taking place at licensed premises on members of the public living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area concerned.” **As this came during the pandemic, local residents were not out looking at documents attached to lampposts and were unaware of the application.**

The document refers to: *i) Long term – the importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs, ii) Integration, iii) Involvement, iv) Collaboration and v) Prevention.* **Short term needs (income) are not being balanced with long term needs.**

My family and I have lived in the heart of Monmouth Town Centre for over 23 years. We live a one-minute walk away from Agincourt Square. I feel confident that the Committee will want to take seriously the opinions of long-term local residents. Thank you for giving this letter your consideration.

With kind regards

Elaine [REDACTED]

Cc County Councillor Peter Clarke, Vice Chair MCC Planning Committee
Caitlin Williams, Administration Officer, Monmouth Town Council (for use in Monmouth Town Council Planning Meeting to take place on 23.03.2021)

Appendix:

Other comments on the Application Form:

Question 5 – Pre-application advice was not sought from the local authority by the applicant.

Question 9 – The applicant has held no neighbour and community consultation.

Question 10 – While there are no plans for external materials to be used, presumably the large windows are all to be blacked out.

From: [Town Clerk, Monmouth Council](#)
To: [Caitlin - Monmouth Council](#)
Subject: FW: planning DM/2021/00050
Date: 18 March 2021 11:05:03

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 March 2021 11:05:07 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London
To: Town Clerk, Monmouth Council <townclerk@monmouth.gov.uk>
Subject: planning DM/2021/00050

Dear Council members

I would like to comment on the planning application DM/2021/00050 for change of use of the former music shop at 2-4 Monnow street Monmouth to a gaming arcade. I would like you to take note of my objection on the grounds of moral responsibility. In this day and age we should not be encouraging anyone, let alone young school children to be gambling. Gambling is a highly addictive activity and can cause untold misery to people, their families and friends. Gambling addiction leads to criminal activity in the form of stealing and fraud to finance the activity and also has been known to such despair that the participants can take their own life. We should not, as a responsible caring community, be condoning plans to open a gaming arcade in Monmouth town centre. The high street in Monmouth looks very run down and neglected as a result of lockdown due to Covid restrictions and we need to be encouraging new businesses to the town that will benefit the residents and raise the profile of our lovely market town.

Yours faithfully

Eleanor [REDACTED]

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [Jamie Treharne](mailto:Jamie.Treharne)
To: Caitlin - Monmouth Council
Subject: Fwd: Planning application 2-4 Monnow Street Monmouth NP25 3EE
Date: 18 March 2021 14:20:16

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED] >
Date: Thu, 18 Mar 2021, 14:14
Subject: Planning application 2-4 Monnow Street Monmouth NP25 3EE
To: <jamie.treharne@gmail.com>
Cc: <bryn.wyesham@gmail.com>

Dear Mr Treharne,

I would like to lodge my opposition to the granting of change of use to the above property. As a local resident of Monmouth I am greatly saddened at the amount of empty retail properties in the town but to grant this application is catastrophic for our community. We already have enough provision within our public houses and betting facilities. Monmouth needs to encourage its residents and visitors to enjoy this amazing historic town. Visitors should come to enjoy eating, shopping, the river, the beautiful buildings granting this application will seriously damage the fabric of Monmouth. An adult gaming centre very clearly has the potential to be harmful to what Monmouth is and what it offers its people. Do we really want our children to see this on our high street? I encourage you to visit Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2 who ask public bodies in Wales to think about long term impact of their decisions on communities. The negative social and health impacts of gambling are clear from the many personal accounts provided. The brand name of Carousel evokes a vision of children having fun at the fair or seaside lets remind ourselves that this is Adult gambling so why make it sound like it's for children so please let it go somewhere else and not this town. Please do not support this application our council would be irresponsible to its residents wellbeing and our future generations.

Thank you in anticipation of your help.

Kind
Isabel
Sent from my iPad

Regards
[REDACTED]

H

I make this written submission by way of objection to a change of use application submitted in respect of 2-4 Monnow Street ('the Property').

I am the owner of a commercial premises situated directly opposite the Property at 1A Monnow Street and I have been resident in the Town for over 40 years.

I have read with keen interest the many objections raised by the local community to the grant of a licence by Monmouthshire County Council to Mr Henry Danter, permitting subject to planning permission, the operation of the Property as an amusement arcade. I endorse the representations of others, as noted below, and make the following observations of my own:

1. Dr. Catrin Maby wrote that gambling was a major public health issue as a direct result of the availability of online gambling facilities, and the increasing prevalence of gambling in advertising seen on television and in the sponsorship of sport. In the wake of the pandemic will follow an economic crisis that renders it irresponsible to promote gambling in our high streets.
2. David and Angela Hoyles made reference to the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which requires public bodies to consider the long-term impact of their decisions and to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It is difficult to conceive how the grant of the application in hand could be in line with these statutory obligations.
3. If a change of use is permitted, the licence already granted will allow for the installation of 4 gambling machines in the Property. There are already 6 such machines situated in Wetherspoons King's Head which is located in the immediate vicinity of the Property, and a further betting establishment situated at the bottom of Monnow Street. The need for such recreation is catered for by the existing facilities in Monmouth.
4. Monmouth is a very special town steeped in history. The Council for British Archaeology designated Monmouth one of the top ten towns in Great Britain. The Property is accessed directly from the prestigious Agincourt Square and large sums of taxpayers money have been expended to improve the appearance of the Square and to make it pedestrian-friendly. One has to question whether the proposed amusement arcade will lend anything to the historic aesthetic of the Town.
5. There are 15 empty retail units in Monmouth and the addition of an amusement arcade is highly unlikely to attract either retailers or indeed shoppers to the Town.

It is an affront to me as a property owner and resident of Monmouth that a licence has been granted to allow for the operation of a further business that encourages and promotes gambling and as such I consider it imperative to object in the strongest terms to this application for a change of use.

Liz [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Caitlin - Monmouth Council](#)
Subject: Change of Use of DS Music
Date: 16 March 2021 09:57:55

Madam

I wish to protest strongly to the above proposal, on two grounds;

1. At this time when so many people have lost their jobs and are suffering financially due to the corona virus, it is inappropriate to open a gambling venue which would only encourage people to get into debt
2. The site is adjacent to our town square and a gambling business would completely spoil the ambience of the historic buildings and Rolls statue which are much loved by the people of Monmouth and of great interest to visitors. It would be unbelievably detrimental to the atmosphere around Agincourt Square and would encourage noise litter and unsocial behaviour. Having spent so much on paving around the square, I cannot believe the Town planning Committee would even consider granting permission for a gambling business in a prime location such as this.

Yours

Margaret [REDACTED]
Sent from my Galaxy

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

County Councillor Ruth Edwards
Chair
Monmouthshire County Council
Planning Committee

18 March 2021

Dear Councillor Edwards

Re: Planning Application Ref: DM/2021/00050

A change of use of former DS Music to an adult gaming centre, Monmouth

I wish to object to the above application. The information on the plan and application form submitted appears rushed and is minimal, lacking any detail. At Question 17 "Does your proposal involve the loss, gain or change of use of non-residential floorspace?" The applicant has answered "No". This is incorrect; it does involve a change of use. Does this apparently **false information** on the application render it void?

In addition, I object to the change of use of this property for the following reasons.

- The building forms part of the vista of Agincourt Square, **an area of national historical importance** (birth of Henry V, trial of the Chartists) and is a **Listed building**. (You use a photo of that exact corner on your website under the heading "Heritage".) An adult gaming centre is completely out of keeping with the appearance and ambience of that area.
- Much **public money has been spent upgrading** the Square to make it safer and a pleasing area for local people and tourists alike. An adult gaming centre is not in keeping with that.
- The granting of a change of use for this property is not in keeping with Monmouthshire's **Well Being Plan**.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

"This Act requires Local Authorities in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems, such as poverty, health inequalities ..."

There is already a betting shop in town and if people wish to play on gaming/gambling machines they are also available in local pubs. Children passing the building would see gambling normalised within our society. **If the local authority is to promote the well-being of its citizens, a gaming/gambling site with no other facilities certainly is not to the benefit of those citizens. In a town with well over 2000 secondary school pupils and numerous primary school children in the town it appears particularly inappropriate to allow this development.**

I understand that the Licence has already been allocated. However, the following points are relevant:

Licensing Act 2003 - Policy Statement 2020 Monmouthshire County Council:

“The Licensing Authority wishes to encourage licensees to provide a wide range of entertainment activities in Monmouthshire throughout their opening hours and to promote live music, dance, theatre, etc. for the wider cultural benefit of the community.” **A site solely for gaming/gambling is not to the wider cultural benefit of the community.**

“Because of the rural nature of the County, premises and events licensed under the Licensing Act 2003 provide an essential contribution to the local economy, through tourism and cultural development.”

The gaming/gambling site does not provide an essential contribution to the local economy through tourism and cultural development.

“The Licensing Authority will primarily focus on the direct impact of the activities taking place at licensed premises on members of the public living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area concerned.” **As this came during the pandemic, local residents were not out looking at documents attached to lampposts and were unaware of the application.**

The document refers to: *i) Long term – the importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs, ii) Integration, iii) Involvement, iv) Collaboration and v) Prevention.* **Short term needs (income) are not being balanced with long term needs.**

Like many market towns throughout the country Monmouth is in serious need of regeneration and it is hard to see how an adult gaming centre in the heart of the town will enhance the quality of the town’s amenities for residents and visitors.

I have owned my home in Monmouth for over 25 years and I feel confident that the Committee will want to take seriously the opinions of long-term local residents. Thank you for giving this letter your consideration.

With kind regards

Tim [REDACTED]

Cc County Councillor Peter Clarke, Vice Chair MCC Planning Committee
Caitlin Williams, Administration Officer, Monmouth Town Council (for use in Monmouth Town Council Planning Meeting to take place on 23.03.2021)

Appendix:

Other comments on the Application Form:

Question 5 – Pre-application advice was not sought from the local authority by the applicant.

Question 9 – The applicant has held no neighbour and community consultation.

Question 10 – While there are no plans for external materials to be used, presumably the large windows are all to be blacked out.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Caitlin - Monmouth Council](#)
Subject: Re: gambling
Date: 21 March 2021 23:53:42

> -----Original Message-----

> From: [REDACTED] >

> Sent: 17 March 2021 07:21

> To: Caitlin - Monmouth Council
<caitlin@monmouth.gov.uk>

> Subject: Re: gambling

>

Very opposed to the change of use of DS Music to a gambling shop, especially as it's in such a prominent position in the high street There are innumerable opportunities for gambling activities on line and it will only prove to be a temptation to young people and those trying to cope with an addiction Hope and pray that the application is refused Jean [REDACTED] Sent from my iPad

>

From: [REDACTED] >
Date: 22 March 2021 at 8:11:55 pm GMT
To: clrrgrod@gmail.com
Cc: dewhurst612@btinternet.com, claudia.dixtonosbaston@gmail.com,
janelucasindependent@gmail.com, mat.feakins@bgfinance.com
Subject: DM/2021/00050 Planning permission

Dear Richard

I'm writing to you both as a Monmouth Town Councillor representing the area in which I live but also as a Monmouthshire County Councillor. I'm copying the other Dixton with Osbaston Ward councillors, Emma Bryn with whom I had an initial brief email conversation and Matt Feakins as Mayor.

I'm writing with concerns about the proposed placement of an adult gaming centre (arcade gaming machines) on the premises of the former DJ Music on Monnow Street.

I find it utterly unbelievable that a licence has been permitted for a gambling centre given the range of vulnerable groups within and around the area of Monmouth Town. It is also surprising given the other gambling venues and opportunities already available within the town plus the readily available online access. I hope the planning committee will identify valid planning reasons as to why this proposal should not proceed.

The main concern in terms of planning is the position of the proposed adult gaming centre in a prominent position on the main street within the town, Monnow Street.

The proposed site is within easy walking distance of the town's youth centre, The Attik, 'a safe meeting and centre for young people' which is usually a key after-school and evening venue for secondary school students.

It is also within easy walking distance of a number of residential boarding homes for the Haberdasher Schools. Students of these schools and the local comprehensive school often spend a considerable amount of time using the shops, cafes and facilities in the high street and would inevitably have to pass this centre if it were to be allowed to occupy the proposed premises.

Gaming machines are particularly attractive and particularly dangerous in terms of addiction to vulnerable teenagers and young adults, there is much research to support this. Given the position of this site and the inevitable frequency with which teenagers and young adults, would have to walk past makes it an extremely inappropriate position.

Monmouth has both a food bank and a community fridge, both facilities well used. These and other community outreach work gives evidence of the financial stress people are already facing, making individuals and families extremely vulnerable. There are also, I believe designated areas of priority social need in the vicinity.

The proposed site for this gaming centre is in a highly prominent location and therefore a location more likely to attract the attention of the young and vulnerable. There would undoubtedly be an impact upon residents of Monmouth, in particular those within vulnerable groups, again there is research to demonstrate that these groups are likely to be affected.

The unit would be far more appropriately used for retail. The proposal, if agreed, would lead to the loss of an important primary frontage.

In addition, what consideration has been taken for:

- any increase in people wanting to use the proposed facilities, increasing a need for parking?
- the generation of more traffic up and down Monnow Street searching for the centre?
- the noise and disturbance for other businesses resulting from use of the proposed centre?
- the vision for the future of Monmouth town?
- the close proximity to the development of the space around the town hall area?

I appreciate the need to rejuvenate the town's high street. However, I think the community would not be benefitted by the proposed adult gaming centre and for some within the community it would be highly detrimental. I think it would be irresponsible of the Town council to give planning permission for this proposal.

I hope the planning committee will be able to identify the most appropriate way forwards which will benefit the whole community of Monmouth.

Many thanks for your consideration

Kind regards

Anne [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: 22 March 2021 17:59
To: Caitlin - Monmouth Council <caitlin@monmouth.gov.uk>
Subject: Objection to Gaming Arcade
Importance: High

Dear Caitlin

Subject: Re: planning DM/2021/00050

I would like to formally register my objection to the planning application DM/2021/00050 for change of use of the former music shop at 2-4 Monnow street Monmouth to a gaming arcade.

As a therapeutic coach, I understand the impact of addictions and how quickly they take hold. Gambling ruins lives. Not only does gambling have a devastating affect on the immediate family, but on the wider community. That is surely too great a risk for anyone to take.

Whilst filling empty shops is vital for the economical health of Monmouth and beyond, a gaming arcade will create wealth for its owner and poverty for others. The town's youth need entertainment, but not of this variety. Additionally, as it would be sited next to Weatherspoons, it would be creating a potentially greater problem – alcohol and gambling are a lethal combination.

Lastly, as a lesser point, its position on the High Street would also change the face of Monmouth, being a large and prominent space.

I am happy for you to redact my personal details and put forward this objection.

Many thanks, Michèle [REDACTED]

Stay safe & go well, Michèle
Mob: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Late Application for Planning Meeting 23.03.2021

- A. DM/2021/00182 Planning Permission
Demolition of existing 2 storey dwelling. Construction of a 2
storey replacement dwelling including integral garage and
amended access.
Lleoliad/Location: Woodmancote
Highfield Road
Osbaston
Monmouth
Monmouthshire
NP25 3HR
Recommendation required by 9th April 2021**

From: [Deb Jeffreys](#)
To: [Caitlin - Monmouth Council](#)
Subject: RE: Want some help in solving issues with planning online?
Date: 17 March 2021 11:05:20
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hi Caitlin,

I am on leave this week, but thought I would respond to you quickly whilst I am online for half an hour sending out another advert!

I had the job and a bit of a temp the next morning but all fine...so pleased, next one 14th May now

We can of course, sort out a bespoke course for you, as this particular course may not come around again for a good few months. Bespoke courses are usually costed around the £600 mark but I will discuss with the Planners Monday morning.

We can offer you 10% off this bespoke course as it's only fair if you book it and we issue the invoice before or on 31st March?

I can send you full details on Monday when I return to work?

Thanks

Deb Jeffreys

Community Engagement & Development Officer
 Swyddog Ymgysylltiad a Datblygu Cymunedol



Planning Aid Wales
 Cymorth Cynllunio Cymru

☎ 02920 625004



www.planningaidwales.org.uk



📍 First Floor, 174 Whitchurch
 Road,
 Heath, Cardiff CF14 3NB

From: Caitlin - Monmouth Council <caitlin@monmouth.gov.uk>
Sent: 16 March 2021 12:48
To: Deb Jeffreys
Subject: RE: Want some help in solving issues with planning online?

Afternoon Deb,

Hope you felt ok after your jab a few weeks ago.

Many of our committee members are interested in this training session but unfortunately it clashes with our Full Council Meeting so they are unable to attend.

Is this topic likely to be available again in the future? If not, could this be given to our members as a bespoke training course and if so, how much would this cost?

Any information would be great.

Kind regards

Caitlin Williams

Administration Officer
 Monmouth Town Council
 Shire Hall,
 Agincourt Square
 Monmouth



Monmouth Town Council, Solving Planning Problems Online

Training Proposal

22nd March 2021

1. Context

1.1 This proposal document outlines how Planning Aid Wales (PAW) can support Monmouth Town Council with a range of common planning problems and how to solve them by using online resources. The document outlines the services we will provide together with a suggested cost.

1.2 This Town Council have previously been involved with PAW training and have sought advice about how best to develop their own community involvement in the planning process. They have requested specific bespoke training for their Council independently of PAW's other training planned schedule.

2. Why choose Planning Aid Wales?

Planning Aid Wales is a registered charity that advocates and supports community involvement in planning in Wales. Founded in 1978, we have almost 40 years' experience of helping individuals and community groups to understand and engage with the planning system. Our core services include delivering planning training to a range of audiences, developing easy read planning guidance and a free planning helpline. We are the 'go to' organisation for community engagement in planning in Wales; we have built a huge repository of engagement methods, tools and techniques and regularly publish news on good engagement practice.

Relevant experience

Follow the links to find summaries and examples of relevant activities we have delivered in recent years.

LDP Engagement:

- CTC Engagement, Bridgend County Borough Council
- CTC Engagement, Pembrokeshire County Council
- CTC Engagement, Brecon Beacons National Park
- CTC and Key Stakeholder Engagement, Carmarthenshire County Council.
- CTC Engagement, recently commissioned by Conwy & Newport County Council

Training:

- CTC Training across Wales
- Delivering 10 training events, across Wales, on planning policy on behalf of the Welsh Government.
- CTC Engagement, BBNPA

Place Plans

- Place Plan Training at Chepstow Town Council
- Commissioned by Newtown Town Council to prepare their Place Plan
- Commissioned by Chepstow Town Council to undertake community engagement in relation to their Place Plan

For more information on our recent successes please visit the following webpage:
<http://www.planningaidwales.org.uk/about-us/our-work/recent-successes/>

We are also delighted to note that we were Commended for our work at the RTPi Awards for Planning Excellence for In-House Planning Team of the Year 2020.

Our approach

Planning Aid Wales is an advocate of meaningful community engagement in planning.

Through our work, we seek to raise the knowledge and capacity of communities to engage, but not just in the activity at hand - we seek to enable people to effectively participate in planning activities on an ongoing basis.

As an independent third-party organisation, we have found time and again that communities are willing to engage with us, even where Local Planning Authorities have encountered barriers to engagement in the past. As part of our process, we encourage active collaboration between local planning authority staff and community groups, thereby building better relationships for future engagement. We take no view on any local policy or specific development; we only support individuals and communities to express their own views effectively.

We recognise that the planning system can be complex and the needs / wants of communities do not always align with other interests. We manage expectations by helping our beneficiaries understand that planning is a holistic system that seeks to address a wide variety of priorities, and clearly explain the scope and limitations of what the planning system (or particular activity) can achieve.

Planning Aid Wales is a 'not for profit' body; any income generated from our work is utilised to further support our aims of facilitating greater community engagement in planning across Wales.

3. Outline of proposed training

- a. Planning Aid Wales proposes to deliver a Solving Problems with Planning Online webinar, specifically for Monmouth Town Council. The webinar will last for approximately 2 hours 15 minutes (including breaks).
- b. It is anticipated the webinar have the suggested content:
 - *How can we find out more information about planning applications and planning policy?*
 - *How can we respond to them?*
 - *Where can we get guidance on specific planning questions?*
 - *How can we go about engaging our communities online?*

In the course, we will explore and demonstrate some useful online tools you can use to answer all these questions, including:

- *Welsh Government and County Council websites.*
 - *The Planning Aid Wales website and online training portal, the Planning Portal and Place Plans website.*
 - *Online resources such as Landmap, NRW Flood maps, CADW historic maps data that you can use in responding to planning applications.*
 - *Community engagement tools – an overview of using social media and other online resources that allow community participation.*
 - *An overview of how the planning inspectorate is moving online with hearings.*
- c. The Town Council will invite their own Councillors to ensure maximum attendance to ensure all participants engage in the process. PAW can make available for webinar attendees, hard copy versions of the bilingual workshop manual and presentation slides on request.

4. Estimate of costs.

The project will be delivered by 2-3 PAW staff and includes planning, preparation, and delivery of a 2-hour workshop together with attendance at a “live” online session. We consider delivery of our work above would require 10 hours work. Therefore, based on our standard daily rate of £450 we would suggest a fee of £506.25 (which includes a 10% discount for early booking) for the project. Planning Aid Wales does not charge VAT.

£450 per day fees, thus based on 8 hours, £56.25 per hour.

A breakdown of fees:

Preparation of Workshop Presentation	6 hours
Delivery of the session (plus extra)	4 hours
Total	10 hours @ 56.25
Proposed Fee	£562.50
10% discount (if booked by 31/03/21)	-£56.25
Total proposed fee	£506.25

From: [Longford, Amy](#)
To: [Town Clerk, Monmouth Council](#)
Cc: [Carnock, Victoria](#)
Subject: RE: Dilapidated Buildings
Date: 16 March 2021 15:38:37
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Dear Caitlin,

Many thanks for the email I have copied Victoria in however as she has only just started with us and we are all working remotely making things even harder we haven't had chance to look at this list as yet

We will, and as I have said before we are as keen as yourselves to get progress on some of these buildings Please can you use my email address as a point of contact for the meantime however

As an aside, we have been working with the Regen team and helping to advise on the grant funding that we have available for retailers at present We have had a number of applications and have spent some considerable time helping to achieve high quality public realm and shopfront improvements to many listed buildings in Monmouth

Many thanks

Amy

COVID19
 County Hall Usk is now closed to the public however all officers are available by phone or email.
 Due to resources and equipment, we are only accepting applications and correspondence electronically.

Amy Longford BSc, MSc, PGdip, HBC
 Heritage and Applications Team Manager/ Rheolwr y tim Trefladaeth a Ceisiadau
 ☎: 01633 644877/07738187594
 ✉: amylongford@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Shared Heritage Services on behalf of: *Cydwasaethau Treftadaeth ar ran:*
 Monmouthshire County Council *Cyngor Sir Fynwy*
 Torfaen County Borough Council *Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Torfaen*
 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council *Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Blaenau Gwent*

For TCBC queries call **01495 762200** *Am ymholiadau Torfaen*
 For MCC queries call **01633 644880** *Am ymholiadau Sir Fynwy*
 For BGCBC queries call **01495 311556** *Am ymholiadau Blaenau Gwent*

Monmouthshire County Council / Cyngor Sir Fynwy County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, Monmouthshire, NP15 1GA
 Tŷ Blaen Torfaen, Ffordd Panteg, Y Dafarn Newydd, Pont-y-pŵl/New Inn, Pontypool, Torfaen, NP4 0LS
 Blaenau Gwent , Canolfan Dinesig/Civic Centre Glyn Ebbw/Ebbw Vale Gwent NP23 6XB

 Follow us on Twitter / diynwch ni ar Twitter: [@MCCPlanning](#)

Any personal information disclosed to us will be processed in accordance with our [Privacy Notice](#)

From: Town Clerk, Monmouth Council <townclerk@monmouth.gov.uk>
Sent: 16 March 2021 13:01
To: Longford, Amy <AmyLongford@monmouthshire.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Dilapidated Buildings

Good afternoon Amy,

I am wondering whether you could please provide Victoria's email address so that I can keep in touch with her regarding the dilapidated buildings in Monmouth?

Kind regards

Caitlin Williams
Administration Officer
 Monmouth Town Council
 Shire Hall,
 Agincourt Square
 Monmouth
 NP25 3DY
 Tel: 01600 715662
 Email: caitlin@monmouth.gov.uk

Please note the Shire Hall is now closed and Officers are working from home. Telephone calls will be monitored every day except Wednesday from 10 00am until 12noon. Emails are monitored Monday - Friday between 10 00 a.m. until 3 p.m.

The Shire Hall remains closed to members of the public.

When you contact us the information you provide (personal information such as name, address, email address, phone number, organisation) will be processed and stored to enable us to contact you and respond to your correspondence, provide information and/or access our facilities and services. Your personal information will not be shared or provided to any other third party. Your information may however be published in the public domain if you require the Council to discuss the matter raised.

For further information please see our full privacy notice on our

website: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5630d2b8e4b0465682375c36/t/5dcabfbef3feba5015ad1681/1573568447063/MTC+Website+Privacy+Policy.pdf>