

# Appendix 1. Proposal (including Heritage and Access Statement)

## Change of use from public drop in centre/exhibition space with ancillary office accommodation to 'Recovery Hub' community centre

### Site Context / Previous Use

The application site comprises the ground floor of the Hub building on Wellington Row. The ground floor has been vacant since September 2022 when the previous tenants vacated the premises. The building itself was constructed in the early 20th Century as an electricity substation. After this fell into disrepair the whole building was renovated in 2011, with the original internal fittings removed and the building converted into a bike shop/workshop. In 2017, the ground floor was converted to a public drop in centre, with ancillary office space.

### Scale of Development

This application seeks to repurpose the existing ground floor space as part of a community centre operating from the whole property, including the first floor, which we have been advised already sits in the relevant use class.<sup>1</sup> This application therefore relates to change of use class for the ground floor only. Works to the building would be restricted to renewal of interior décor. There are no proposed changes to the fabric of the building.

Appendices 2a-2c show the site location and proposed floorspace change of use.

### Proposal

The proposed new use of the entire property as 'York Recovery Hub' is to serve as a venue to enable people with both direct and indirect lived experience of substance use disorders to have an important role in helping more York residents enter, establish and sustain recovery. 'The Recovery Hub' would be used to host:

- a wide range of activities to support social connections, improvements in health and wellbeing and confidence in life in recovery, including employment
- mutual aid group meetings, including for family members affected by someone else's substance use
- opportunities to meet and find out about local services / employers
- access to counselling / therapy groups / recovery coaching, drawing on a range of approaches to recovery.

Initially, one full-time equivalent will be employed to oversee / co-ordinate the activities and volunteers operating from the Recovery Hub.

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<sup>1</sup> Becky Eades (City of York Council Planning) informed us on 18/12/2023 that:

"The property has two different uses (in terms of planning use classes), the first floor is in use class E and the ground floor is classed as Sui Generis. From my understanding of what you've outlined the building would be used for and that no residential accommodation would be provided the new use class would be E. The E use class means that no change of use would be required for the new intended use at first floor. The Sui Generis use class does not allow for any use class changes to take place without the benefit of planning permission; planning permission will be required to use the ground floor for the intended use. The property is a grade II Listed Building and any changes other than general repairs will require Listed Building consent."

It is anticipated that eventually the centre could be open 7 days a week, with some evening opening. It is expected that in time, The Recovery Hub could open as a social space in evenings and weekends as a recovery café/dry bar.

The principal use of the property would be as a community centre, but 'The Recovery Hub' will need to become self-sustaining, which may mean that there will be some sales/income-generating activity as the Recovery Hub develops.

## **Planning Context**

Paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023) advises Local Planning Authorities, amongst other things, to (a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and (b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community, to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs. This proposal seeks to locate a community centre in the heart of the city, with a focus on activities delivered by and for people who have recovered from, or are seeking to recover from, substance use disorders and people who have been affected by someone else's substance use. This would offer York residents a visible display of recovery, which is important in reducing stigma and offering hope to those who are still struggling with alcohol / substance use disorders that they too can establish and sustain recovery. The proposal aligns with one of the York Health and Wellbeing Strategy's key ambitions: to invest in the things which keep people happy and connected, and working together to support people quickly when they need it, and addresses the 'red flags' of alcohol-related hospital admissions and drug-related deaths highlighted within the Strategy.

Paragraph 203 of the NPPF advises LPAs to take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. This proposal would bring back into productive use a space which has laid vacant since September 2022, and would help to preserve the asset. This proposal does not seek to alter the exterior of the building and therefore will have no impact on the character, appearance or setting of the Hub.

## **Heritage**

The Hub building is statutorily listed (Grade II) for its group value with Lendal Bridge and associated City Wall, and is within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area. During the redevelopment of the building in 2011, the original interior fittings were removed and replaced (as per 08/01669/FUL and 08/01764/LBC). This change of use proposal seeks only to refresh the interior décor of the ground floor, and there will be no changes to the room layout or alterations to the fabric of the building. These changes would not affect the special interest of the host building.

## **Access**

It is anticipated that the vast majority of visitors to the Recovery Hub will travel by public transport or on foot/by bike. The Hub building is located in the heart of the city centre, only 5 minutes from the train station and bus stops. There is provision for cycle parking close to the building and 2 car parks nearby.

The ground floor of the building itself is raised over street level, with steps at the entrance. Access for those with limited mobility is provided by a lift platform in the building entrance.