

# PLANNING STATEMENT

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**70 Monnow Street,  
Monmouth, NP25 3EN**

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January 2024



## Summary

**Proposal:**

Proposed change of use from A1 (Retail) and D1 (Clinic) to A2 (Financial and Professional Services)

**Location:**

70 Monnow Street, Monmouth, NP25 3EN

**Date:**

January 2024

**Project Reference:**

24.107

**Client:**

Monmouthshire Building Society

**Product of:**

Asbri Planning Limited  
Unit 9 Oak Tree Court  
Mulberry Drive  
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## Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Asbri Planning Ltd on behalf of Monmouthshire Building Society in relation to the proposed planning application for the change of use of 70 Monnow Street, Monmouth, from A1 (Retail) & D1 (Clinic) to A2 (Financial and Professional Services).
- 1.2 The application site is located on Monnow Street, in the centre of Monmouth. The site is currently occupied by a dentistry clinic, under a joint use class of A1 (Retail) and D1 (Clinic) (permitted under DM/2018/01955), and is situated within Monmouth's Primary Shopping Frontage.
- 1.3 This proposal seeks to secure the relocation of Monmouthshire Building Society from their existing office at 10 Agincourt Street to 70 Monnow Street. As such, a Change of Use application for Use Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) is required.

- 1.4 The planning application comprises the following set of drawings:

<b>Drawing name (with reference)</b>	<b>Prepared By</b>
Site Location Plan	Asbri Planning Ltd

- 1.5 In addition, the following supporting documents are submitted.

<b>Document</b>	<b>Prepared by</b>
Application Forms	Asbri Planning Ltd
Covering Letter	Asbri Planning Ltd
Planning Statement	Asbri Planning Ltd

- 1.6 This Planning Statement presents the planning case for the proposed development having regard to the site and its surroundings, the planning history, and policy context. It considers the key policy issues and planning merits of the proposed development. The statement is structured as follows:

- **Section 2:** provides a description of the site and its surroundings
- **Section 3:** includes a review of the site's planning history and a summary of the pre-application discussions
- **Section 4:** summarises the development proposals;
- **Section 5:** outlines the relevant planning policy context, at both the national and local level;

- **Section 6:** addresses the key planning considerations associated with the development proposal; and
- **Section 7:** provides a conclusion regarding the overall acceptability of the application.

## Site Description

### General location

- 2.1 The application site is located at 70 Monnow Street, in the centre of Monmouth. It is centred on grid-coordinates: X: 350601, Y: 212662.
- 2.2 The site's surrounding context is predominantly retail, with other uses associated with town centres such as food and drink establishments and offices (financial and professional services) also located in close proximity. This is reflective of the site's location within Monmouth's Primary Shopping Frontage within the Local Development Plan. The site is in close proximity to the A40, in addition to a number of bus stops which present good active travel linkages.

### Site Description

- 2.3 The application site comprises a vacant terraced, ground floor, town centre unit with a site area measuring approximately 102m<sup>2</sup>. The site is located adjacent to an M&S Foodhall store to the north, and a vacant unit which most recently operated under Use Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) to the south.
- 2.4 The existing layout of 70 Monnow Street indicates that the unit is split between A1 and D1 use, with the front 60% of the ground floor of the unit comprising 60% A1 (Retail) use, and the rear 40% comprising D1 use containing two no. treatment rooms.
- 2.5 The town of Monmouth lies near the Wales/England border, and acts as a retail, cultural, and educational centre for a significant rural area in the south-east of Wales. It is identified as a Main Town within the Monmouthshire Local Development Plan 2011-2021.
- 2.6 With further regard to Monmouth's context, the town centre benefits from a large range of shops, restaurants, and other commercial uses. The A40 provides primary vehicle access into the town, which connects Monmouth with nearby Newport and Abergavenny, and links to the wider highway network to provide access to Cardiff, Bristol, and Hereford.

### Access

- 2.7 The site is accessed on Monnow Street (B4293) which facilitates pedestrian and vehicular travel. from the west via a direct connection into the existing St David's Park residential development, accessed off Ballihelig Road. This provides a key route from the application site onto the wider local highway network.
- 2.8 Car parking can be achieved at the rear of the site, off Blestium Street and the B4293. Here, several car parks can be found which facilitate town centre access and parking.

### Transport

- 2.9 Cycling within Monmouth is predominantly catered for on-road cycling provision, with limited off-road routes available. The application site is located approximately 150m from National Cycle Route 423 which connects the neighbouring towns of Cwmbran and Usk.
- 2.10 With regard to public transport, Monmouth Bus Stop is located 160m to the west of the site, which facilitates access between Monmouth and Chepstow, Abergavenny, Ross-on-Wye, Newport, and Hereford.

### **Heritage**

- 2.11 The application site is located within a Conservation Area, as per the Monmouthshire Local Development Plan. A review of Cadw data indicates that a number of the buildings along Monnow Street are subject to heritage listings, including 62, 64, 74, and 76 Monnow Street, which encircle the site. The justification behind the listing of 74 Monnow Street (Grade II Listed) reads as follows: *"Included for its special architectural interest as a multi-million period of definite character in Monmouth town centre."* (Cadw ref: 85162).

### **Flooding and Landscape**

- 2.12 A review of NRW's Development Advice Map for Planning (DAM) indicates that the site is located within Flood Zone C1, which is served by significant flooding infrastructure, including flood defences.
- 2.13 A review of NRW's Flood Map for Planning (TAN15), which is yet to be formally adopted, indicates that the site is located within Flood Zone 3 for river flooding (1% chance of flooding from rivers per year, including the impacts of climate change).

## Planning Context

### Planning History

- 3.1 A review of Monmouthshire County Council's online planning register indicates that the site is subject to the following planning history:
- Application Ref: DC/2015/01290 – 'Demolition of existing private car garage, erection of new single storey building for A1 use to house barber & Manicurist. Change of Use domestic to A1.' Approved March 2016.
  - Application Ref: DC/2016/00505 – 'Removal of Conditions 3 and 4 of planning permission DC2015/01290.' Approved June 2016.
  - Application Ref: DM/2018/01955 – 'Change of Use from A1 to mixed use of A1 and D1.' Approved February 2019.
- 3.2 In line with the above planning history, the site's current lawful use is established as mixed A1/D2 Use.



## Proposals

4.1 The proposed development refers to the change of use of the ground floor of 70 Monnow Street, from mixed Use Class A1/D1 to A2 (Financial and Professional Services).

4.2 As discussed in the following section, the site is situated within the defined settlement boundary for Monmouth, and is located along Monmouth's Primary Shopping Frontage. The proposed development would put the unit into appropriate, viable use, and would allow for the relocation of Monmouthshire Building Society from their existing office on Agincourt Square (outside of the Primary Shopping Frontage) to 70 Monnow Street.

### **Layout**

4.3 As discussed, the existing layout of 70 Monnow Street indicates that the unit is split between A1 and D1 use, with the front 60% of the ground floor of the unit comprising 60% A1 (Retail) use, and the rear 40% comprising D1 use.

4.4 The proposed change of use would result in the entirety of the ground floor (102m<sup>2</sup>) being changed to Use Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services).

### **Scale and Appearance**

4.5 The proposed development relates to the ground floor only of 70 Monnow Street. As such, no proposals are made for the residential units at the upper floors of the unit.

4.6 No significant alterations to the building's appearance or exterior are proposed as part of this change of use application, with reference to the site's location within the Monmouth Conservation Area.

### **Access and Parking**

4.7 The proposed development does not seek to alter the existing parking arrangements found at the site. Parking will continue to be achieved for those working on the unit's ground floor via the existing parking provision at the rear of the building at Blestium Street.

4.8 Pedestrian access into the ground floor of the site will continue to be achieved via the site's frontage on Monnow Street. As such, no changes to the existing access arrangements are proposed.

### **Heritage and Amenity**

4.9 As discussed, 70 Monnow Street is not subject to any specific heritage designations, including listings.

4.10 As above, the proposed development does not propose any works to the exterior of 70 Monnow Street – nor does it seek to alter its appearance onto the street scene in any significant ways. As such, the proposed development is not considered to generate any adverse

impacts on the amenity of nearby listed buildings, or the Monmouth Conservation Area.

## Planning Policy Context

### Introduction

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this Planning Application comprises the following:

- National Development Framework: Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (February, 2021);
- The Monmouthshire County Council Adopted Local Development Plan (February 2014)).

5.2 In addition to the Development Plan, the Planning Application has been informed by policy and guidance set out in the following:

- Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (February, 2021), informed by The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and supplemented by Technical Advice Notes;
- Building Better Places: The Planning System Delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures (July, 2020);
- Monmouthshire County Council Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

5.3 This section of the Planning Statement provides an overview of the Development Plan context and planning policy framework of specific relevance to the determination of this application. For ease of reference, this overview is set out below at the national and local level.

### **Wellbeing of Future Generations Act**

5.4 The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (which came into force on 1st April 2016) requires “public bodies to do things in pursuit of the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in a way that accords with the sustainable development principle”. The Act sets out seven ‘well-being’ goals, including creating a “prosperous Wales”, a “more equal Wales”, a “healthier Wales”, a “Wales of cohesive communities”, and a “Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language”.

### **National Development Framework: Future Wales – The National Plan 2040**

5.5 The National Development Framework: Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 was published on 24th February 2021. ‘Future Wales’ sets out the Welsh Government’s strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy; achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience; developing strong ecosystems; and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

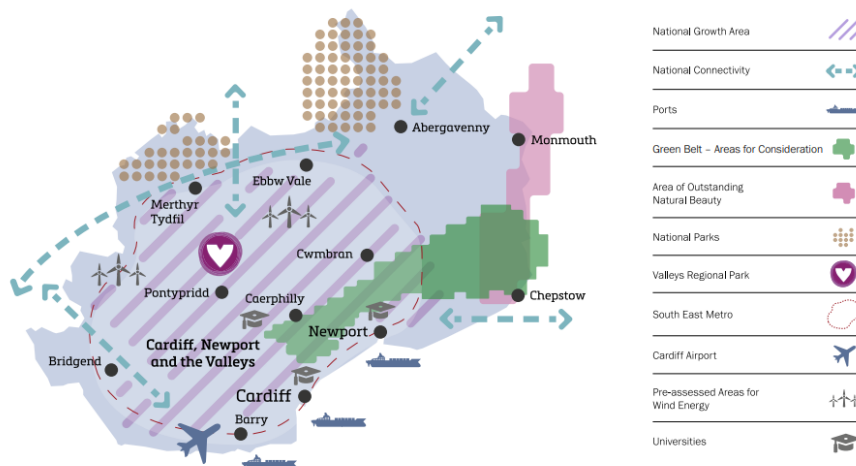
### Town Centres

- 5.6 Policy 6 of Future Wales details the desire for a 'Town Centre First' approach for growth within Wales. In full, this policy states:

*“Significant new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure and public service facilities must be located within town and city centres. They should have good access by public transport to and from the whole town or city and, where appropriate, the wider region. A sequential approach must be used to inform the identification of the best location for these developments and they should be identified in Strategic and Local Development Plans.”*

### Monmouthshire

- 5.7 Monmouthshire is identified within the South-East region of Wales within Future Wales. although given its context it is not allocated for any specific development. It is, however, closely connected to the Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys area which is identified as a National Growth Area.



### **Planning Policy Wales, Edition 11**

- 5.8 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 11 was published on 24th February 2021. The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

- 5.9 Sustainable Development is defined at Page 7 of PPW as follows:

*“the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals”.*

### **Local Level**

**Monmouthshire County Council Adopted Local Development Plan 2011-2021 (February 2014)**

- 5.10 The statutory development plan for the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 comprises the Monmouthshire County Council Adopted Local Development Plan which was adopted in February 2014.
- 5.11 As shown below, the Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan indicates that the site is located within the defined settlement boundary for Brecon, and is located along Monmouth’s Protected Retail Frontage, within the Central Shopping Area.

Figure 1 - Monmouthshire LDP Proposals Map



- 5.12 Monmouth is identified as one of Monmouthshire’s three County Towns, as indicated in Paragraph 5.36 of the LDP. These county towns are “akin to market towns, providing a broad range of facilities and services, of which retailing is a key component, for residents and visitors.”
- 5.13 In light of the above, the following Local Development Plan policies are considered relevant in the context of the proposed development:

Policy Reference	Referring to
<b>Strategic Policies</b>	
Policy S6	Retail Hierarchy
Policy S12	Efficient Resource Use and Flood Risk
Policy S13	Landscape, Green Infrastructure, and the Natural Environment
Policy S17	Place Making and Design
<b>Development Management Policies</b>	
Policy RET1	Primary Shopping Frontages
Policy DES1	General Design Considerations

Policy HE1	Development in Conservation Areas
Policy HE2	Alterations to Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Areas
Policy HE3	Design of Shop Fronts in Conservation Areas

5.14 Policy S6 'Retail Hierarchy' defines Monmouth as a County Town. Here, it states that all new or enhanced retail or commercial developments will be focused on the County's main towns.

5.15 Policy S17 'Place Making and Design' states:

*"Development shall contribute to creating high quality, attractive, and sustainable places. All development proposals must include and promote high quality, sustainable inclusive design which respects local distinctiveness, respects the character of the site and its surrounding in order to protect and enhance the natural, historic and built environments and to create attractive, safe, and accessible places."*

5.16 Policy RET1 'Primary Shopping Frontages' is considered pertinent as the site is situated along Monmouth's Primary Shopping Frontage, and states:

*"Primary Shopping Frontages are designated in Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth as shown on the Proposals Map. Within Primary Shopping Frontages, development or redevelopment proposals for Classes A2 or A3 on ground floors, or a change of use on ground floors from Use Class A1 to Classes A2 or A3, will be permitted unless:*

- a) they would create (or further extend) a continuous frontage exceeding two or more non A1 units; or*
- b) they would result in the loss of A1 retail units in prominent locations, corner units or those with long frontages; or*
- c) the number, frontage lengths and distribution of Class A2 or A3 uses in the frontage create an over-concentration of uses detracting from its established retail character.*

*Where a proposal fails to meet the above criteria, an exception may be considered provided:*

- i) it can be demonstrated that the proposed use would not harm the vitality of the street frontage; or*
- ii) the premises have been vacant for a least 2 years and genuine attempts at marketing the existing use have been unsuccessful."*

5.17 Policy DES1 'General Design Considerations' details the Council's approach to securing good design quality in new development. This states that all development must (inter alia) ensure a safe environment, contribute towards placemaking, respect the scale and context of its setting, respect natural and built heritage, make efficient use of land and incorporate inclusive design.

5.18 As the site is located within the Monmouth Conservation Area, Policy HE1 of the Local Development Plan applies. This states that development within the Conservation Area should preserve and enhance the character of the area, have no significant impacts on views in and out of the area, and use materials which are sympathetic to the appearance of the area.

5.19 In addition, Policy HE2 'Alterations to Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Areas' is also considered to apply, given that the site comprises an unlisted building situated within the Monmouth Conservation area. This states that conversion proposals should consider the potential effects on the setting of the building and the Conservation Area, the effect of introducing new uses to the area, and the impact on parking and servicing arrangements.

5.20 Similar to the above policies, Policy HE3 'Design of Shop Fronts in Conservation Areas' is also relevant:

*"In Conservation Areas, the removal of traditional shop fronts will not be permitted. However, improvements to shop fronts will be permitted where they retain historic features and the proposed improvements are in character with the area. Proposals to replace modern shop fronts will be permitted where they:*

- a. Replace or restore lost details which enhance the Conservation Area;*
- b. Use traditional materials and paint colours in favour of aluminium or UPVC;*
- c. Integrate fully with the surrounding area, and where it replaces two or more units, respects the character of individual units;*
- d. Have fascia boards and signing in keeping with the design and materials of the character of the building in which they are set; and*
- e. Use unobtrusive security measures such as internal shutters, toughened glass, or traditional timber shutters."*

5.21 The Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan 2011-2021 remains in force and will do so until such a time as the Replacement Local Development Plan is adopted.

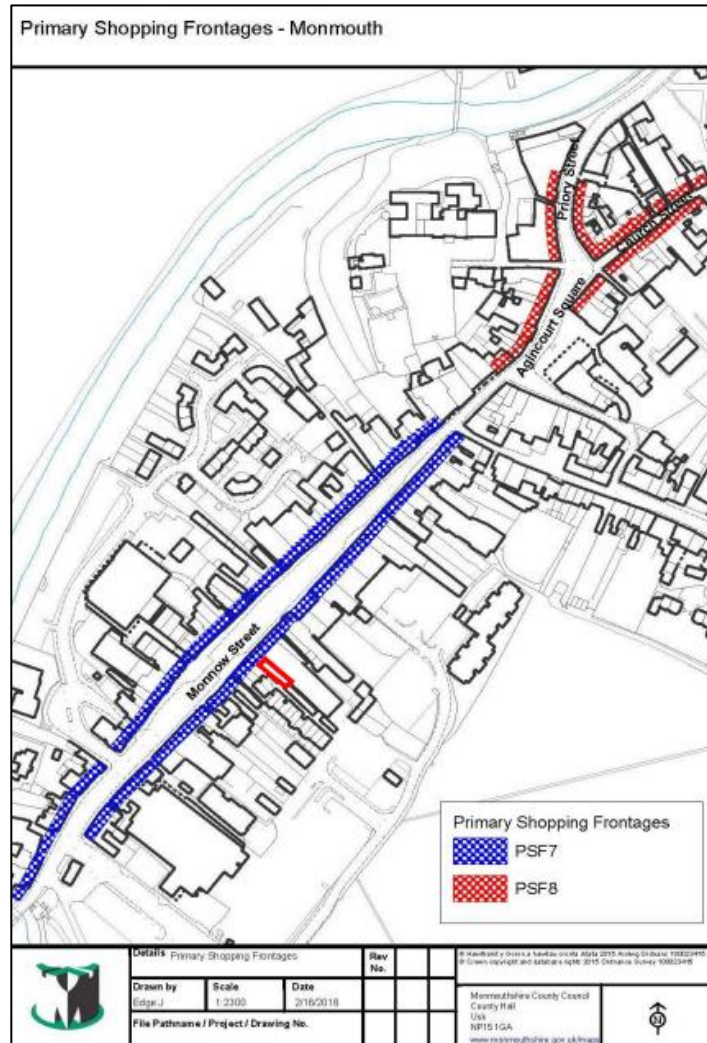
#### **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

5.22 The following Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) adopted by Monmouthshire County Council are considered to be of relevance to the proposed development:

- Primary Shopping Frontages SPG (April 2016)
- Monmouth Conservation Area Appraisal (March 2016)

5.23 The Primary Shopping Frontages SPG (April 2016) identifies Monnow Street as a Primary Shopping Frontage (PSF 7), as illustrated below:

Figure 2 – Primary Shopping Frontages in Monmouth



5.24 The Monmouth Conservation Area Appraisal (2016) indicates that 70 Monnow Street, whilst not specifically subject to any heritage designations, is recognised as a building which makes “a particular or special positive contribution” to the area.



## Appraisal

### Overview

6.1 This section aims to identify the main issues relevant to the determination of the application and assess the scheme against the relevant planning policy framework. These matters are considered to be as follows:

- **Principle of Development**
- Loss of A1 (retail) use within Monmouth's **Protected Shopping Frontage**
- The impact of the development on the **amenity of the Monmouth Conservation Area**

### Principle of Development

6.2 PPW states that planning applications must be determined in line with the adopted local development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.3 The application site sits within the defined Settlement ('Development') Boundary for Monmouth, which is identified within the Local Development Plan as a 'County Town'. The site is, therefore, well positioned in terms of proximity to a range of local services and facilities, including retail, food and drink, and financial services uses.

6.4 Both national and local planning policy encourage development to be located on brownfield land, within defined settlement boundaries. Moreover, Future Wales identifies a 'Town Centre First' approach which highlights a preference for securing growth within town centres through the development process.

6.5 The application site is currently vacant, with the unit previously operating under a mixture of Use Class A1 (Retail) and D1 (Clinic). As indicated in the approved plans for DM/2018/01955, the majority of the ground floor is currently permitted for retail use (A1 Retail), with a small area at the rear ground floor permitted for health treatment use (D1 Clinic). As such, it is well served by utilities. The proposed development does not propose any significant alterations to the unit's exterior / frontage.

6.6 As discussed, the proposed change of use application, if approved, would allow for the relocation of Monmouthshire Building Society from their existing office location on Agincourt Square, located approximately 250m to the north of the application site, under Use Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services). Under this proposal, Monmouthshire Building Society seek to further establish their presence within Monmouth's town centre in a more prominent location to their existing office. As such, the proposed development does not constitute the generation of a new use to local area, given that uses under this use class are associated with town centres.

- 6.7 Monmouthshire Building Society are considered to represent a well-established existing tenant within Monmouth's town centre, with business presence established across South Wales. If permitted, their operations out of 70 Monnow Street are considered to contribute to an increase in footfall, and engagement with frontages along Monnow Street. More staff are proposed to be employed in comparison to the site's former A1 use, which will further contribute to socio-economic and footfall growth along PSF7 and further afield within Monmouth's town centre.
- 6.8 The proposed development does not propose any changes to the unit's existing parking provision, nor is it anticipated to generate an increase in parking demand.
- 6.9 On this basis, the application is considered to comply with national and local planning policies and the change of use of 70 Monnow Street would provide an appropriate form of development which would comply with national and local planning policy relating to development of brownfield land within the settlement boundary of a town centre. The proposed development constitutes the effective re-purposing of a vacant unit along one of Monmouth's key frontages, which would contribute to increased frontage engagement and footfall, therefore contributing to socio-economic growth within Monmouth.

**The Loss of A1 (Retail) Use within Monmouth's Protected Shopping Frontage**

- 6.10 As established, the site is located within Monmouth's Primary Shopping Frontage, where A1 uses are preferred and A2 & A3 uses are considered acceptable provided they accord with material considerations.
- 6.11 Local Development Plan Policy RET1 'Primary Shopping Frontage' is therefore pertinent. Under this Policy, development proposals for the change of use of ground floor areas from Use Class A1 (Retail) to Use Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) will be permitted unless:
- "a. they would create (or further extend) a continuous frontage exceeding two or more non-A1 units; **or***
- b. they would result in the loss of A1 retail units in prominent locations, corner units, or those with long frontages; **or***
- c. the number, frontage lengths, and distribution of Class A2 or A3 uses in the frontage create an over-concentration of uses detracting from its established retail character."*
- 6.12 It is therefore considered necessary to consider the proposed development with regard to the above criteria under Policy RET1.

"a. they would create (or further extend) a continuous frontage exceeding two or more non-A1 units; or

6.13 From the section of frontage containing the application site, stretching from 60 Monnow Street to 86 Monnow Street, the existing street scene comprises:

- D1 (60 Monnow Street – Boots Pharmacy)
- A3 (62 Monnow Street – Canton Kitchen)
- A1 (64 Monnow Street – Fingal Rock Wine)
- A1 (66-68 Monnow Street – M&S Foodhall)
- **A1 & D1 Mixed (70 Monnow Street – The Face Space)**
- A2 (72 Monnow Street – former Didier & Dandelion)
- A1 (74 Monnow Street – store name unknown)
- A1 (76 Monnow Street – Dylan’s Den Crystal Shop)
- B1 (78 Monnow Street – Alan Curtis Solicitors)
- A3 (80-82 Monnow Street – Coffi Lab)
- A1 (84-86 Monnow Street – Harts Ladies Clothing)

6.14 Under the proposed change of use, the permitted uses along this section of frontage PSF 7 would comprise:

- D1 (60 Monnow Street – Boots Pharmacy)
- A3 (62 Monnow Street – Canton Kitchen)
- A1 (64 Monnow Street – Fingal Rock Wine)
- A1 (66-68 Monnow Street – M&S Foodhall)
- **A2 (70 Monnow Street – Monmouthshire Building Society)**
- A2 (72 Monnow Street – former Didier & Dandelion)
- A1 (74 Monnow Street – store name unknown)
- A1 (76 Monnow Street – Dylan’s Den Crystal Shop)
- B1 (78 Monnow Street – Alan Curtis Solicitors)
- A3 (80-82 Monnow Street – Coffi Lab)
- A1 (84-86 Monnow Street – Harts Ladies Clothing)

6.15 As above, the proposed development would result in the generation of two adjacent Use Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) units. This, however, includes 72 Monnow Street (former ‘Didier & Dandelion’ store, which does not appear to be trading at the time of the submission of this application. Notwithstanding this, its permitted use class (A2) is still considered as part of assessment under Policy RET1. The change of use of 72 Monnow Street from Use Class A1 to A2 was permitted under DM/2020/00772, with the officer’s report for approval stating:

*“In this instance 72 Monnow Street is located between a non-commercial unit at 74 Monnow Street and a salon (A1) at 70 Monnow Street. An A1 unit is located at 76 Monnow Street. The proposed change of use to A2 at 72 Monnow Street would thus not be contrary to criterion (a) of the policy, as it wouldn’t create a continuous frontage of three non-A1 uses.”*

- 6.16 As such, it is considered that this sets a precedent and provides justification that the proposed change of use at 70 Monnow Street is acceptable under criterion (a) of LDP Policy RET1, as it would not “create a continuous frontage of three non-A1 uses”, as per the officer’s report for DM/2020/00772.
- b. they would result in the loss of A1 retail units in prominent locations, corner units, or those with long frontages; or*
- 6.17 With reference to the above criterion (b), the unit of 70 Monnow Street has a frontage length of approximately 5.0m, which is slightly larger than the above frontages to the south of the site, but lower than the frontage lengths of the M&S Foodhall and Coffi Lab units which share the same section of frontage within PSF7 (as per the Primary Shopping Data SPG).
- 6.18 Frontage data obtained from the Local Authority’s online planning registry indicates that the average frontage length for this location within PSF7 is approximately 6.6m. As such, the application site is not considered to comprise a long frontage and is below the average unit frontage length for Monnow Street.
- 6.19 Given the context of the application site within frontage PSF7, it is not considered to comprise a prominent location in comparison to neighbouring units, nor does it comprise a corner unit on the frontage.
- 6.20 As such, the proposed change of use is not considered to contravene criterion (b) of Policy RET1.
- c. the number, frontage lengths, and distribution of Class A2 or A3 uses in the frontage create an over-concentration of uses detracting from its established retail character.”*
- 6.21 The Monmouthshire County Council Primary Shopping Frontage SPG (Adopted April 2016) states that the Monnow Street (specifically 12-126 Monnow Street) Primary Shopping Frontage 7 (PSF7) has a maximum threshold of non-A1 Units of 25%.
- 6.22 Officer reports specific to planning applications proposing the change of use of units on PSF7 (including DM/2018/01955 and DM/2020/00772) indicate that the frontage, at present, has exceeded this threshold and is estimated to currently stand between approximately 27-28%.
- 6.23 A recent walkover of the frontage conducted as part of this planning application indicates that at present, there are 5no. A2 Use Class units, and 16 no. A3 Use Class units located along PSF7, which equates to approximately 27% of the frontage, in line with the above.

- 6.24 With regard to the unit information detailed in 6.12 and 6.13, and with reference to criterion (c), the proposed development is not considered to contribute to an over-concentration of uses detracting from the overall retail character of the frontage, especially this section of PSF7. This has also been considered with regard to a number of high-profile A1 units located opposite the application site, including Card Factory (65 Monnow Street), The Works (69 Monnow Street), and FatFace (81 Monnow Street).
- 6.25 As detailed previously, the proposed change of use would allow for the relocation of Monmouthshire Building Society from their existing premises at 10 Agincourt Square, which located on the fringes of PSF7 but within the Central Shopping Area for Monmouth. Whilst this relocation would, in principle, result in the generation of an additional A2 unit along PSF7, it is considered important to recognise that the net number of A2 units within Monmouth's Primary Shopping will not be directly altered as a result of this proposal.
- 6.26 With regard to the above information, it is not considered that the proposed development inherently contravenes criterion (c) of Local Development Plan Policy RET1.

**Impact of development on Heritage and the Amenity of the Monmouth Conservation Area**

- 6.27 As detailed, 70 Monnow Street is located in close proximity to a number of heritage designations but is not specifically subject to any heritage designations, such as listings.
- 6.28 The application site is located within the Monmouth Conservation Area. Specifically, it is located within Character Area 5 of the Conservation Area, as per the Monmouth Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Proposals Document (March 2016). This cites the street's high quality roofing and walls, in addition to traditional, good quality signage on shopfronts as the reason for designation within the Conservation Area.
- 6.29 Policy HE1 states that development proposals within Conservation Areas will only be permitted where they;

- "a. Preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area and its landscape setting;*
- b. Have no serious adverse effect on significant views into and out of the Conservation Area;*
- c. Have no serious adverse effect on significant vistas within the area and the general character and appearance of the street scene and roofscape;*
- d. Use materials appropriate to their setting and context and which protect or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area; and*
- e. Pay special attention to the setting of the building and its open areas."*

- 6.30 The proposed development does not propose any alterations to the elevations of 70 Monnow Street, nor does it seek to alter the external appearance of the unit. As such, views of the site from Monnow Street (in either direction), and within the Conservation Area will remain unchanged.
- 6.31 As such, the proposed development is not considered to generate any adverse impacts on the setting, character, or appearance of the Monmouth Conservation Area, nor will it impact any views into and out of the Conservation Area.
- 6.32 The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy HE1 of the Monmouth Local Development.

## Conclusion

- 7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Monmouthshire Building Society in relation to the proposed change of use of 70 Monnow Street, Monmouth, from Use Class A1/D1 to A2 (Financial and Professional Services).
- 7.2 The proposed development presents an opportunity for the relocation of Monmouthshire Building Society from their existing office location on Agincourt Square, to a more appropriate location within the heart of Monmouth. The proposed change of use would put the unit back into viable use, with the existing tenants set to vacate shortly. This would contribute significantly to the socio-economic character of Monmouth's town centre.
- 7.3 As discussed within this Planning Statement, the application site is located within the defined settlement boundary for Monmouth and is situated along the town's Primary Retail Frontage. It is not at risk of sea, river, or surface water flooding, and is served by significant flood defence infrastructure, as indicated by NRW data.
- 7.4 Policy RET1 'Primary Shopping Frontages' aims to protect A1 (Retail) uses along Monmouthshire's defined Primary Shopping Frontages, including Monnow Street. As per this Policy, A2 uses proposed are only to be permitted provided they do not conflict with one of the three criteria detailed. This Planning Statement has detailed the conformity of the proposed development with this Policy, in addition to other local and national planning policy, including Future Wales: The National Plan 2040.
- 7.5 With the proposed relocation of this A2 use in mind, it is also considered important to recognise that the net number of A2 uses within the Central Shopping Area (CSA) of Monmouth is to remain as existing. As such, no new A2 uses are proposed, meaning no increased pressure is to be generated on the retail context of Monmouth within the CSA.
- 7.6 The proposed development does not propose any alterations or works to the exterior appearance of 70 Monnow Street. Whilst not listed or subject to specific heritage designations, its context within the Monmouth Conservation Area has been recognised and considered when formulating this development proposal.
- 7.7 In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed change of use is in accordance with material considerations and complies with Local Development Plan policies including Policies S12, S17, RET1, and HE1, in addition to the overarching goals and aims published in national planning policy within Future Wales and PPW, and that the proposed development is acceptable in regard to principle and detailed design matters.