Welshpool Town Council, The Vicarage Gardens, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7DD
Tel: 01938 553142 Email: office@welshpooltowncouncil.gov.uk

DRAFT

Minutes of the Events & Planning Committee held on 12/08/2026 6:30pm in Council Chamber, Welshpool Town Hall.

PRESENT:

Cllr Chris Davies (Chair)
Cllr Jackson Quarrell
Cllr Kelly Meredith
Cllr Morag Bailey
Cllr Nick Howells
Cllr Phil Owen
Cllr Revd William Rowell

Apologies for absence:

Cllr Dr Ben Gwalchmai
Cllr Estelle Bleivas

Absent:

Also in attendance:

Cllr Carol Robinson
Cllr Phil Pritchard
Kimberly Wright - Events & Markets Manager
8 member(s) of the public / press

EP120826/1. WELCOME, CODE OF CONDUCT AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Ben Gwalchmai and Councillor Estelle Bleivas.

EP120826/2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

None.

EP120826/3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Eight members of the public were present at the meeting.

County Councillor Graham Breeze informed Councillors and members of the public that he had called the application in for consideration by the Powys County Council Planning Committee. Councillor Breeze stated that he would like to see the building retained for retail use. He also raised concerns regarding the applicant's proposal for the gym to operate on a 24-hour basis, highlighting the close proximity of the premises to the town's nightclub and the potential safety implications.

Councillor Breeze also referred to the applicant's indication that 90 car parking spaces would be available as part of the proposal. He clarified that this was not the case, as the spaces would not be leased to the

applicant.

Mr Greatorex, owner of Great Fitness, informed Councillors and residents that he had previously considered operating his gym on a 24-hour basis. However, following completion of a risk assessment, and taking into consideration the close proximity of the nightclub, he concluded that operating 24 hours a day would not be safe.

Mr Greatorex also highlighted that there are already five established gyms operating in Welshpool, providing a range of fitness facilities suitable for different needs and abilities. Given that Welshpool has a population of just over 6,000, he expressed the view that there is insufficient demand to support an additional gym within the town.

Concerns were also raised regarding the proposed gym's proximity to residential properties. Mr Greatorex stated that, should the gym operate 24 hours a day without staff being present to monitor the premises, there was potential for noise disturbance and associated impacts on local residents.

Another member of the public expressed concerns regarding the proposed operating hours and the lack of any clear indication within the application that staff would be present on the premises 24 hours a day. It was noted that access would be controlled through a fob-entry system. The member of the public also questioned the number of employment opportunities that would be created by the proposal and raised concerns that, as the gym would be operated by a multinational company, profits generated locally could ultimately be repatriated to its parent company.

EP120826/4. PLACE PLAN

Councillors explained to members of the public that Welshpool Town Council is looking to develop a Place Plan, which will give the Town Council more input and say in future development. Councillor Bill Rowell explained that there will be public consultations on the place plan.

EP120826/5. PLANNING - NEW APPLICATIONS

EP120826/5.1 P/26/0555/FUL

Members considered the planning application and provided the following response:

Response: Object
Comments:
Welshpool Town Council unanimously objects to this application on the following grounds;

Policy T1 – Travel, Traffic and Transport Infrastructure - Development should ensure the safe and efficient flow of traffic, manage impacts on the transport network and encourage sustainable travel.

The applicant states that approximately 90 spaces are leased within Berriew Street Car Park and that six further staff spaces would be provided within the service yard. A covered cycle shelter is proposed, and the bus station and railway station are within walking distance.

The applicant has failed to demonstrate that adequate parking is actually available to serve the development.

If 90 spaces are claimed but unavailable, vehicles associated with the gym could instead use surrounding streets or public car parks, potentially increasing parking pressure and affecting traffic and highway safety.

The application should be based on the parking spaces that are genuinely available and capable of being used by gym customers, rather than spaces that are merely shown or claimed by the applicant.

The local planning authority should seek:
a copy or suitable evidence of the parking lease;
a plan clearly distinguishing exclusive, allocated and publicly available spaces;
clarification of whether the 90 spaces can legally and operationally be reserved for?gym?users;
existing and predicted parking accumulation surveys;
a parking-management plan;
disabled parking provision close to the entrance;
safe pedestrian routes between the car park and entrance;
secure cycle parking with capacity proportionate to the use; and
electric vehicle charging arrangements.

The application should not result in a significant loss of conveniently located public parking or undermine the car park's wider function in supporting the town centre.

Policy DM13 – Design and Resources - Development should avoid unacceptable impacts from noise, disturbance, lighting, hours of operation and traffic.

Noise, disturbance, lighting, traffic, parking and other impacts associated with the proposed use.

The applicant proposes a 24-hour?gym, with staffing from around 6:00 am and cleaning staff remaining until approximately 10:00 pm. The facility would therefore be unstaffed for part of the night.

The submission states that overnight use would be low and that midnight-to-6:00 am attendance typically accounts for no more than 5% of visits. However, no acoustic assessment, noise-management plan or detailed operational statement has been provided.

Policy DM13 requires development to avoid unacceptable impacts upon nearby occupiers through matters including noise, disturbance, lighting, hours of operation and traffic. A?gym?can generate:

impact noise from free weights and resistance equipment;

amplified music and public-address systems;

vibration transmitted through the building;

vehicle movements and door closures during sensitive night-time hours;

conversations in the car park;

external lighting and illuminated signage; and

disturbance associated with an unstaffed overnight facility.

A retail store operating predominantly during daytime and evening hours is not directly comparable with an unstaffed 24-hour?gym. The statement that the building has operated as a retail store without complaint therefore carries limited weight.

Before permitting 24-hour operation, the local planning authority should require:

an acoustic impact assessment;

details of the location and specification of free weights, studios, speakers and plant;

an assessment of structure-borne noise and vibration;

a noise-management plan;

arrangements for supervising the site overnight;

a complaints and incident-management procedure;

details of deliveries and waste collection; and

an assessment of activity in the car park during the night.

Policy R3 - Town Centres and Retail - Development should maintain or enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre.

The proposal must enhance, or at least avoid harming, the vitality and viability of the centre. The applicant has not provided a substantive assessment of:

The effect of losing approximately 960 sq m of retail floorspace;

Expected membership and visitor numbers;

Likely linked trips or expenditure in the town centre; or

How the?gym?would contribute to daytime footfall and the wider commercial function of Berriew Street.

As the property is outside the protected shopping frontages, the loss of the retail use is not necessarily contrary to Policy R3. However, the assertion that another?gym?would enhance vitality and viability needs more evidence than is currently supplied.

Accuracy and Completeness of the Application.
The application appears to be using an incorrect description of the existing provision.

The premises opposite are currently operating as a gym, but the application identifies them as a cinema. Therefore, the applicant's assessment of existing indoor recreation provision is factually inaccurate. This is particularly relevant to Policy C1 – Community Facilities and Indoor Recreation Facilities, which requires consideration of existing provision when assessing proposals for new indoor recreation facilities.

It is understood that where a proposal involves a change of use from retail to a community or leisure facility, the applicant should demonstrate that the proposed facility is meeting a need that is not currently being met. In this case, the new gym should either provide a service that is not presently available in Welshpool, or demonstrate that there is a level of demand greater than the capacity of existing providers and that the proposed facility is required to meet that additional demand.

Neither of these points has been demonstrated within the application. There is already an established gym directly opposite the application site, yet the application does not appear to provide evidence of unmet demand, insufficient existing capacity, or a specific need for an additional gym of the proposed scale. The fact that the premises opposite are incorrectly identified as a cinema is therefore relevant, but the more significant concern is that the application does not adequately demonstrate that the requirements of Policy C1 in respect of the need for additional indoor recreation provision have been met.

The applicant should therefore be required to provide robust evidence demonstrating the need for the proposed facility, including an assessment of existing gym provision, capacity and demand within

Welshpool, before the application can be considered to demonstrate compliance with Policy C1.

Number 4 Berriew Street is not the application building.

The Local Planning Authority should establish exactly which property, land and building are the subject of the application.

The application should provide a clear and accurate description of the development and its location. Powys states that the application process involves checking that the appropriate information has been submitted, and its planning system relies on the site address and plans to identify the development being assessed.

The Local Planning Authority should check:

the application site address;

the address stated on the application form;

the address used in the Design and Access Statement;

the address used in the Planning Statement;

the address on the existing/proposed plans; and

any parking arrangements relying on neighbouring land.

RESOLVED
To respond to the planning authority in respect of P/26/0555/FUL with the above response and comments.

WTCM822 - Proposed by Cllr Morag Bailey, seconded by Cllr Nick Howells. A recorded vote was requested.

For: Chris Davies, Jackson Quarrell, Kelly Meredith, Morag Bailey, Nick Howells, Phil Owen, Revd William Rowell
Against:
Abstain:

EP120826/5.2 P/26/0711/ADV

Members considered the planning application and provided the following response:

Response: Object
Comments:
Welshpool Town Council unanimously objects to this application on the following grounds;

Policy T1 – Travel, Traffic and Transport Infrastructure - Development should ensure the safe and efficient flow of traffic, manage impacts on the transport network and encourage sustainable travel.

The applicant states that approximately 90 spaces are leased within Berriew Street Car Park and that six further staff spaces would be provided within the service yard. A covered cycle shelter is proposed, and the bus station and railway station are within walking distance.

The applicant has failed to demonstrate that adequate parking is actually available to serve the development.

If 90 spaces are claimed but unavailable, vehicles associated with the gym could instead use surrounding streets or public car parks, potentially increasing parking pressure and affecting traffic and highway safety.

The application should be based on the parking spaces that are genuinely available and capable of being used by gym customers, rather than spaces that are merely shown or claimed by the applicant.

The local planning authority should seek:
a copy or suitable evidence of the parking lease;
a plan clearly distinguishing exclusive, allocated and publicly available spaces;
clarification of whether the 90 spaces can legally and operationally be reserved for?gym?users;
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safe pedestrian routes between the car park and entrance;
secure cycle parking with capacity proportionate to the use; and
electric vehicle charging arrangements.

The application should not result in a significant loss of conveniently located public parking or undermine the car park's wider function in supporting the town centre.

Policy DM13 – Design and Resources - Development should avoid unacceptable impacts from noise, disturbance, lighting, hours of operation and traffic.

Noise, disturbance, lighting, traffic, parking and other impacts associated with the proposed use.

The applicant proposes a 24-hour?gym, with staffing from around 6:00 am and cleaning staff remaining until approximately 10:00 pm. The facility would therefore be unstaffed for part of the night.

The submission states that overnight use would be low and that midnight-to-6:00 am attendance typically accounts for no more than 5% of visits. However, no acoustic assessment, noise-management plan or detailed operational statement has been provided.

Policy DM13 requires development to avoid unacceptable impacts upon nearby occupiers through matters including noise, disturbance, lighting, hours of operation and traffic. A?gym?can generate:

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A retail store operating predominantly during daytime and evening hours is not directly comparable with an unstaffed 24-hour?gym. The statement that the building has operated as a retail store without complaint therefore carries limited weight.

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details of deliveries and waste collection; and

an assessment of activity in the car park during the night.

Policy R3 - Town Centres and Retail - Development should maintain or enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre.

The proposal must enhance, or at least avoid harming, the vitality and viability of the centre. The applicant has not provided a substantive assessment of:

The effect of losing approximately 960 sq m of retail floorspace;

Expected membership and visitor numbers;

Likely linked trips or expenditure in the town centre; or

How the?gym?would contribute to daytime footfall and the wider commercial function of Berriew Street.

As the property is outside the protected shopping frontages, the loss of the retail use is not necessarily contrary to Policy R3. However, the assertion that another?gym?would enhance vitality and viability needs more evidence than is currently supplied.

Accuracy and Completeness of the Application.
The application appears to be using an incorrect description of the existing provision.

The premises opposite are currently operating as a gym, but the application identifies them as a cinema. Therefore, the applicant's assessment of existing indoor recreation provision is factually inaccurate. This is particularly relevant to Policy C1 – Community Facilities and Indoor Recreation Facilities, which requires consideration of existing provision when assessing proposals for new indoor recreation facilities.

It is understood that where a proposal involves a change of use from retail to a community or leisure facility, the applicant should demonstrate that the proposed facility is meeting a need that is not currently being met. In this case, the new gym should either provide a service that is not presently available in Welshpool, or demonstrate that there is a level of demand greater than the capacity of existing providers and that the proposed facility is required to meet that additional demand.

Neither of these points has been demonstrated within the application. There is already an established gym directly opposite the application site, yet the application does not appear to provide evidence of unmet demand, insufficient existing capacity, or a specific need for an additional gym of the proposed scale. The fact that the premises opposite are incorrectly identified as a cinema is therefore relevant,

but the more significant concern is that the application does not adequately demonstrate that the requirements of Policy C1 in respect of the need for additional indoor recreation provision have been met.

The applicant should therefore be required to provide robust evidence demonstrating the need for the proposed facility, including an assessment of existing gym provision, capacity and demand within Welshpool, before the application can be considered to demonstrate compliance with Policy C1.

Number 4 Berriew Street is not the application building.

The Local Planning Authority should establish exactly which property, land and building are the subject of the application.

The application should provide a clear and accurate description of the development and its location. Powys states that the application process involves checking that the appropriate information has been submitted, and its planning system relies on the site address and plans to identify the development being assessed.

The Local Planning Authority should check:

the application site address;

the address stated on the application form;

the address used in the Design and Access Statement;

the address used in the Planning Statement;

the address on the existing/proposed plans; and

any parking arrangements relying on neighbouring land.

RESOLVED
To respond to the planning authority in respect of P/26/0711/ADV with the above response and comments.

WTCM823 - Proposed by Cllr Morag Bailey, seconded by Cllr Kelly Meredith

EP120826/5.3 P/26/0645/LBC

Members considered the planning application and provided the following response:

Response: Support
Comments:
No comment

RESOLVED
To respond to the planning authority in respect of P/26/0645/LBC with the above response and comments.

WTCM821 - Proposed by Cllr Revd William Rowell, seconded by Cllr Kelly Meredith

EP120826/5.4 Pre-Application Consultation - Slurry Store and Associated Works

Councillors agreed to refuse this application on the same grounds they refused it the first and second time, as nothing much has changed in the application.

1. Access, visibility, and highway safety
The proposal raises significant highway safety concerns due to constrained access arrangements onto the A483 within a known collision hotspot, where slow-moving agricultural vehicles would enter and cross a high-speed trunk road with limited forward visibility, contrary to Policy T1.
The application is unsupported by any detailed transport assessment, speed survey, collision analysis, or swept-path modelling despite the acknowledged use of large agricultural machinery and slurry transport operations associated with a 2,500-acre farming enterprise.

2. Size, location, and use
The proposed slurry store constitutes a substantial industrial-scale structure measuring approximately 39m in diameter and 11.354m in height with a fixed GRP roof, resulting in significant visual prominence within the open River Severn landscape, contrary to Policies DM4 and DM13.
The Planning Statement materially understates the visual scale of the development by initially describing the structure as 6.06m high whilst the submitted ammonia report confirms a total roof height of 11.354m.
The applicant's assertion that the development "will not stand out in the surrounding landscape" is unsupported by any formal Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment despite the scale, height, and exposed rural location adjacent to the A483 and River Severn corridor.

3. Flooding & Pollution
The site lies within Flood Zone 3 adjacent to the River Severn, and the applicant expressly acknowledges the flood risk, yet insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the development would remain structurally resilient and environmentally secure during flood events, contrary to Policies DM5 and DM6.

The proposal is located approximately 145m from the Montgomery Canal SAC and SSSI, yet insufficient evidence has been provided to conclusively demonstrate no adverse impacts from ammonia emissions, nutrient pollution, accidental release, or wider ecological disturbance, contrary to Policy DM2.
The ammonia assessment acknowledges that ammonia-sensitive receptors exist in close proximity to the site and relies upon future mitigation measures and planning conditions rather than demonstrating that impacts can be fully avoided at application stage.
The statement that mitigation measures "can reduce emissions by up to 100%" is generic and theoretical and does not constitute evidence that emissions from this specific development would have no adverse environmental impact.

The Council remains concerned that inadequate evidence has been submitted regarding slurry containment, overflow protection, groundwater protection, and pollution control measures in the event of flood inundation, structural failure, or operational malfunction, contrary to Policies DM2, DM5 and DM13.

EP120826/6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Councillors noted that the next meeting of the Events & Planning Committee will be held on Wednesday, 2nd September 2026 at 6.30pm

The meeting finished at 19:30.

Signed: Dated:

Councillor Chris Davies (Chair)

Decision/Action Log

ID		Assigned
WTCM821	**RESOLUTION** **EP120826/5.3 P/26/0645/LBC** To respond to the planning authority in respect of P/26/0645/LBC with the above response and comments.	Events & Markets Manager
WTCM822	**RESOLUTION** **EP120826/5.1 P/26/0555/FUL** To respond to the planning authority in respect of P/26/0555/FUL with the above response and comments.	Events & Markets Manager
WTCM823	**RESOLUTION** **EP120826/5.2 P/26/0711/ADV** To respond to the planning authority in respect of P/26/0711/ADV with the above response and comments.	Events & Markets Manager