

Plymouth office building to be turned into shops, gym and flats

A former community centre and public sector offices in Devonport could be transformed into a gym and apartments. The Welcome Hall was sold by Plymouth City Council in 2022 after being deemed “surplus to requirements”, having lingered on the market for a year before finally going under the hammer at auction.

Owner Sultan Ahmed of Nazim Properties has proposed a revamp of the ground floor to accommodate a gym, shop, sauna, treatment room, plant room, changing facilities, and an office/reception area, while converting the upper two levels into five one-or-two bedroom apartments.

The planning submission reflects on the hall’s history as a community resource centre serving Devonport locals and workers for almost 30 years.

Previously, the hall played host to leisure activities such as dance classes, lunch clubs, and evening events with audiences of up to 150 people. The new plans suggest that the gym will offer services on a scale not currently available in the area, capping membership at 200 and staffing it with three full-time and two part-time employees.

The project will forego parking provisions, citing financial constraints that would render the development “financially unviable”, reports [Plymouth Live](#).

An acoustic assessment was carried out following concerns from council officers during the pre-application stage, recommending double-glazed windows and trickle vents to mitigate traffic noise.

To ensure harmony between the new residential units and the adjacent Devonport Playhouse, an acoustic wall lining is planned for the party wall to prevent disturbance to flat residents from theatre performances, particularly in the evenings.

The review indicated that considering the restrained utilisation of Devonport Playhouse and the expected degree of sound travel, it is “unlikely” that noise emanating from the stage and patrons will markedly affect residents in the apartments.

The remaining area, formerly occupied by public sector offices including those of Plymouth City Council, will remain unchanged pending a resolution on its subsequent application.

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