

Planning Statement – Change of Use (Ground Floor), 19–20 Church Street, Merthyr Tydfil. May 2026.

This application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the ground floor at 19–20 Church Street from their current A2 use class (with consent for A1 granted in June 2025 but not implemented due to lack of demand) to form two self-contained C3(a) residential apartments.

The proposal responds directly to the ongoing vacancy and limited commercial demand for ground-floor retail/financial services in this part of the town centre. The owner's discussions with the council regarding business rates, has also highlighting the lack of viability. Despite having secured A1 consent in June 2025, the unit has remained unused and not in demand. Bringing the space back into productive use through residential conversion will support local regeneration objectives and improve natural surveillance and activity along Church Street.

The development comprises:

- 1 no. apartment at 19 Church Street (approx. 60 sqm)
- 1 no. apartment at 20 Church Street (approx. 50 sqm)

Both units provide appropriate internal layouts, including dedicated living/kitchen/dining areas, bedrooms, and bathrooms, as shown on the submitted plans.

There are no external alterations proposed, other than the removal of redundant signage. All existing elevations, access arrangements, and the established rear access to the upper-floor flats remain unchanged. Waste storage is accommodated within the existing rear service area.

The upper floors of both properties already benefit from lawful residential use. The proposed ground-floor conversion therefore represents a logical continuation of the established residential character of the building.

Overall, the proposal will:

- Bring a long-vacant commercial unit back into active use
- Provide high-quality town-centre housing
- Maintain the existing appearance of the building
- Support wider regeneration and sustainability objectives

For these reasons, the proposed change of use is considered to comply with relevant local and national planning policy and is respectfully submitted for approval.