



Doc Ref: 5269 Change of Use Supporting Statement

**WOMEN OUT WEST  
PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE, UNIT B4 HAIG ENTERPRISE PARK,  
WHITEHAVEN**

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

Women Out West is one of three women's centres in the county, they work closely with; Women's Community Matters in Barrow and Gateway for Women in Carlisle, each of whom play a vital role in supporting the women in their area of Cumbria.

Following WOW's setup in 2017, Whitehaven was identified as a suitable location for a centre to serve the wider Copeland and Allerdale communities and an initial proposal, to renovation/alter a property on Howgill Street, was progressed. The scheme combined the facilities needed by WOW with additional space utilized as B&B accommodation, to provide a secondary source of income however, despite a huge push for funding; it proved too costly to proceed. It was at this stage, with the need of the services established and in order to retain funding already secured from the MOJ, that temporary approval was granted for a pilot scheme, at the Haig Enterprise Park, Kells.

Opened in June 2019 the Haig Enterprise Park facility has proved to be and is recognised as, an important facility for the region however, the onset of the Covid Pandemic has meant that WOW have not been able to fulfill the full extent of their pilot objectives, nor obtain sufficient funding for any permanent facility. This application seeks to extend the temporary Change of Use permissions for a further 5 years, to allow the centre to implement all of the original pilot objectives, maintain its ability to deliver services in the area and hopefully enable additional funding to be secured, during the long-term financial recovery period that is likely to follow the Covid Pandemic.

Domestic Abuse is a high priority for National and local government and as a consequence, WOW expect their services will increase, resulting in them outgrowing their current location, as has happened at the Barrow facility. It is at this point that a larger property, similar in size to the original Howgill Street premises, would become more viable. With a larger scheme occupying the whole of any property, it is hoped that funding will be more forthcoming and the layout more successful for the sensitive nature of the services provided.

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