

Design and Access Statement (Amended)

White Hart
1 East Street
Havant.
PO9 1AA

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Design and Access statement has been prepared to support the following proposal:

Change of use from public house (Use Class A4) to Amusement Centre (sui generis) and Bingo Hall (Use Class D2)

This statement has been prepared by the Town Planning Experts who act as planning consultants for the applicant.

- 1.2. The application site consists of a prominent building on the corner of east Street and North Street comprising a public house on the ground floor and accommodation above.

2. Site Context

- 2.1 The property is located in the centre of Havant on the corner of East Street and North Street, within a primarily retail area
- 2.2 The application site consists of a two and a half storey building with public house at ground floor and accommodation over.
- 2.3 Immediately adjacent on North Street are retail units, currently occupied by a jewellers and a charity shop.
- 2.4. On East Street it is adjoined by offices and then retail units. Opposite is an estate agents, while on North Street is a bank.
- 2.5 The premises lie in the main shopping centre in Havant.
- 2.6 The site lies in the St Faith's Conservation Area, although the property is not listed.

3.0 Planning Policy

3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was introduced on March 27 2012, and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

3.2 It indicates that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies that there are three dimensions to sustainable development – economic, social and environmental.

3.3 Planning can assist the economic role by building a strong, responsive and competitive economy; the social role by supporting strong, healthy and vibrant communities, and the environmental role by protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. These roles are seen as mutually dependent.

3.4 The NPPF advises in para 9 that “Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people’s quality of life”. This can include, creating jobs, replacing poor design with better designs, and improving the conditions in which people work, live, travel and take leisure.

3.5 With regard to economic growth it states in paras 18 to 20:

The Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, building on the country’s inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and of a low carbon future.

The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.

To help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan pro-actively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century.

3.6 The NPPF supports vibrant and sustainable town centres. It states in para 23:

Planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:

- *recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality;*
- *promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres;*
- *retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones, ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive;*
- *allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres. It is important that needs for retail, leisure, office*

and other main town centre uses are met in full and are not compromised by limited site availability...

“does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbours through smell, the loss of privacy, outlook, noise and overlooking.”

- 3.7 The Havant Borough Core Strategy was adopted on 1 March 2011 and sets out local planning policy until 2026. The Strategy sets out a vision for the Borough which it intends to meet by seeking an appropriate balance between protecting the natural and built environment; delivering new economic growth and community regeneration; meeting the social needs of its communities and the prudent use of natural resources.

- 3.8 Policy CS4 indicates that

Planning permission will be granted for appropriate town centre development proposals that:

1. Promote and enhance the following hierarchy of identified centres as shown on the Proposals Map:

Town Centres - Havant and Waterlooville

District Centres - Cowplain, Emsworth, Leigh Park and Mengham/Gable Head ...

2. Enhance the evening economy of the town and district centres.

3. Retain and enhance local markets.

4. Support small and independent businesses.

5. *Encourage high quality, mixed-use development in designated centres that retain active ground floor frontages.*

- 3.9 Policy CS16 encourages a good standard of design. In particular it indicates that all development should indicate that it

4.0 Planning Considerations

- 4.1 This application seeks to change the use of the ground floor of these premises from a public house (Use Class A4) to an amusement centre (sui generis).
- 4.2 The proposed operator is an established company which currently has four other such premises.
- 4.3 The proposal seeks to provide bingo and slot machines.
- 4.4 The premises are effectively split into two areas, the present main bar area at the front and a second room at the rear. Bingo can take place in both areas but the slot machines would be principally installed in the front area only.
- 4.5 There will be approximately 60 bingo terminals between the two areas. Some will be in the form of fixed seating with others provided in tablet form. It is anticipated that there would be 30-35 slot machines.
- 4.6 There would be background music and televisions provided for the benefit of customers. Light refreshments, including alcohol, would be available
- 4.7 The premises would be open between the hours of 9 am and 11 pm, Monday to Sunday inclusive.
- 4.8 Entry would be restricted to persons aged over 18 only and 2 to 3 staff would be on duty at all times.
- 4.9 In considering this application the local planning authority should have regard only to its effects on the amenity and character of its surroundings, and its effects on road safety and traffic flow. Issues of morality, specifically those related to gambling, cannot lawfully be taken into account in the consideration of the planning application.
- 4.10 The building is a particular landmark in the centre of Havant both in itself and having regard to the wider area which is designated as a Conservation Area.
- 4.11 No external alterations are proposed and any external signage will be sympathetic to the character of the building.
- 4.12 A window display will be maintained if required, although this would have regard to the overall appearance of the building.
- 4.13 Currently there is one amusement centre in Havant, within Market Parade. A further centre is located in Greywell Road, Leigh Park.
- 4.14 Over the years the retail centre of Havant has drifted west, in part to the Meridian Centre and pedestrianised nature of West Street, and subsequently the development of Tesco's and the associated retail park, together with the redevelopment of Parchment Terrace to the west of the centre.
- 4.15 East Street has therefore seen a decline in its retail offer, as evidenced by a number of empty units.

- 4.16 It will be further noted that public houses in the vicinity have also struggled, with the Perseverance in North Street now being operated as a restaurant, while consent has recently been granted for the demolition of The Star.
- 4.17 A diversity of uses in centres makes an important contribution to their vitality and viability. Different, but complimentary uses, during the day and evening, can reinforce each other, making town centres more attractive to local residents, shoppers, and visitors.
- 4.18 An amusement centre would enhance the viability and vitality of the area as such premises elsewhere have been found to generate higher than average levels of footfall and visitation, with up to 70% of customers often going on to use other shops and services in the locality. Such levels of use are generally greater than for a comparable sized A1 use.
- 4.19 The White Hart has experienced issues in the past regarding anti-social behaviour by customers, and additional conditions have accordingly been imposed on its licence relating to use of plastic glasses outside, drug prevention/awareness measures being in place, staff training to deal with drunkenness and violent behaviour, a proof of age scheme being required and the premises being part of the Pubwatch scheme.
- 4.20 The public house is licensed for both live and recorded music until 11 p.m and for the serving of alcohol until 1 pm Friday and Saturday and midnight on other days.
- 4.21 The applicant has not identified any residential accommodation adjacent to the premises however any noise reducing measures required by the council would be installed.
- 4.22 As indicated above staff will be on site at all times, and no persons under the age of 18 will be allowed entry.
- 4.23 The proposed use will therefore be more neighbour friendly than the existing public house.
- 4.24 The loss of the public house is not seen as significant as in close proximity are The Bear Hotel in East Street, The Old House at Home, in South Street, The Six Bells in North Street and the Robin Hood in Homewell.
- 4.25 The property lies on a corner where traffic is slowing down, accelerating and manoeuvring. Any noise associated with this use must therefore be judged against the ambient noise levels in the street generally.
- 4.26 The property lies on a crossroads, albeit West Street is largely pedestrianised restricting vehicular movements in that direction.
- 4.27 Traffic predominately moves between East Street and North Street, with limited movements to and from South Street. This traffic is mainly associated with visitors to the town centre, and is generally moving at a slower speed.
- 4.28 There is a pedestrian crossing on East Street immediately outside the premises, with zig-zag lines precluding the parking of vehicles either side.

- 4.29 There is a further crossing in North Street approximately 100 metres from the premises.
- 4.30 No parking spaces are available or proposed on site, however the site is in the town centre and most clients are anticipated to be using the facility in association with visits to the shops or other facilities.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The application seeks to convert these premises to an amusement centre.
- 5.2 The premises would be run by an experienced company and is considered to be a less intrusive use than the existing public house.
- 5.3 The use would complement the existing retail offer in the vicinity and add to the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- 5.4 No external changes are proposed.
- 5.5 For these reasons the applicant considers that having regard to both national and local guidelines planning permission should be granted.