
Site Address: 14 Portsdown Hill Road, Havant, PO9 3JY
Proposal: Change of use from Bed & Breakfast establishment to a single residential dwelling with associated works.
Application No: APP/14/01119 Expiry Date: 24/12/2014
Applicant: Mrs Boulton Team: Team 1
Agent: Mrs Munday Case Officer: David Eaves
 Henry Adams Planning Ltd
Ward: Bedhampton

Recommendation: **GRANT PERMISSION**

1 Site Description

- 1.1 The site is located to the north of Portsdown Hill Road on the western side of the A3M. The property is a large former dwelling house which has been converted into Bed and Breakfast accommodation with the owners also residing on site. The existing use comprises 8 B&B bedrooms.

2 Planning History (Relevant only)

07/54574/007 To increase the number of rooms available for Bed and Breakfast from 4 to 8, by conversion and external alteration of the existing accommodation/ snooker room. Permitted December 2007

96/54574/006 Detached garage with pitched roof to south of site (amendment to previous Planning Permission 92/54574/4) Permitted August 1996

92/54574/004 Use of 4 bedrooms for bed & breakfast accomm., conversion of existing garage to snooker room, single storey rear extension with balcony over & detached dble garage to front Permitted August 1992

3 Proposal

Change of use from Bed & Breakfast establishment to a single residential dwelling with associated works.

4 Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) March 2011

CS16 (High Quality Design)
CS17 (Concentration and Distribution of Development within the Urban Areas)
CS20 (Transport and Access Strategy)
CS21 (Developer Requirements)
CS5 (Tourism)
CS9 (Housing)
DM13 (Car and Cycle Parking on Residential Development)
DM3 (Protection of Existing Employment and Tourism Sites)

Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) July 2014

- AL1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
AL2 (Urban Area Boundaries and Undeveloped Gaps between Settlements)

Listed Building Grade: Not applicable.

Conservation Area: Not applicable.

5 Statutory and Non Statutory Consultations

Planning Policy (Revised Comments)

Further to my previous response dated 14th November 2014 to this consultation, the applicant's agent Henry Adams has provided two updated marketing reports (vendor reports) one published by themselves and one by Fleurets Leisure Property Specialists. Both reports are dated October 2014.

The updated report from Henry Adams indicates the dates of four separate advertisements placed in the Chichester Observer between May 2013 and October 2014. The report from Fleurets indicates print advertising in two editions of Fleurets On Market and Hotels Review, dated March 2014 and October 2014. In addition to this advertising, both reports show extensive advertising via a number of property portal websites, as well as email mailshots and SMS text notifications. These efforts prompted more than 30 viewings and 7 initial offers. Although the Council has not received copies of every advertisement, a detailed enquiry log has been received which shows reasons for every viewing being unsuccessful. The number of advertisements satisfies the minimum requirement in DM3 (iv) of four weeks' worth within a six month period.

The agent's Planning Statement states that marketing commenced in May 2013 and has been ongoing continuously since – a total of 17 months' worth of marketing activity. The evidence of this, in particular evidence of extensive website coverage, satisfies in my view that the marketing exercise has been active and exhaustive. I feel therefore that the change of use application satisfies the requirements of policy DM3. I also take note of the information in the viability report on the impact on the viability of the business of the ongoing need for financial investment into the B&B to allow its use to continue to function under Environmental Health, Health and Safety and Fire Regulations. Taking into account the entire package of evidence I have no further objection to the application on policy grounds.

Economic Development - Commercial and Housing

While it is disappointing to lose visitor accommodation from the borough, I would not object to this application from an economic development point of view. Please note the following:

1. This type of mid range visitor accommodation, ie small guest house, is experiencing increasingly squeezed margins, with rising costs and limited scope for raising prices. This is true across the country.
2. Running such a b&b as part of a family home can mean it is viable to operate. However if a commercial mortgage is required to acquire a business, coupled with a need for continuing investment to maintain quality standards, the margins do not allow a sufficient level of return to fund the investment.
3. It is often the case that flexibility is required to allow for the retirement plans of operators of small guest houses.
4. Planning Policy requires additional evidence that the property has been adequately marketed as a visitor accommodation business. If this can be

satisfied then I would have no objection to permission being granted for change of use.

6 Community Involvement

This application was publicised in accordance with the Council's Code of Practice for Publicity of Planning Applications approved at minute 207/6/92 (as amended), as a result of which the following publicity was undertaken:

Number of neighbour notification letters sent: 3

Number of site notices: 1

Statutory advertisement: Not applicable.

Number of representations received: 0

7 Planning Considerations

7.1 Having regard to the relevant policies of the development plan it is considered that the main issues arising from this application are:

- (i) Principle of development
- (ii) Impact upon the character and appearance of the area
- (iii) Impact upon residential amenity
- (iv) Highway matters
- (v) Developer Contributions

(i) Principle of development

7.2 In terms of the principle of development the most relevant local policies are considered to be Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011 policies CS5 and DM3. These are considered in detail below.

Policy CS5 states:

Planning permission will be granted for appropriate development proposals around the Borough that:

1. Provide sustainable and small scale recreational opportunities.
2. Provide hotel and other types of tourist accommodation.
3. Safeguard existing tourist facilities, hotels, holiday centres and caravan parks.
4. Improve existing tourist facilities, hotels, holiday centres and caravan parks.

7.3 This policy effectively sets the scene for the consideration of any proposal related to tourism. Whilst it is understood that High Towers has a majority of guests from the corporate and contractors markets', the premises would in my view represent a tourist facility under this policy being open to all types of clientele including people visiting the Borough or wider area as a tourist. It is therefore necessary to assess the potential change of use under point 3 of the policy and the requirement to, 'Safeguard existing tourist facilities,

hotels, holiday centres and caravan parks'. It should also be noted that corporate clients also support local business including restaurants, pubs and shops etc.

7.4 Under policy CS5, the loss of tourist facilities is to be resisted. The Council do however

recognise the need for some flexibility in order to respond to the evolving tourist market and

policy DM3 sets out in detail how applications which would result in the loss of tourist accommodation will be assessed.

7.5 The relevant part of policy DM3 states:

2. The change of use or development of land or premises currently or last used for tourism purposes to non-tourism uses will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated that the land or premises are not fit for purpose and financially unviable for any tourism use.

For both employment and tourism sites this shall be demonstrated through an active and exhaustive marketing process covering at least 18 months for a major site and 12 months for all other sites.

In all cases the marketing process requires as a minimum:

- i) Confirmation by the marketing agent on headed company paper that the premises were appropriately and extensively marketed for the required length of time as set out by the council.
- ii) Dated photographs of marketing board/s of an appropriate quality, size, scale, location and number, during this time, on the premises.
- iii) An enquiry log, how it was followed up and why it was unsuccessful.
- iv) A copy of all advertisements in the local press and trade journals (should be at least four weeks' worth of advertisements spread across a six month period).
- v) Evidence of marketing via the internet.

7.6 As stated the change of use to non-tourism purposes will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the land or premises are not fit for purpose and financially unviable for any tourism use. This is tested by marketing and points i) - v).

7.6 The existing use is not considered to be a major site and therefore the relevant marketing period is 12 months.

- 7.7 The compliance with policy has been assessed in detail by the Planning Policy Officer who has concluded that:
The agent's Planning Statement states that marketing commenced in May 2013 and has been ongoing continuously since – a total of 17 months' worth of marketing activity. The evidence of this, in particular evidence of extensive website coverage, satisfies in my view that the marketing exercise has been active and exhaustive. I feel therefore that the change of use application satisfies the requirements of policy DM3. I also take note of the information in the viability report on the impact on the viability of the business of the ongoing need for financial investment into the B&B to allow its use to continue to function under Environmental Health, Health and Safety and Fire Regulations. Taking into account the entire package of evidence I have no further objection to the application on policy grounds.
- 7.8 Comments have also been received from Economic Development which provide further background information in relation to the general issues of viability experienced by similar tourist accommodation and raising no objection to the proposals.
- 7.9 It is considered that on the basis of the information submitted the change of use and subsequent loss of tourist accommodation whilst regrettable in tourism terms meets the tests set by the Development Plan and can therefore be supported in principle subject to other development control criteria.
- (ii) Impact upon the character and appearance of the area
- 7.10 The site lies outside the built up area and within a gap between settlements. The proposal however is for a change of use with no additional built form being created. The intensity of use would also be reduced to that of a single dwelling house as opposed to a commercial B & B use with 8 bedrooms and owners accommodation. On this basis it is considered that there would be no additional impact of the openness of the gap or the character and appearance of the non-urban area.
- (iii) Impact upon residential amenity
- 7.11 The site is located adjacent to Towers Farm which has a dual residential and childrens nursery use. The proposals would not lead to any significant changes to the external appearance of the building and would be likely to result in less activity at the site including use of the garden and vehicle movements. It is not anticipated that the proposed change of use would result in additional impacts on neighbours residential amenities.
- (iv) Highway matters
- 7.12 In relation to highway matters, the development is likely to lead to a reduction in vehicle movements and car parking when compared to the existing use.
- (v) Developer Contributions
- 7.13 With regard to developer contributions, no additional floorspace would be created as a result of the proposals and there is existing owner accommodation. No CIL contribution would be applicable to the development.
- 7.14 The proposed change of use would not lead to additional recreational pressure at the

coast as a result of the proposed use when compared to the existing use. The SDMP contribution is not considered to be required in this case.

8 Conclusion

- 8.1 In conclusion, the application is fully supported in terms of marketing information and provides details in relation to the viability of the existing use. It is considered that the policy tests relevant to the loss of tourist accommodation have been met in this case.
 - 8.2 The impact on the character and appearance of the area and on the residential amenities of neighbouring residents are considered acceptable given the reduction in the intensity of the use at the site.
 - 8.3 In the light of the above conclusions planning permission can be recommended.
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9 RECOMMENDATION:

That the Executive Head of Planning and Built Environment be authorised to **GRANT PERMISSION** for application APP/14/01119

(A) subject to the following conditions

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date on which this planning permission was granted.
Reason: To comply with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Planning Statement Ref: HAPL / 978
Letter Davies Keig Investment Consultants
Vendor Report Henry Adams April 2013 to October 2014
Vendor Report Fleurets dated 28th October 2014
Viability Report HAPL / 978 October 2014
Location Plan Licence No. 100022432
Elevations Existing and Proposed Drawing No. 7229.14.2 Rev A
Floor Plans Existing and Proposed Drawing No. 7229.14.1 Rev A
Email from Henry Adams (Alexandra Munday) dated 5th November 2014 (Car Parking)

Reason: - To ensure provision of a satisfactory development.