

Marketing and Policy Statement

For

**Changes of Use
From Class C1 To Class C3.
Broad Oak Hotel,
Copse Lane, Hayling Island
Hampshire, PO9 1PF.**

For

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Marketing and Policy Statement

Change of Use from Class c1 TO Class C3

Broad Oak Hotel, Copse Lane,
Hayling Island,
Hampshire, PO11 0QB

0.0 Contents

- 1.0 Generally**
- 2.0 Physical Context**
- 3.0 Social / Economic Context**
- 4.0 Viability of the Proposals**
- 5.0 Policy Considerations**
- 6.0 Summary**

1.0 Generally

- 1.1 This Marketing Statement is in support of a Planning Application to the Havant Borough Council, for a Change of Use from Class C1 (Hotel) to Class C3 (Dwellinghouse) at Broad Oak Hotel, Copse Lane, Hayling Island, Hampshire, PO11 0BQ.
- 1.2 No other purpose is anticipated or accepted. Copyright of this report remains with Martin Critchley Chartered Architect.
- 1.3 Reference should be made to the planning submission drawings for details of the proposals, ref:-

1413 - 201	Location Plan
202	Block Plan
203	Site Plan
205	Existing floor plans

2.0 Physical Context

- 2.1 Copse Lane is country road on Hayling Island, running approximately north-south. The setting is rural rather than open countryside.
- 2.2 Copse Lane is a relatively quite thoroughfare, being part of a 'loop' road off the main Hayling Island distributor road, the A 3023, approximately 0.5 Km to the west.
- 2.3 Copse lane is fully metalled, unrestricted, unlit, without pedestrian foot paths. The road is at risk from tidal flooding approximately 0.5 Km north of the subject site. Much of the lane is tree lined.
- 2.4 The subject site is part of a short ribbon of detached house plots. Behind the houses and opposite are agricultural fields.
- 2.5 The subject building is set back from the road in a generous open site with mature gardens and trees.
- 2.6 The nearest adjacent houses to either side are 40 metres distant.

Broad Oak, Copse Lane, Hayling Island, PO11 0QB

- 2.7 The site is generally flat and level.

3.0 Social / Economic Context

- 3.1 Hayling Island is a former farming and fishing community, dating back to pre-Roman times.
- 3.2 Following the fashion for south coast holidays, popularised by Queen Victoria, Hayling Island developed as a tourist destination. Particularly between WW.1 and WW.2 the beach areas were 'colonised' by timber frame chalets and railway carriage conversions, of which now only a few remain.
- 3.3 Post WW.2 Hayling Island developed rapidly as a mass tourist destination with a number of large holiday camps, serviced by the branch line railway from Havant.
- 3.4 The railway closed in 1955, and the tourist holiday trade has been in decline ever since. Following the availability of cheap flights to sunshine holiday destinations in the 1960's, the loss of holiday trade on the island accelerated.
- 3.5 In recent years Hayling Island has become popular with beach day visitors. The seafront car parks and promenade facilities have been developed to accommodate this trade. This trade is entirely sunshine dependant, and can, on summer Sundays or Bank Holidays, reach invasion proportions, with total traffic congestion of the Island, back to the A 27 in Havant.
- 3.6 Also, post WW.2 and post holiday camps, the beach areas and the immediate hinterland became popular with static and touring caravans. A number of static caravan sites remain, and are effectively 'second homes' for visitors.
- 3.7 The subject site was first promoted for tourist use in the 1970's with proposals for holiday caravans. Use by five caravans received planning approval in 1977 (Ref: 23309/5) despite various other applications for up to twenty caravans.
- 3.8 Planning approval for the Hotel Use (Class C1) was given on 4th January 1990, (Ref: 89/50931).

4.0 Viability of the Proposals.

4.1 It is our view that the viability of the Hotel has always been marginal, and that it is no longer viable.

4.2 The hotel use has always been 'low key' and 'discrete', and has never been a 'roaring success' or an 'in crowd place'. There are a number of reasons for this failure, as follows.

4.3 The fact the hotel has struggled is evidenced by the number of planning applications submitted to seek approval for alternative and varied uses, e.g.

91/50931/6

Relief of Condition for use by non-residents. – Refused

In our view, the continuation of this restriction is a severe limitation on the viability of the hotel.

95/50931/16

Erect 10 linked lodges – Refused.

An attempt to expand the use and activity of the 'core' hotel facilities.

06/50931/018

Change of Use to Care Home – refused.

An attempt at an alternative use.

10/00431

16 Bedroom hotel extension, 7 lodges and 10 touring Caravans
Refused.

A serious attempt to increase the activity at the hotel to a viable level.

4.4 It is our view that the conditions imposed on the January 1990 approval, (Ref: 89/50931), are inherent the subsequent lack of viability and failure of the hotel.

Particularly :-

Condition 4.

“The premises shall only be used as a private hotel. And for no other purpose whatsoever”.

Condition 13.

“The restaurant (dining room and lounge) bar and pool facilities shall not be open to or used by any person other than residents of the hotel.”

These two conditions in combination place severe restrictions on the hotel use, by denying the operators income from related uses, such as :-

1. Wedding Parties.
2. Private parties
3. Private receptions.
4. Business conferences.
5. Marketing seminars.
6. Restaurant diners.

Supplementary uses such as these are an important part of the mix of uses, both social and seasonal, that are necessary for a viable hotel. This mix of uses is clearly set out in the Havant Planning report ‘**Havant Hotel Futures -2008**’, see below.

4.5 Without the options as 4.4 above, there is insufficient trade in the hotel for the necessary specialist staff, particularly a chef and a barman. These are two key providers of service in a successful hotel. The Planning Approval for the hotel (Ref: 89/50931), allowed for 20 guest rooms. This included an extension to the building – never implemented. In its current form (see Plan 1317-205) the hotel has only 10 guest rooms. Even if there is full occupancy (and that is a big ‘if’), a maximum of 20 guests is insufficient to run a bar and a catering kitchen profitably.

4.6 The specialist report ‘**Havant Hotel Futures – 2008**’ is specific and strong in its recommendations and market analysis of the range of services that are required for a hotel to be successful. All of the services listed in 4.4 above are included in that report, and all are denied to Broad Oak.

- 4.7 The hotel in its present form is the wrong size. It is too large for a family bed and breakfast hostel, which is the only possible format that might be workable in this quiet rural location.

It is too small to be an effective hotel, as 4.5 above, and particularly so with all the 4.4 restrictions imposed on trading.

- 4.8 The hotel is in the wrong location to be successful.

It is in a quiet rural location, with residential neighbours nearby. This is probably the basis of the restrictions as 4.4 above, and which is not going to change. A hotel is a commercial enterprise for the enjoyment of visiting guests. There will be parties, there will be late night noise, there will be traffic at odd times. This is inevitable for a successful hotel, and to restrict it, is to remove its viability.

- 4.9 'Havant Hotel Futures 2008' is quite specific in its recommendations for siting successful hotels. They must be near the town centre, or the seafront. Broad Oak is neither. The combination of restrictions as 4.4 above stop the hotel from developing a 'niche' or specialist trade which might draw visitors to its remote location.

- 4.10 The hotel is not on a through route. See 2.2 above. There is no 'passing trade' or possibility of signage promotion that would attract visitors.

- 4.11 The hotel is only accessible by car. It is not on a bus route. Copse Lane is unlit and unsafe for walking, particularly for strangers at night. There are no other attractions or visitor destinations within walking distance. The hotel is too small to put on visitor attractions, and there are no external attractions nearby.

It is not an attractive visitor destination.

- 4.12 Considering the possible loss of local employment, if the hotel were to be lost :- The hotel has been closed since July 2004, and no staff have been employed since that date. As in 2.2 and 4.11 above, the hotel is not accessible for staff without cars. In current planning assessment terms it is not in a sustainable location. The hotel business is well known for employing manual and cleaning staff on low hourly wages, many of whom do not have personal transport.

Broad Oak will find it difficult to recruit and retain staff, because of its remote location.

5.0 Policy considerations

5.1 The key document is the Havant Borough Council '**Core Strategy**' March 2011. The following quotations take references and numbering from that document.

5.2 **Policy CS.5** Tourism.

1. *Provide sustainable and small scale recreational opportunities.*

It is our view that Broad Oak is neither sustainable, nor able to provide recreation opportunities, because of the restrictions on its use.

3. *Safeguard existing tourist facilities, hotels, holiday centres and caravan parks.*

Although Broad Oak as a physical building remains, it has not traded since July 2004, and as such can not be considered an existing facility. The closure of the hotel predates the current Core Strategy by three years. It no longer existed as a hotel at the time of the formulation of the current policies, and before the compilation of 'Havant Hotel Futures 2008'.

- 3.56 *...encourages the provision of small scale recreational opportunities for tourists...focussed on the natural environment, the seafront.....without damaging or disturbing designated nature conservation sites...and to comply with Policy CS.11.*

Broad Oak is not on the sea front, and can not be developed on its present site because of environmental considerations. This is quite clear from the refusal reasons given on the numerous planning applications to develop and extend the site.

- 3.59 *'Havant Hotel Futures 2008' report forms the main evidence based study on hotel accommodation in the borough.*

See Below.

It is stated there was possible scope for a small boutique hotel development as part of the regeneration of Hayling Island Seafront.

Note. A singular hotel, and on the Seafront. This is not Broad Oak.

*3.60 Hotels are defined as a main town centre use in PPS.4. Town centre locations will be favoured for new hotels in order to promote their vitality and **viability**.....*

....Proposals to develop a hotel outside a designated centre will need to carry out a thorough sequential test to ensure no suitable sites in the centres identified in Policy CS.4....

These policies could not be clearer. Hotels only in town centres, and on designated sites. Not Broad Oak. It fails on every policy count.

3.64 Policy CS.5 will protect all existing tourist facilities and accommodation that are fit for purpose.

It is arguable that Broad Oak as a hotel is not fit for purpose, in that it is, de facto, closed.

*However, the council recognises the need for flexibility in order to respond to an evolving tourist and day visitor market. The Development Management **Policy DM.3** deals with the protection of existing tourism sites.*

The market has evolved away from Broad Oak (to the town centres and the Seafront, as above), and as such there is no longer a tourist site to protect.

5.3

Havant Hotel Futures – 2008

As 5.2 – 3.59 above, this research document, although prepared by outside consultants is a part of the adopted policies for the borough. The findings of the report are **key to the lack of viability**, and inappropriateness of the hotel use at Broad Oak. Extracts from the report below are referenced by the page number 'HHF-XX'.

- 5.4 HHF-4. Broad Oak is **not included** in the table 'Current Hotel Supply 2008'. This is not an omission. The hotel had been closed for four years at the time of writing the report. The facilities are **not included** in the Hotel Futures document. It is no longer a part of the borough tourist facilities, and has not been so for the life of the current Core Strategy.
- 5.5 HHF-5. Current Hotel demand. *Weekday occupations are strongest on Tuesday and Wednesday....occupancies dip during school holiday periods....Weekend occupancies were much lower.*
- This use pattern is typical of business customers, driven by the businesses in and around the industrial estates, and generally reflected in the town centre. This pattern is fully recognised as 5.2-3.60 above. The remoteness of Broad Oak from the centres of business will not attract business custom.
- 5.6 HHF-6. Market Mix. *Weddings and functions are the **primary source** of leisure business for 3 star hotels in the Havant area.* This essential business is denied Broad Oak. We can not emphasise enough this combination of trade and restriction, as to make Broad Oak unviable as a hotel.
- 5.7 HHF-7. Market Mix. *The market mix for hotels in the Havant area is 60-70% business and 30-40% leisure.* This reinforces the town centre importance for hotels, and the weakness of the Broad Oak location.
- 5.8 HHF-12. Current Hotel Demand. *The two adult only hotel resorts on Hayling Island....achieve extremely high occupancy levels, trading purely in the leisure break market....they offer break packages including entertainment.* Broad Oak can not compete with this opposition, when the use conditions effectively ban evening entertainment on environmental grounds, and the cost of entertainers can not be carried on a low number of guests.
- 5.9 HHF-14. Prospects for Growth. *Corporate demand for hotel accommodation in the Havant area is likely to increase.* Confirms the preferred town centre hotel locations. This will not help Broad Oak.
- 5.10 HHF-15. Prospects for Growth. *It is difficult to see scope for weekend leisure demand in the Havant area.* No encouragement fro Broad Oak there.

The regeneration of Hayling Seafront could attract increased leisure break business to Hayling Island. This is the only viable location on Hayling Island, recognised by any of the current policies. Broad Oak is not on, or near the seafront. There is also doubt in that the recommendation is only 'could' and not 'would'.

- 5.11 HHF-18. Hotel Developer Interest. It is clear from the responses of experienced and commercial hotel operators, that the only viable locations are related to the population centres and the major road network. Broad Oak does not offer these conditions.

The interest here was food and beverage led, so use by local residents will also be important. Not at Broad Oak, limited to residents only.

- 5.12 HHF-20. Boutique Hotels. Reinforces the view that only locations related to the waterfront are likely to be viable. Also recognises the role of 'entrepreneur' owners in the success of boutique hotels. The restrictions on Broad Oak are so severe as to prevent almost any 'entrepreneurial' use.

- 5.13 HHF-39. The Way Forward. **No hotel developers were interested in Hayling Island.** This statement is in a policy document. It is clear and brutal in its implication.

Two hotel companies....negotiating on sites in the Havant area...could add 150 + bedrooms to the Havant area hotel supply. Additional bedspace provision on this scale should be seen as a success for the tourism policies, and to completely negate the theoretical loss of the ten bedspaces at Broad Oak. The borough is not struggling to find hotel bedspaces.

- 5.14 HHF-40. The Way Forward. *New budget....hotel development in the Havant area could, however put the area's existing 3 star hotels under pressure to upgrade and possibly to **exit the market**.* This describes the potential at Broad Oak exactly. No owner or hotel operator will invest in Broad Oak with the severe restrictions on use that exist. Broad Oak exited the market in July 2004.

- 5.15 HHF-43. The Way Forward. *...planning conditions and restrictions that significantly increase hotel development and operational costs are avoided if possible.* Broad Oak has all the restrictions on use. This confirms our view, ever more clearly, as expressed at 4.4 above.

It must be recognised that the weakness of weekend demand in the Havant area potentially makes it more difficult to secure viable hotel development projects....not a priority location. Broad Oak is not in a viable location.

...avoiding imposing too many conditions on hotel projects...Re-affirms 4.4 above, yet again.

*The Hotel Futures Study has not identified **any evidence of need for a hotel retention policy** for the borough.....whether it is reasonable to insist that all existing hotels remain in use.*

What can we add ? As agents for the applicants, it is frustrating in the extreme, to have to make a Change of Use application case, which states the obvious, and is fully supported by the borough's own policies. This is broadly contradictory to the wishes of Central government to streamline planning policy and to reduce 'red tape'.

5.16 **Policy DM.3** of the Havant Borough Core Strategy (March 2011) is applicable : Protection of Existing Employment and tourism Sites.

5.17 Messers Pearsons estate agents, marketed the hotel in 2007 without success. The marketing included the usual press advertising, and site boards, and failed to find a buyer.

5.18 The failure to sell Broad Oak is down to its poor location, and limited trading potential. The building requires extensive refurbishment for hotel use. Overall it does not represent fitness for purpose, or a viable business proposition.

5.19 Current policy guidance from Dept. for Communities and Local Government :- Letter to Chief Planning Officers 24th January 2013...

"...permitted development rights for change of use from B1(a) office to C3 residential purposes..."

This could not be clearer in its intention. It recognises the overall picture in Britain where there is a surplus of vacant office accommodation and a shortage of residential accommodation, with new housing starts lagging behind housing demand, year on year.

Broad Oak, Copse Lane, Hayling Island, PO11 0QB

We recognise that Broad Oak is not an office. But it is an under-used commercial premises, and there are strong similarities in the underlying demands. This is a sustainable response to recycling the existing building stock for new and necessary uses. The subject proposals fit this policy perfectly. There is an established, strong demand for housing on Hayling Island.

5.20 **Policy CS.9** of the Havant Borough Core Strategy (March 2011) is applicable :- Housing. Planning permission will be granted for housing that will :-

- 4) *“Achieve a suitable density of development for the location, taking into account accessibility to public transport and proximity to employment, shops and services in addition to respecting the surrounding landscape, character and built form.”*

The proposal for residential use at Broad Oak meets all of these criteria.

- 5) *“Provide a mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures which help meet identified local housing need and contribute to the development of mixed and sustainable communities.”*

The proposal for residential use at Broad Oak meets this criteria consistent with its rural location and residential neighbours.

6.0 **Summary.**

6.1 The proposals are a sustainable opportunity to redevelop the site for optimum re-use of the existing buildings and to contribute to the vitality of Hayling Island.

6.2 The loss of hotel use was established before the current policies were formulated and applied.

6.3 Residential use on the site is sustainable and appropriate, and a recognition of the facts of actual use on the site. It is our view that if a new hotel were proposed on this site, that there would be strong objections from the neighbours, and that the proposal would fail on Planning and Environmental grounds.

- 6.4 The proposals are consistent with Government guidance to revitalise the countryside, and to make best use of the existing buildings stock.
- 6.5 The applicants are making a determined and positive effort to retain the existing building, and to bring it back into beneficial use.

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