

**COMMITTEE DATE:** [22/05/2018](#)

**Application Reference:** **18/0136**

WARD: Talbot  
DATE REGISTERED: 19/03/18  
LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATION: Defined Inner Area

APPLICATION TYPE: Full Planning Permission  
APPLICANT: Barsham West Ltd

**PROPOSAL:** External alterations including provision of cycle/bin stores to rear and use of premises as six self-contained permanent flats following demolition of single storey rear extension.

**LOCATION:** 31-33 HORNBY ROAD, BLACKPOOL, FY1 4QG

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**Summary of Recommendation:** Grant Permission

#### **CASE OFFICER**

Mr Mark Shaw

#### **BLACKPOOL COUNCIL PLAN 2015 -2020**

This application accords with **Priority two of the Plan** - Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

#### **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION**

This is a test case for Policy C23 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and the revised Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document adopted in November 2017 which continues to protect holiday accommodation against conversion to residential and other non-holiday uses within designated areas other than in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that it is no longer viable in holiday use. It is important that any approval granted satisfies the policy and guidance and does not potentially undermine future applications.

It is considered that this application satisfies the exceptional circumstances requirement of the policy for the reasons set out below which allows approval of a residential conversion within a designated holiday area in principle. The quality of the proposed scheme is also considered to be sufficiently high and will provide a good standard of accommodation improving the housing stock within the inner area and therefore the application is accordingly recommended for approval with conditions.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The application property is a three storey double fronted and currently vacant 24 bedroom hotel, formerly Northlands Hotel, located within one of the clusters of holiday accommodation within the South Town Centre Main Holiday Accommodation Area. The building is currently in a poor condition and has been vacant for four years. The property is within the stretch of Hornby Road between Central Drive and Coronation Street and this stretch of Hornby Road has a strong holiday character. However, this property is part of a terrace which has two trading hotels (Strides and Deleware), this disused hotel and a cafe on the corner of Coronation Street.

## **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

The application seeks approval for the conversion of the vacant hotel into six x two bedroom flats which measure between 70sqm and 84sqm in size. The proposal will also remove a single storey rear extension creating additional amenity space to the rear and to provide a cycle store and bin store. Each flat would be laid out with its lounge/ dining room overlooking Hornby Road with bedrooms and bathrooms within the outrigger to the rear and overlooking the rear area.

The application is accompanied by an Economic Viability Impact Statement, a Business Plan and a Surveyor's Report.

## **MAIN PLANNING ISSUES**

The main planning issues are considered to be:

- Principle of Permanent Residential Use
- Quality of Residential Accommodation Proposed
- Impact on Character of Area and Residential/ Visitor Amenity
- Any Other Matters

These issues will be discussed in the assessment section of this report.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**Head of Highways and Traffic Management:** No comments have been received at the time of preparing this report. Any comments that are received before the Committee meeting will be reported in the Update Note.

## **PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS**

Site notice displayed: 21 March 2018

Neighbours notified: 20 March 2018

Six letters of objection have been received on the following grounds:-

**Stay Blackpool.Com c/o Chorlton Hotel, 38 Vance Road-** are aware of the applicant and his positive attitude and property investments within the Central Holiday Area. However there are significant issues here and the property is in the heart of the Central Holiday Area and as such should be resisted. It is recognised that the property is abandoned and decaying blighting the locality though there are serious issues with the financial viability assessment, namely:-

- 90 guest houses up for sale within a quarter mile radius is not proof the hotel accommodation sector is finished.
- Havelock Street and Hornby Road are not directly comparable. Hornby Road is a main through road with significant passing trade.
- References to the Northlands Hotel are inappropriate, as it was extremely badly run and caused significant issues in the area. Anyone taking the business on would change the name.
- A number of the hotel comparisons involve totally different situations and are therefore inappropriate.
- Historic issues at the property and the damage caused are not proof of viability as the hotel would not be managed in the same way in future.
- Prices quoted per night are too low.
- The absence of a lift is not a significant issue and regarding the 'no drop off point' extensive loading bays have now been provided.
- The comment regarding 'steady decline in guest houses in favour of corporate alternatives' is disputed as is the comment about Blackpool being in decline.
- The £28,000 per annum manager's position is more likely to be £16,000 per annum.
- If the area is in decline as suggested why is the international operator DJ Suites investing heavily nearby?

**The Almeria Hotel, 61 Hornby Road-** approval would set a precedent resulting in a large number of flats in one area which could cause anti-social behaviour and even drug problems if the flats are not properly managed. There seems to be too many hotels being converted into flats or restaurants which will not help the town's reputation of being a family friendly resort again.

**The Arabella Hotel, 102 Albert Road-**this area is becoming more and more HMO flats and not a holiday zone as it should be. By adding flats this will encourage more drug dealers. Private landlords mostly live out of town and do not know what is happening or who is living in their property. Managing agents do not keep an eye on the tenants and it takes a court order to get them out but the damage has already been done and hotel guests do not return and the hotels nearby get negative feedback.

**Franklin Hotel, 32 Hornby Road-** this is classed as a holiday area whereas a lot of conversions have taken place causing a number of problems with criminal and anti-social behaviour. Properties being converted into HMOs including DSS properties in the holiday area is not good for holidaymakers. The area should be kept as a holiday zone, further

conversions will only add more problems to those existing causing further deterioration and put hotels out of business.

**11 Hornby Road and 32 Vance Road-** we fully agree with all the other objections about this application. We wish to submit our objection as my wife and I own two hotels near the proposed development, one on Hornby Road and one on Vance Road.

We bought these properties in the belief this was classed as a holiday area. In recent years there has been an emphasis on granting planning permission to convert hotels into permanent flats by unscrupulous landlords, this has caused a lot of anti-social behaviour, drunkenness, drug taking and dealing by these tenants and there is no one to make sure this doesn't happen and a lot of these people are being brought here from other areas of the country at the taxpayers expense.

In the immediate area of Hornby Road we have lots of places that have been turned into HMOs and there are a lot of DSS premises as well in the holiday zone. This is not good for holiday makers coming to Blackpool. It seems as you are setting precedent of what type of people you want in your holiday zone. Sometimes we feel for the hotel guests and as a small business owner. We think the time has come to stop these conversions happening as this holiday area is being saturated with flats where the taxpayer is paying these landlords. The area should be kept as a holiday zone as any approval would only add to existing problems cause further deterioration in the area we would be out of business. We feel really strongly about unscrupulous landlords who don't live near here so do not have to put up with the anti-social behaviour.

This area should stay as a holiday zone and the Planning Committee should back this. The Council has allowed a conversion on Vance Road two doors down from our property and the trouble we get from the flats is unreal. We have had guest being asked if they were looking for a good time by females from the flats and being offered drugs on the corner and outside on our benches. We get people from the flats putting rubbish in our bins that we pay a lot of money for. This has been reported to the Council and the Police but nothing done about it apart from us having to change our bins for lockable ones. To convert more flats in a holiday zone would cause more problems including parking which is terrible already. Why is there so many yellow lines on our streets when they are not needed and the price for parking so high.

**Glen Allen Hotel, 22 Hornby Road** - I am writing to object to the planning permission to turn the northlands on Hornby Road into permanent flats, having a bed and breakfast on the same road there is nowhere for our guests to park at the best of times let alone having cars parked permanently from flats. Also with all the drunks and drug addicts that are about this will lower our street creditation if we had to put up with these like some streets further along the road do. I'm hoping you take all this into consideration as business for us at present is important to keep our street a bed and breakfast street like I was told when we took on the business that our end will stay has a holiday place for guests new and old.

**Windsor House Hotel, 19 Hornby Road** - This property has no off street parking.

The owners of the Northlands Hotel in Hornby Road, have applied for planning permission to convert into six self-contained flats.

As this property is within the central holiday area, we strongly object to this proposal. May I quote. Policy off the Promenade 5.10 The off promenade Main Holiday Accommodation Areas, are made up of a number of streets that are considered to be most concentrated areas of holiday accommodation which are well located to access the resort's attractions.

Core Strategy Policy CS23 (1a 1b ) 5.115.11 Within the areas listed below and defined in Appendix 5, change of use from holiday accommodation, or the loss of sites used, or last used, as holiday accommodation, will be resisted.

5.12 Change of use will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where:

- 1) Suitable evidence is provided to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that the business is no longer viable and has reasonable prospect of continuing as holiday accommodation; and
- 2) The proposed use is compatible with the holiday accommodation uses in the street and provides regeneration benefits to the immediate area.

5.13 The policy applies to: The Cliffs- Empress Drive, King Edward Avenue and Gynn Avenue. North Town Centre- focused on parts of Lord Street and Bank Street. South Town Centre- focused on Adelaide Street, Albert Road, Charnley Road, Hornby Road, Reads Avenue, Palatine Road, Hull Road, Vance Road and Havelock Street.

Viability 5.14 In recognition of the significant viability issues faced by some holiday accommodation owners in the main accommodation areas, the guidance makes an allowance for exceptional circumstances when a change of use may considered acceptable.

5.15 It must be demonstrated through a transparent and robust viability methodology that future holiday accommodation use of the property is no longer viable. The proposed use will need to be compatible with other holiday accommodation uses in the street and make a contribution to the regeneration of the wider area.

This property is situated in the bottom end of Hornby Road which falls into Core Strategy Policy CS23 (1a 1b) 5.11 This part of Hornby Road does not have compatible premises to the proposed application, all properties are either hotels or guest houses supplying holiday accommodation and therefore if this application was granted would not provide regeneration benefits to the immediate area, In fact it would do the opposite.

Some 15 years ago, we purchased our property because it was situated in the main holiday area. One of the hotels we aimed to be as good as was The Northlands Hotel. Over the last number of years, we have achieved this, but unfortunately The Northlands let the condition of their property go in decline. I feel that as the owners want to convert to six self-contained flats, they could afford to reinstate the property to its former state and then run a viable

business, as all the properties in this part of Hornby Road are doing so. In fact, it would not cost as much as the proposed change of use.

If this permission is granted, I feel it would open up the floodgate to other owners in Blackpool, as it would set a precedent, who would follow suit, let their properties go in decline and then say to the Council that the business is no longer viable and has reasonable prospect of continuing as holiday accommodation. Do you want Blackpool to survive as a holiday resort?

Blackpool was built, over the years, by holiday accommodation providers such as the ones around our area and will keep attracting customers as long as the holiday accommodation is not taken away.

**Anon, Hornby Road-** this type of property will only attract one type of person. Hornby Road is a holiday zone and should stay that way.

**One letter of support has been received from 53 Central Drive-** the proposal would enhance the street and bring this derelict building back into use. A high standard of living accommodation is required and a reduction in the stock of holiday accommodation.

### **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The National Planning Policy Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute towards sustainable development. There are three strands to sustainable development namely economic, social and environmental. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date local plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. Always seek to secure high quality and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings and **Part 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes.** Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It is acknowledged that proposals for housing development should be looked upon favourably if a Local Planning Authority is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land.

**Part 7 - Requiring good design.** Planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments respond to local character. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. Planning decisions should create safe and accessible environments, add to the overall quality of an area, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses.

### **BLACKPOOL LOCAL PLAN PART 1: CORE STRATEGY**

The Blackpool Local Plan: Part 1 - Core Strategy was adopted by the Council in January 2016. The policies in the Core Strategy that are most relevant to this application are -

Policy CS7: Quality of Design

Policy CS12: Sustainable Neighbourhoods  
Policy CS13: Housing Mix, Standards and Density  
Policy CS23: Managing Holiday Bed spaces

### **SAVED POLICIES: BLACKPOOL LOCAL PLAN 2001-2016**

The Blackpool Local Plan was adopted in June 2006. A number of policies in the Blackpool Local Plan (2006) have now been superseded by policies in the Core Strategy (these are listed in Appendix B of the Core Strategy). Other policies in the Blackpool Local Plan are saved until the Local Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies is produced.

The following policies are most relevant to this application:

LQ1 - Lifting the Quality of Design  
LQ2- Site Context  
LQ14- Extensions and Alterations  
HN5- Conversion and Subdivisions  
BH3 - Residential and Visitor Amenity  
AS1 - General Development Requirements (Access and Parking)

### **New Homes from Old Places Supplementary Planning Document/ National Technical Housing Standards**

### **Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

### **ASSESSMENT**

**Principle of Permanent Residential Use-** the application property is located within one of the designated holiday areas which are protected via the up-dated Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document adopted in November 2017. Policy CS23 and the up-dated document only allow hotels to change over to non-holiday use in exceptional circumstances. These exceptional circumstances include a demonstration that it is no longer viable, that there is no reasonable prospect of the property continuing in holiday use, the new use being compatible with holiday uses and also providing regeneration benefits.

The application property has been vacant for approximately four years and is in a poor condition requiring extensive refurbishment and up-grading prior to any re-use, whether this be re-commencing use as a hotel or alternatively in providing six x two bedroom self-contained flats as proposed. The property is double fronted and is the last hotel property within the designated block on the south side of Hornby Road between the Coronation Street and Central Drive junctions. The application property is located at the Coronation Street end of Hornby Road adjoined by a hotel at 29 Hornby Road and by a cafe at 103 Coronation Street. Directly across the road is a derelict hotel and at the Central Drive end of this block on the north side of Hornby Road are two properties, 10 and 12, which no longer appear to be in holiday use. Other than these properties the remaining 22 properties all appear to be trading hotels.

The viability and business reports submitted with the application adequately illustrate that a hotel would not be a viable re-use of the property and require expenditure in the region of £300,000 before trading could re-commence and it is anticipated that a hotel here would be trading approximately 10 years before it would be operating with a small profit. There is a strong likelihood of the property remaining vacant and continuing to deteriorate, this is not in the interests of the applicant nor the local area and this application represents a viable alternative use. There is a history of derelict property in the town either going over to unauthorised multiple occupation use, including squatting and/or being subject to vandalism and arson. Given the details of the proposals the application is considered to meet the tests of Policy CS23 and the Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document and the principle of permanent self-contained flats is therefore accepted.

**Quality of Residential Accommodation Proposed-** the proposal involves the conversion of the 24 bedroom hotel into six x two bedroom flats each measuring between 70sqm to 85sqm in size. Five of the six flats would be more than 10sqm above the minimum floor space standard. Individually the room sizes of each flat would be in excess of floorspace standards. Each flat would have its main living/dining room fronting onto Hornby Road and its entrance from Hornby Road, with bedrooms, bathrooms and kitchens positioned to the rear within the outrigger. Each flat would also have direct access into the rear yard where the bins and cycle stores would be located with direct access onto the rear alley which leads onto both Coronation Street and Hornby Road. An existing single storey rear extension on the application property will be removed to create additional amenity space. The proposal complies with Policy HN5 of the Local Plan and Policies CS13 and CS23 of the Core Strategy and would provide six quality apartments thus adding to the stock of quality accommodation within the inner area. The proposal will also help contribute towards the town's future housing supply and help towards meeting the Council's inner area regeneration ambitions.

**Impact on Character of Area and Residential/ Visitor Amenity** - the application property has been vacant for approximately four years having previously been used as a low quality hotel which advertised 24 hour parties and ultimately lost its alcohol licence. Whilst bad management can be corrected, the property is nevertheless in a poor state of repair and requires a considerable amount of money spending on it to bring it up to a habitable standard whether that be for hotel or residential use. Whilst cosmetically from the front elevation it may appear in a reasonable condition the property is in a poor state of repair and there are also some structural issues.

The renovation and re-use of the property to provide a quality residential scheme has considerable regeneration benefits for the area which should not undermine the continuing successful operation of adjacent hotels and its location at the end of a hotel block next to a cafe fronting Coronation Street means that visually too the property would not appear obtrusive nor undermine the holiday character of the street. The previous hotel use was a badly managed property which detracted from the character of the area, the current position is a non-trading guest house with little prospect of re-trading and the likely prospect of long-standing vacancy and deterioration. The proposal represents a good opportunity to secure its long term future and to bring the property back into beneficial use.



It is worth noting that no comments have been received from either Strides or Delamere Hotels.

**Any Other Matters-** a strong element of the opposition against the proposal relates to fear and perception, often based on previous experience elsewhere, that the residential use of properties means a low quality Houses in Multiple Occupation type accommodation resulting in a range of anti-social behaviour and criminal activity which will undermine the successful operation of adjoining businesses. These properties are usually Houses in Multiple Occupation or low grade flats often converted from old holiday flats without the requirement for planning permission. There is however nothing to suggest that residential accommodation, particularly good quality accommodation, cannot happily co-exist with holiday accommodation.

It should be noted that the planning system cannot vet the suitability of future tenants/ occupants of this or any other accommodation (or hotel) but it can, and has in this case, seek to ensure that the quality of accommodation provided meets approved local and national standards. This fact together with the obvious considerable amount of money required to bring the property up to a habitable standard will ensure that it is clearly not in the applicant's interest to disregard the adequate vetting of future tenants. It is also noted that the last hotel use of this property itself generated significant issues for the area resulting in it losing its alcohol licence.

### **CONCLUSION**

The proposal complies with the relevant Policies namely CS13 and CS23 of the Core Strategy, Policies LQ1, BH3, and HN5 of the Local Plan, the Holiday Accommodation and New Homes From Old Places Supplementary Planning Documents and is also in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework providing good quality residential accommodation comprising six x two bedroom flats which are in excess of both local and national floor space standards in a sustainable location. Accordingly the application is recommended for approval.

### **LEGAL AGREEMENT AND/OR DEVELOPER FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION**

None

### **HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

Under Article eight and Article one of the first protocol to the Convention on Human Rights, a person is entitled to the right to respect for private and family life, and the peaceful enjoyment of his/her property. However, these rights are qualified in that they must be set against the general interest and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. It is not considered that the application raises any human rights issues.

## **CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the Council's general duty, in all its functions, to have regard to community safety issues as required by section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Planning Application File(s) 18/0136 which can be accessed via the link below:

<http://idoxpa.blackpool.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple>

**Recommended Decision:** Grant Permission

## **Conditions and Reasons**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development shall be carried out, except where modified by the conditions attached to this permission, in accordance with the planning application received by the Local Planning Authority including the following plans:

- Proposed plans and elevation ref: B/18/34/02
- Location Plan received on 6 March 2018

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and so the Local Planning Authority can be satisfied as to the details of the permission.

3. No flat shall be occupied until all of the external alterations and the internal layouts and arrangements have been provided in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The layout of the accommodation and arrangements hereby approved shall thereafter be retained unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure that the accommodation accords with the Council's approved Supplementary Planning Document, to safeguard the living conditions of the occupiers of the flats and to improve the external appearance of the property in accordance with Policies LQ1, LQ14, BH3 and HN5 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policies CS7, CS12 and CS13 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order) no change of use from Use Class C3 (the subject of this permission) to Use Class C4 shall take place without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the living conditions of the occupants of nearby residential premises and to prevent the further establishment of Houses in Multiple Occupation which would further increase the stock of poor quality accommodation in the town and further undermine the aim of creating balanced and healthy communities, in accordance with Policies BH3 and HN5 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policies CS7, CS12 and CS13 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

#### **Advice Notes to Developer**

1. Please note this approval relates specifically to the details indicated on the approved plans and documents, and to the requirement to satisfy all conditions of the approval. Any variation from this approval needs to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to works commencing and may require the submission of a revised application. Any works carried out without such written agreement or approval would render the development as unauthorised and liable to legal proceedings.