

COMMITTEE DATE: [20/12/2016](#)

Application Reference: **16/0563**

WARD: Claremont
DATE REGISTERED: 20/09/16
LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATION: Resort Neighbourhood
Defined Inner Area

APPLICATION TYPE: Full Planning Permission
APPLICANT: PEAKE PROPERTY SERVICES LTD

PROPOSAL: External alterations including re-instatement of bay windows and formation of second floor balconies to Springfield Road and Lord Street elevations, and use of premises as altered as 11 self-contained permanent flats with associated landscaping, boundary treatment, bin and cycle stores, following demolition of existing sun lounges and dormers.

LOCATION: 38 - 40 SPRINGFIELD ROAD AND 10 - 10A LORD STREET, BLACKPOOL

Summary of Recommendation: Grant Permission

CASE OFFICER

Ms C Johnson

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

The development would be in accordance with policies CS1, CS2 and CS13 of the Blackpool Local Plan, Part 1 - Core Strategy 2012-2027, policies HN4, HN5 and BH3 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and the New Homes from Old Places Supplementary Planning Document in terms of housing supply and quality. The proposal would also be in accordance with policies CS6, CS7 and CS9 of the Blackpool Local Plan, Part 1 - Core Strategy 2012-2027 and policies LQ1, LQ2, LQ4, LQ6 and AS1 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 in terms of design and highway safety.

Although technically contrary to the Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document and Policy CS23 of the Blackpool Local Plan, Part 1 - Core Strategy, the proposal would create good quality living accommodation and significantly improve the appearance of the properties on what is a key gateway into the Town Centre and the Central Business District. Given the location of the properties on the edge of the Lord Street Main Holiday Accommodation Area, on balance, it is considered that the benefits of the development outweigh any dis-benefits of using three properties in the Lord Street Main Holiday Accommodation Area as 11 flats, despite conflicts with the Holiday Accommodation

As such, the recommendation is that the application is approved.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises three properties, two fronting Springfield Road (Nos 38 and 40) and the third fronting Lord Street (No. 10). The properties are in a terrace of four and the adjoining property appears to be holiday flats (36 Springfield Road). To the north of the site, the properties are predominantly holiday accommodation, to the south are properties in the Town Centre, including the side elevation of the former Odeon building (Grade II listed) which now trades as Funny Girls. Further to the west there are bars and other commercial property and to the east there is a mix of residential and holiday accommodation.

The properties all have three storeys with accommodation in the roof space. The property at 38 Springfield Road has a traditional two-storey square brick bay on the front elevation, a front dormer and a two-storey outrigger. There have been numerous enforcement investigations into the use of the property as a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO). The property is laid out as three self-contained flats and five en-suite bedrooms with ancillary rooms such as a laundry. The case officer visited the property on 17 October 2016 and the property was undergoing renovation at that time. There were no working kitchen facilities for the property and a number of the rooms were occupied by single tenants. A flat in the roof space was not accessible as the tenant was unprepared for the inspection. It was unclear on what basis the rooms were occupied but the tenants did not appear to be traditional holiday makers.

The property at 40 Springfield Road has a ground floor front sun lounge with the original stone bay at first floor, a front and rear dormer and a single storey extension at the rear. The property is currently trading as a hotel on a part time basis and there were only two families staying at the hotel when the case officer visited. There are 15 letting rooms but only 10 are used as much of the top floor is suffering from damp from leaks in the roof and from the dormers. The rest of the accommodation is clean and tidy but very dated and with poor en-suite facilities. One bedroom is accessed via a bathroom and most of the en-suites are little more than a shower cubicle in the bedroom. The installation of one en-suite has resulted in part of the first floor front bay window being blocked off which is a poor design solution.

The ground floor of the corner property (10A Lord Street) is the owner's accommodation associated with 40 Springfield Road and the upper floors belong to 10 Lord Street. The boundary wall has been removed on the corner to provide two parking spaces. There is a poor quality extension which wraps around the corner and what would have been a first floor stone bay has been replaced by a plastic clad bay.

The property at 10 Lord Street is a non-trading hotel and has not traded since 2010. The property has 12 bedrooms although four bedrooms in the roof space have significant head

height restrictions and are not considered to be particularly useable. Again, the accommodation is very dated and some bedrooms share bathroom facilities. There are three parking spaces to the side with access directly off Lord Street.

The properties are adjoining the Town Centre boundary and are in a Main Holiday Accommodation Area which is shown on the maps to the Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The proposal involves external alterations, including the removal of non-original extensions, erecting a dwarf boundary wall around the front of the properties, formation of four balconies on the front elevation above re-instated stone bays, landscaping and bin and cycle stores to the rear, accessed off Lord Street. The properties would be converted into 11 self-contained flats, nine of which would have two bedrooms and two of the flats would each have one bedroom.

The application is accompanied by an Economic Viability Impact Statement.

MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

The main planning issues are considered to be:

- The principle of permanent flat accommodation in a holiday accommodation area
- The quality of the design
- The quality of the accommodation
- The highway implications
- Other issues

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

CONSULTATIONS

Head of Highways and Traffic Management:

The proposal seeks to convert three guest houses into 11 self-contained permanent flats. I have no significant concerns on the basis that the proposal site is located in the Town Centre, or edge of Town Centre where access to other modes of transport is available. On this basis, I am happy to support this proposal.

Cycle parking is proposed which must be retained.

The individual units will require formal postal addresses. The Applicant is advised to contact Head of Traffic and Highways, Blackpool Council, PO BOX 4, Blackpool, FY1 1NA.

Given the location of the units and the constraints with access, I recommend a Construction Management Plan condition be included to ensure the works are managed in the appropriate and correct manner.

Waste Services Manager:

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

Press notice published: 29 September 2016

Site notice displayed: 17 October 2016

Neighbours notified: 21 September 2016

Objections have been received from 12, 21 and 27 Lord Street and 10 Ascot Road.

The objections are summarised below:

- The application site is protected holiday accommodation surrounded by hotels, bed and breakfasts, bars and clubs.
- If approved, three profitable hotels will be replaced by flats. Run down hotels that are no longer trading should be used instead.
- Loss of jobs and livelihoods.
- There are lots of empty flats in the area.
- If the flats are rented out this would put a further strain on budgets in regards to housing benefit and council tax support.
- The flats would cause anti-social behaviour and increased noise which will affect other hotels in the area.
- Noise from music will travel when windows are open.
- Not enough parking spaces and the on-street provision is over-subscribed.
- If approved, it would set a precedent for further conversions and a lack of hotels in the heart of Blackpool which would put tourists off visiting the town and would be the beginning of the end for the holiday zone area.
- Noise and loss of privacy during construction.
- Parking of work vehicles to deliver materials on a busy main road and no details of how long the development will take.
- The alley gate is noisy and will cause disturbance if used more frequently.
- The cycle stores will attract crime into the area as they will be attractive to thieves.

A letter of support has been received including a petition in favour of the proposal containing 22 signatures. The comments are summarised below:

- The proposal will significantly enhance and evolve the local area and support the regeneration of the wider area.
- The application would not set a precedent for other flats in the holiday zone.
- Over the years, there has been a decline in the zone which is no longer used solely for holiday purposes.
- A lot of hotels in the zone are up for sale, being used as unregulated HMOs or completely in disrepair and not trading.
- The lack of parking is a good thing as the apartments are within walking distance of all amenities and local transport and may support a greener lifestyle.

- The development will provide work to locals and create an increased customer base to the local businesses.
- The construction works will be temporary and will be worth the outcome.
- Blackpool has an extensive number of successful hotels in the area and improving the locations image can only help to promote them.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

General planning principles in paragraphs 2, 7, 8, 14 and 17;

Design issues in paragraphs 9, 17, 56 and 73;

Housing issues in paragraphs 47 and 49;

Highway issues in paragraph 35.

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 CS1: Strategic Location of Development

Policy CS2: Housing Provision

Policy CS6: Green Infrastructure

Policy CS7: Quality of Design

Policy CS9: Water Management

Policy CS13: Housing Mix, Density and Standards

Policy CS23: Managing Holiday Bed Spaces

None of these policies conflict with or outweigh the provisions of the saved Local Plan Policies listed below.

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 are produced.

The following policies are most relevant to this application:

Policy LQ1: Lifting the Quality of Design

Policy LQ2: Site Context

Policy LQ4: Building Design

Policy LQ6: Landscape Design and Biodiversity

Policy HN4: Windfall Sites

Policy HN5: Conversion and Subdivision

Policy BH3: Residential and Visitor Amenity

Policy AS1: General Development Requirements

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document.
New Homes from Old Places Supplementary Planning Document.
Technical Housing Standards - nationally described space standards.

ASSESSMENT

The Principle of Permanent Flat Accommodation in a Holiday Accommodation Area.

The Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) seeks to support an improvement in quality and the reduction in quantum of holiday accommodation, consolidating provision around the strongest clusters of holiday accommodation. In Main Holiday Accommodation Areas, the SPD states that change from holiday accommodation will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where properties fundamentally differ in character and it would be without detriment to the character of the holiday accommodation area. Any such application should include an assessment indicating that the building is not viable for future holiday use.

Policy CS23 of the Blackpool Local Plan, Part 1 - Core Strategy confirms that existing holiday accommodation within Main Holiday Accommodation Areas will be safeguarded unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The application site is on the edge of the Lord Street Main Holiday Accommodation Area. The Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document focuses on Lord Street and Bank Street and no reference is made to Springfield Road, although the defined boundary does include 36, 38 and 40 Springfield Road. This Holiday Accommodation Area is segregated into three parts. The northern part of Lord Street contains approximately 17 buildings, the Banks Street element to the west contains approximately 21 buildings and the southern part of Lord Street (which contains the application site) contains approximately 28 buildings.

The loss of three buildings from the southern part of the Holiday Accommodation Area, especially considering that two of the properties are not facing on to Lord Street, is not considered to be particularly detrimental to the character of the wider Lord Street Main Holiday Accommodation Area. It is unfortunate that the adjoining property at 36 Springfield Road is not included within the application site, as the remaining holiday use would be somewhat divorced from the rest of the Holiday Accommodation Area. However, this part of Springfield Road is mixed in character and there are hotels to the east and west of the site so the remaining holiday accommodation at 36 Springfield Road would not appear out of place.

The property at 38 Springfield Road appears to be a hybrid property with mixed Houses In Multiple Occupation, holiday use and three flats, at least one of which is occupied on a permanent basis. As such, there is no holiday accommodation to protect. The building is in poor repair and has been the centre of anti-social behaviour in the area and has had a higher number of Police visits in the past, although the situation has improved more

recently. The property currently does not have a holiday appearance as there is no signage, canopy etc. which would identify it as being holiday accommodation and so the property does not contribute to the character of the Holiday Accommodation Area.

The property at 40 Springfield Road is a hotel which is trading on a part time basis and without significant investment, is unlikely to remain viable in the medium to long term. The property is in poor repair, particularly the roof which has led to the upper floor rooms being unlettable due to damp ingress. The accommodation on offer is outdated and not of the standard that visitors today would expect. Whilst the property does contribute to the holiday character of the area in terms of having a sun lounge and a canopy on the front, these are not of high quality and their loss would not be detrimental to the area visually.

The property at 10 Lord Street has not traded as a hotel in the last five years and is largely unoccupied other than the ground floor and a couple of bedrooms which are used by the occupants. Again, significant investment would be required to bring the accommodation back into a viable hotel use as a 6/7 bedroom hotel (omitting the rooms in the roof space given the restricted head heights). The property could remain a non-trading hotel for the foreseeable future and thus does not and would not contribute to the holiday character of the wider area.

Whilst ideally these properties, with significant investment, would be brought back into good quality holiday accommodation, the proposal is for permanent flats. An Economic Viability Impact Statement confirms that the properties have failed to generate sufficient income to allow investment to re-introduce holiday accommodation and that, in conjunction with low property values, means the costs of renovating/re-introducing holiday accommodation in this location is not viable.

The application is therefore technically contrary to the Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document and Policy CS23 of the Core Strategy, unless other material considerations indicate that this application could be considered as an exception to the current Holiday Accommodation policy stance. These considerations are discussed below.

The Quality of the Design

As part of the proposal to provide 11 flats in the three properties, all of the dormers would be removed and the roofs made good. All extensions would be removed and stone bays reinstated where they are missing. A dwarf wall would enclose defensible amenity space (other than to the north which would be used as existing, as three parking spaces), and four balconies introduced on the street fronting elevations, above the bays, to provide amenity space and to help give an active frontage.

All of the existing stonework would be stripped of paint and restored and areas of soft landscaping would be provided around the street frontage (exact details of the hard and soft landscaping would be agreed by condition).

The properties are on the edge of the Central Business District which has recently seen significant regeneration and there are plans in the near future for further regeneration of the Wilkinsons' site, around the corner from the application site. Notwithstanding the tenuous viability of bringing these properties back in to quality visitor accommodation, the external alterations proposed would significantly enhance the properties and the area, and this is a material consideration which weighs heavily in favour of the proposal.

The Quality of the Accommodation

The proposal is for 11 flats, two of which would have one bedroom and nine would have two bedrooms. This would comply with Policy CS13 of the Blackpool Local Plan, Part 1 - Core Strategy.

The layout of the flats comply with the Technical Housing Standards and generally comply with the New Homes from Old Places standards, apart from some main living areas falling slightly short of the total aggregate lounge/kitchen/dining space requirements.

All of the flats would have internal access to secure bin and cycle stores at the rear and four of the flats would have private balconies. All of the flats would have access to soft landscaped areas at the front of the property which would be defensible, if not particularly private. There would be a small area of private amenity space at the rear for the hanging out of laundry etc.

The quality of the accommodation proposed is good, the flats are well stacked and all main living areas would have an outlook over the street.

The quality of the flats and amenities provided is another consideration which weighs in favour of the proposal.

The Highway Implications

The proposal involves the loss of two of five parking spaces by erecting a boundary wall around the Springfield Road/Lord Street boundary. Three off-street spaces would be retained on the Lord Street frontage with direct access from Lord Street.

Given the edge of Town Centre location of the application site, close to rail, bus and tram routes, the site is considered to be highly accessible. Furthermore, there would be a secure cycle store for 11 bicycles at the rear of the properties.

As such, three parking spaces is considered to be more than sufficient to service the proposed flats.

Other Issues

The introduction of landscaping will help with surface water runoff. Currently the site is completely hard surfaced.

Disruption to local residents or businesses during construction work is not a material planning consideration and is dealt with under other legislation.

It is not considered that this scheme would set a precedent for similar conversions in the area, but in any case, each proposal would be judged on its own merits.

CONCLUSION

Although the use of the premises as flats is technically contrary to the Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document and Policy CS23 of the Blackpool Local Plan, Part 1 - Core Strategy, the properties either front on to Springfield Road or have not traded in the last five years. These properties contribute little to the character of the Lord Street Main Holiday Accommodation Area and it is very unlikely that all three properties would receive the significant levels of investment required for them to be brought into good quality visitor accommodation.

It is considered that the benefits to the character of the area from the external alterations, and the quality of the flats proposed, outweigh the requirement to retain the hotel accommodation in this location.

LEGAL AGREEMENT AND/OR DEVELOPER FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

Blackpool Local Plan, Part 1 - Core Strategy Policy CS14 confirms that development within the defined inner area would not need to provide affordable housing.

Similarly, contributions towards the provision or improvement of Public Open Space are not required for the conversion of hotel accommodation.

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 content of this report has 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) 16/0563 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 on 31 August 2016 including the following plans:

Location Plan stamped as received by the Council on 31 August 2016.

Drawings numbered B/16/69/03 Rev A, B/16/69/04.

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

3. Prior to the development hereby approved being first brought into use the refuse storage and cycle storage provision shown on the approved plans shall be provided and shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the locality and the residential amenity of occupants and neighbours, and to ensure that the development is accessible by a sustainable mode of transport in accordance with Policies AS1, LQ1 and BH3 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

4. The external brickwork and roof tiles to be used in the external alterations hereby approved shall be the same colour, texture and design as those on the existing buildings, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council as Local Planning Authority before the development commences.

Reason: In the interests of appearance of the locality, in accordance with policies LQ1 and LQ14 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001 - 2016 and Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

5. 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.

6. The dwarf wall shown on the frontage of the premises shall be constructed in brickwork to match the brickwork of the buildings and shall have a stone coping (or coping with the appearance of stone). The existing stone gate posts, other than one which is to be removed, shall be refurbished and retained. The dwarf wall and gate posts shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: In the interests of appearance of the locality, in accordance with Policy LQ1 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

7. The window reveals on the Lord Street and Springfield Road elevations shall be the same depth as the existing properties unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Authority prior to the commencement of development.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the property and the character of the surrounding area, in accordance with policies LQ1 and LQ4 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001 - 2016 and Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan, Part 1 - Core Strategy 2012 - 2027.

8. a) No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include any proposed changes to existing ground levels, areas of soft landscaping, hard surfaced areas and materials, planting plans specifications and schedules (including plant size, species and number/ densities), existing landscaping to be retained, and shall show how account has been taken of any underground services.

b) The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details within the first planting season following completion of the development hereby approved or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing by the

Local Planning Authority (whichever is sooner.)

c) Any trees or shrubs planted in accordance with this condition which are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die, or become severely damaged or seriously diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees or shrubs of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason. To ensure the site is satisfactorily landscaped in the interests of visual amenity and to ensure there are adequate areas of soft landscaping to act as a soakaway during times of heavy rainfall with regards to Policy LQ6 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027.

9. 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.

10. No development shall take place until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Construction Management Plan shall include and specify the provision to be made for the following:

- dust mitigation measures during the construction period
- control of noise emanating from the site during the construction period
- hours and days of construction work for the development
- contractors' compounds and other storage arrangements
- provision for all site operatives, visitors and construction loading, off-loading, parking and turning within the site during the construction period
- arrangements during the construction period to minimise the deposit of mud and other similar debris on the adjacent highways
- the routing of construction traffic.

The construction of the development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved Construction Management Plan.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of surrounding residents and to safeguard the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policies LQ1, BH3 and BH4 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy CS7 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 need 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.