

TWC/2020/0941

Norwood House Hotel, Pave Lane, Newport, Shropshire, TF10 9LQ

Change of use from existing dining/function room (Use class A3) into five bedrooms with communal shower facilities (Use class C1) and replacement windows (part-retrospective)

\*\*\*\*\*amended plans received\*\*\*\*\*

**APPLICANT**

Norwood House Hotel Limited

**RECEIVED**

03/11/2020

**PARISH**

Chetwynd Aston and Woodcote

**WARD**

Church Aston and Lilleshall

**THIS APPLICATION HAS BEEN REFERRED TO PLANNING COMMITTEE BY CLLR ANDREW EADE.**

Online Planning File: <https://secure.telford.gov.uk/planning/pa-applicationsummary.aspx?ApplicationNumber=TWC/2020/0941>

**1.0 SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 It is recommended that DELEGATED AUTHORITY be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to GRANT FULL PLANNING PERMISSION subject to Condition(s) and Informative(s).

**2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The premises is a Local Interest Building and is an existing hotel and restaurant comprising 2½ storeys, with attic rooms and rear and front facing dormer windows. The building dates back to the C18 and is rendered and painted white and has a clay tiled gable roof. The windows vary in style and include casements and sash and bow.
- 2.2 The property is located on the outside corner of the bend of Pave Lane at the junction with Pitchcroft Lane. There is a grassed outside seating area with tables and chairs and there is a large carpark to the side (north) of the property and residential dwellings beyond.
- 2.3 During the Covid19 Pandemic, the hotel has been used as temporary accommodation for a Shropshire Charity to provide relief during the pandemic.

**3.0 APPLICATION DETAILS**

- 3.1 This application seeks full planning permission to convert the existing restaurant section of the hotel into 5no. Additional hotel rooms. The application is part-retrospective as the works to convert this part of the building have already taken place. The application also seeks to replace the 12no existing windows of the property to which the works have not yet been carried out. The additional bedrooms would result in the removal of one of the hotel's dining rooms, however there is still sufficient space on site to provide dining facilities.

3.2 The application has been subject to amended plans and subsequent re-consultation. The amendments follow objections from the Council's Built Heritage specialist, in particular to the erection of external decking and replacement of windows. The decking has now been removed from the proposal and amendments have been received for the replacement windows. Other amendments included the submission of additional information to support the proposal, namely an additional planning statement and management plan. A re-consultation has taken place following these changes.

#### **4.0 RELEVANT HISTORY**

4.1 TWC/2012/0066: Proposed extension, decking area and new entrance to main building \*\*\*\*\*AMENDED PLANS RECEIVED\*\*\*\*\* Full granted.

4.2 W2001/0620: Demolition of existing outbuildings with proposed new kitchen facilities, toilets and dining room. Full granted.

#### **5.0 RELEVANT POLICY DOCUMENTS**

5.1 National Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2 Local Development Plan:

Telford & Wrekin Local Plan 2011-2031:

SP1 Telford

SP4 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

C3 Impact of the development on highways

BE1 Design Criteria

BE6 Buildings of Local Interest

EC12 Leisure, cultural and tourism development

ER11 Flood risk management

ER12 Sewerage systems and water quality

#### **6.0 SUMMARY OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

6.1 Cllr Andrew Eade: Object

- The premises is not being operated as a hotel;
- Proposed alterations to the fabric of the building are inappropriate;
- Car park too small causing overspill onto the highway, internal alterations inappropriate, current use is putting local residents at significant risk of harm;
- Request to Green Card the application to have it considered at Planning Committee.

6.2 Chetwynd Aston & Woodcote Parish Council: Object

- Concerns regarding the heritage of the site
- Access and egress
- Drainage
- Occupancy levels

6.3 Highways: No objection

6.4 Drainage: No comment

6.5 Built Heritage Conservation: Support subject to conditions

- Initially objections were made regarding the proposed French doors, balustrade, decking and roller awning; removal of windows from the west elevation. Amendments have now been received to remove these elements from the proposal.
- No objection from a built heritage perspective to the principle of the change from hotel restaurant to rooms, but any replacement windows associated with the change should preserve or enhance the character of the building by reproducing historic; window forms and materials.
- Conditions are required for joinery to improve the design of the windows put forward:
- Development shall not take place until the elevation drawings have been amended to show flush fitting casement windows and until they have been approved in writing.
- Development shall not take place until plans showing a specification for the windows has been submitted and approved in writing.

6.6 Shropshire Fire: Comment: Propose Fire Safety Informative

6.7 Shropshire Council: No comment.

## 7.0 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION RESPONSES

7.1 Public Representations:

Six neighbouring properties have been formally consulted on the proposal and the Local Planning Authority have received 42 letters of objection over three consultation periods in response. The contents of all comments are available in full on the planning file, but key points have been summarised as follows:

- Noise and disturbance from residents of the hotel
- Lack of parking to support further rooms
- Replacement windows resulting in lack of privacy to neighbouring properties
- Lack of en-suite facilities for the proposed rooms
- No local facilities to support expansion of the hotel – the area is not sustainable
- Unsuitability of rooms due to Covid19 pandemic
- The alterations proposed to the building would be out of keeping with the character of the area
- Residents of the hotel trespassing on private property

- Anti-social behaviour

## **8.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 Having regard to the Development Plan and other material considerations including comments received during the consultation process, the planning application raises the following main issues:

- Principle of Development
- Design & Heritage Considerations
- Neighbouring Amenity
- Response to consultation comments

### **8.2 Principle of Development**

8.2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act (2004) states that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

8.2.2 This application is a full planning application to convert a restaurant within an existing hotel into 5no further rooms. The rooms have been described as 'budget' hotel rooms and have shared bathroom facilities. The rooms would result in the loss of existing dining room space at the hotel, however other dining rooms are available to support guests.

8.2.3 In terms of the principle of development, the hotel is already in existence and the proposed rooms would be an addition to the existing facilities. The site does fall within the rural area where new development is strictly controlled, however for tourism purposes the rural area is considered to be appropriate as it has facilities nearby to support the business, associated with tourism. The hotel is therefore already an established business and the principle of extending the accommodation at the hotel is therefore considered acceptable.

8.2.4 Some concern has been raised through the consultation period with regards to the location of the site within the rural area and that it would be isolated and unsustainable. The LPA acknowledge that the site is situated away from the settlement of Newport and shops and facilities are some distance away, however for tourism purposes, the site is considered to be appropriate within the rural area where activities associated with tourism are typically expected. As the site is already an established business and the proposal would just be an addition to the existing facilities, the scheme is considered to be acceptable on balance.

8.2.5 Concerns have been raised during the consultation period regarding the current occupiers of the hotel, as the hotel is currently being used to as temporary accommodation to house vulnerable individuals from a Shropshire Charity during the Covid19 Pandemic. A request was made by the Government for hotels and similar facilities to assist with housing vulnerable people during the pandemic and as a result the hotel has been operating in this way for some time. A letter from an MP has been provided with the application to evidence this.

- 8.2.6 The current use of the facility could be linked to being a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) or a hostel. This temporary change to the facility could be carried out without the need for any formal planning permission due to the circumstances, however this is on the basis that the hotel returns to its previous operation following the pandemic. The Applicant is applying to retain the rooms which have been converted prior to applying for planning permission, for use in the hotel following the pandemic; they are not seeking to change the use permanently to a HMO or a hostel. The LPA are therefore considering the proposed additional rooms to the hotel only, and not the suitability of the site as a temporary form of accommodation.
- 8.2.7 With regards to the comments raised in respect of the status of the rooms and the lack of en-suite facilities, there is no guidance in planning legislation to prevent the use of shared facilities within hotels and it is common for hotels to provide shared bathroom facilities. In addition, the concerns extend to the layout of the rooms as they do not have windows, and instead only provide sun tubes in the ceiling for light. The LPA has also liaised with the Council's Building Control team regarding these elements and have been advised that the rooms have approval under building regulations as sufficient ventilation has been installed, and are considered to be acceptable. The LPA have therefore raised no objection in this respect.
- 8.2.8 In order to mitigate some concerns, the Applicant has put forward a management plan which outlines the operations of the hotel and confirms it is for paying guests only, who have access to all of the hotel's facilities. The LPA propose to include, firstly a condition which ensures the hotel is operated in accordance with the submitted management plan, but also a further condition requesting additional information in respect of temporary accommodation scenarios such as the one the hotel currently finds itself. For instance if an MP was to call upon the hotel again for assistance to house people on a temporary basis for an emergency situation such as Covid19, the LPA would seek further assurances that the Applicant would operate the building whilst ensuring minimal impact and disruption to nearby residents and the community. The Applicant will be required to submit the information in the form of an action plan within 3 months of the date of approval, if permission is granted. The LPA would also propose to include a condition which stipulates that one individual shall only reside at the hotel for a period of 28 days at one time and the hotel will be required to keep a log book of all guests which could be inspected at any time.
- 8.2.9 As a result of the above conclusions, it is considered the principle of extending the number of hotel rooms is acceptable as it would provide additional facilities to the hotel. The scheme would result in the loss of the restaurant, however the hotel can still provide dining facilities to guests as another dining room would remain. As the scheme would therefore not result in the loss of any facilities, the scheme is compliant with policies in the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan (TWLP).

### 8.3 Design & Heritage Considerations

8.3.0 Policy BE1 of the TWLP advises that development should respect and respond positively to its setting, and should enhance the built and natural environment. Policy BE6 advises that the Council will not support development on Local Interest buildings which would have adverse impacts upon the character of the building, would impact upon the form and fabric of the building or where development would affect its setting. The Council's Conservation Officer has confirmed that the amendments to remove French doors, balustrade, decking and roller awning has improved the scheme and it can now be supported in principle.

8.3.1 The revised scheme proposes the replacement of 12no. Windows on the property as the current windows have fallen into disrepair. The replacement windows would be timber and would be like for like replacements. After much discussion, the Council's Conservation Officer has confirmed they have no objection in principle to the replacements of the windows, and have requested appropriate conditions so that further information and detail of the windows will be submitted prior to works on the windows taking place.

8.3.2 Overall, as the Conservation Officer has raised no objection subject to the submission of additional information by condition, the LPA can accept the replacement windows and it is considered their replacement would have no significant adverse harm upon the character of the building or its setting. The scheme is therefore considered to be compliant with Policies BE1 and BE6 of the TWLP.

### 8.4 Neighbouring Amenity

8.4.1 Telford & Wrekin Plan Policy BE1 states that new developments should not prejudice existing surrounding uses.

8.4.2 The proposal is for additional hotel rooms, which in terms of neighbour amenity would cause no significant detrimental impacts of loss of light, loss of privacy or overbearing as there is no built development associated with it and the only changes are internally. In respect of the replacement windows and their placement within the property, the position of the windows would not change and the windows would be replaced to improve their functionality and external appearance. The windows would also be replaced on a like-for-like basis in terms of scale. As a result it is considered no harm would occur from the replacement of the existing windows.

8.4.3 After conducting a full assessment of the scheme, the LPA consider that despite the comments raised within the consultation period regarding loss of privacy, the scheme would have no significant detrimental impacts upon neighbouring residents. It is acknowledged that residents nearby have experienced impacts from anti-social behaviour as a result of the temporary operation of the hotel, however the application is for additional hotel rooms and the LPA can only assess the impacts of the scheme put forward rather than the temporary operations that have taken place.

## 8.5 Response to consultation comments

- 8.5.1 With regards to the concerns raised about parking and the lack of suitable parking to serve the additional rooms, the LPA has consulted with the Council's Highways Officer who has raised no objection to the scheme. The spaces required for the restaurant facility which is to be removed as part of the proposal would balance out the parking spaces required for the 5no new rooms and therefore the impact would be unchanged as a result of the proposal.
- 8.5.2 Concerns have also been raised regarding drainage in the area, in particular concern that the existing drainage system would be worsened as a result of the proposal. The Council's Drainage Officer has been consulted on the proposal and has raised no objection as the building is existing and the scheme would not increase the foul or surface water provision required to drain the site.
- 8.5.3 A number of concerns have been raised which are not considered to be material planning considerations, namely: anti-social behaviour, noise, disturbance, trespassing on private property and the impact of Covid19. Whilst the anti-social behaviour, noise and disturbance have been acknowledged earlier in this report, all of the elements listed cannot be taken into account as part of the planning application process and would be civil matters between the Applicant and local residents to resolve. With regards to the impact of Covid19 due to the mixing of individuals and shared facilities, this is not a reason to refuse planning permission as it would be the responsibility of the Applicants to ensure Covid19 safe measures can be put in place.
- 8.5.4 Based on the above conclusions, it is considered the comments raised during the consultation have been addressed in detail and the concerns mitigated where required.

## 9.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 On balance, the application to convert the restaurant of an existing hotel into 5no additional hotel rooms, and to change 12no windows is considered to be acceptable. The site is an established business and the proposal would extend the existing provision and is considered to be an appropriate change. The change of windows is acceptable subject to conditions and would not harm the character of the building. No significant detrimental impacts would occur upon neighbouring residents as a result and the comments raised by neighbouring properties have been addressed. As a result, the proposal is considered to comply with policies of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan and is in accordance with national policies contained within the NPPF.

## 10.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 Based on the conclusions above, the recommendation to the Planning Committee on this application is that **DELEGATED AUTHORITY** be granted to the Development Management Service Delivery Manager to **GRANT FULL PLANNING PERMISSION** subject to the following Condition(s):

A04: Time Limit

B019: Window specifications

B029custom: Notwithstanding the approved plans, revised elevation plans to be submitted prior to window works being carried out

C119custom: Action Plan to be submitted within 3 months of approval

C119custom: Works in accordance with the management plan

Restriction in occupation – 28 days

C38: Works in accordance with the approved plans

Informatives:

I32 Fire Authority

I40 Conditions

I41 Reasons for grant of full permission

RANPPF1