

Committee Date: 10th January 2013

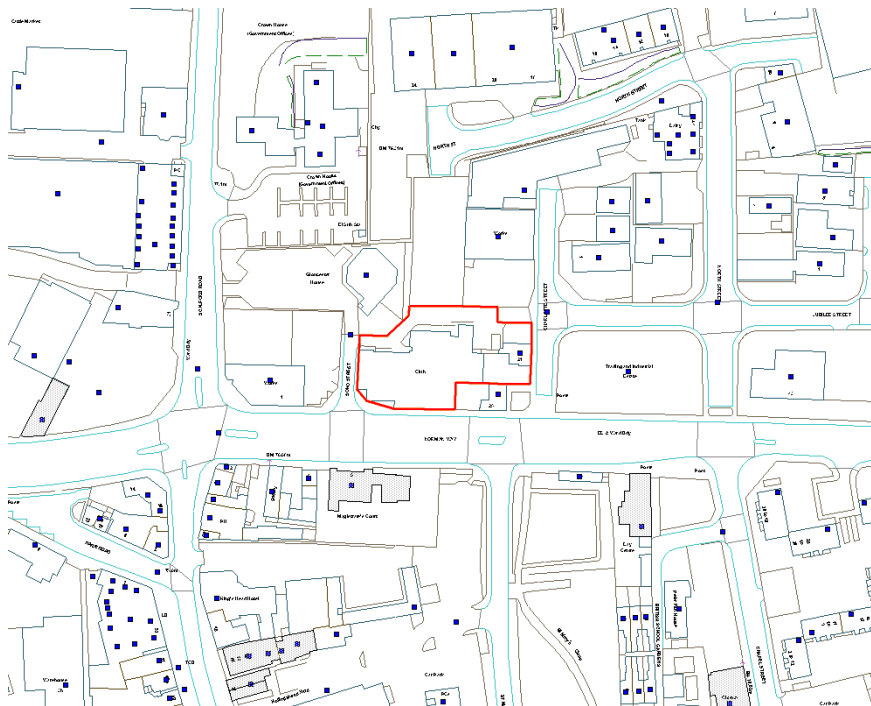
Reference: 12/00722/FUL

Date submitted: 16.10.12

Applicant: Mr J Hinton - Hinton Properties (Midland) Limited

Location: Former Working Mens Club, Norman Way, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1JE

Proposal: Proposed demolition of existing Working Mens club including detached house and construction of 50 bedroom hotel on land off Norman way Melton Mowbray.



Proposal :-

This application seeks consent to demolish the former Working Men's Club and managers dwelling and replace with a 50 bed hotel development. The site sits within the town fronting Norman Way, which separates this site from the town centre making this site an edge of town centre location. The area is predominantly made up of commercial uses with some community uses close by. Council owned residential flats are to the east of the site on the opposite side of Norman Way.

Application to be considered by Committee as it is a major planning application.

It is considered that the main issues relating to this proposal are:-

- **Compliance with the development plan policies**
- **Impact upon the character of the area**

Relevant History:-

No relevant planning histories

Planning Policies:-**Melton Local Plan (saved policies):**

Policies OS1 and BE1 allow for development within Town Envelopes providing that:-

- the form, character and appearance of the settlement is not adversely affected;
- the form, size, scale, mass, materials and architectural detailing of the development is in keeping with its locality;
- the development would not cause undue loss of residential privacy, outlook and amenities as enjoyed by occupants of existing dwellings in the vicinity; and,
- satisfactory access and parking provision can be made available.

Local Development Framework Publication Core Strategy Seeks to support developments located in the town centre that attract a large number of people, especially retail, leisure and office uses to promote the towns vitality and viability, social inclusion and promote more sustainable patterns of development. More activity will increase the appeal of the town centre. Many people can travel to the town centre by public transport, walking or cycling, so that they do not need to use their cars as much; and increased competition will benefit visitors.

The East Midlands Regional Plan - contains advice on regional priorities for tourism. Tourism is a growth industry desirable not only for the economic benefits obtained but also important in improving the quality of life in the region. Day visitors provide economic benefits but also mean that the environmental impact is proportionately large due to additional car traffic. Increasing the portion of visitors who stay overnight is therefore a regional priority. The plan seeks to encourage provisions for additional tourist facilities, including accommodation, close to popular destinations that have adequate environmental and infrastructure capacity, particularly those within walking and cycling distance.

The National Planning Policy Framework was published 27th March and replaced the previous collection of PPS. It introduces a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ meaning:

- approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
 - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

The NPPF offers direction on the relative weight of the content in comparison to existing Local Plan policy and advises that whilst the NPPF does not automatically render older policies obsolete, where they are in conflict the NPPF should prevail. It also offers advice on the weight to be given to ‘emerging’ policy (i.e the LDF) depending on its stage of preparation, extent of unresolved (disputed) issues and compatibility with the NPPF.

It also establishes 12 core planning principles against which proposals should be judged. Relevant to this application are those to:

- **Support sustainable economic development.**
- **Promote mixed use development, encouraging multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas.**
- **Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable**
- **Take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.**

On Specific issues relevant to this application it advises:

Building a Strong Competitive Economy

- Planning should encourage growth, not prevent it and should plan proactively to encourage economic growth.
- Significant weight should be given to the need to support economic growth.

Ensuring the vitality of Town Centres

- Allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres.
- Allocate appropriate edge of centre sites for main town centre uses that are well connected to the town centre where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available.
- When assessing proposals for retail, leisure and office development outside of the town centres which are not in accordance with an up to date Local Plan a sequential test and impact assessment shall be required (subject to scale exceeding 2500m²).

Promoting Sustainable Transport:

- Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people.
- Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of the development are severe.

Promoting Healthy Communities:

- Plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

Require Good Design

- Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
- Securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetics considerations and should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

This National Planning Policy Framework does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. 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. (NPPF para. 12)

“Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism” – provides guidance on the role of planning in tourism development. It also underlines the importance of protecting and enhancing the visual quality of sites to ensure the development fits in well with its environs. Annex 1 addresses accommodation and advises:

- Planners should carefully weigh the objective of providing adequate facilities and sites with the need to protect landscapes and environmentally sensitive sites.

- New sites that are close to existing settlements and other services will generally be more sustainable as some local services may be accessed by means other than by car.

Consultations:-

Consultation reply	Assessment of Head of Regulatory Services
<p>Highways Authority: No objection subject to conditions relating to the drop off point, parking and turning, drainage and surfacing.</p>	<p>The hotel development will be set back from the road frontage to allow for disabled parking and drop off facilities. Railings are proposed along the frontage of the disabled spaces to prevent over hanging of the pavement. Access into the site will be from Soho Street which also serves B & H Printers and Gloucester House community facility. The parking to the rear will be retained providing 30 spaces with access gained from North Street to the rear of the site. The existing access from Jubilee street will be retained for delivery vehicles only.</p> <p>The application was supported with a Travel Plan which seeks to promote sustainable transport modes. The site is in close proximity to the town centre where there is a choice of other modes of transport and car parking facilities.</p> <p>No objection has been received from the Highways Authority. The development will provide overnight accommodation with no conference or leisure facilities. It is expected that most guests will arrive out of office hours and therefore the traffic generated is not considered have a detrimental impact upon highway safety through coming and goings to the site.</p>
<p>Conservation Officer: No objections</p> <p>This is a relatively prominent roadside site on a major through route around the town centre. Norman Way is primarily lined by relatively modern buildings, including the WMC that currently occupies the site, but there are a group of traditional buildings including the grade II listed former Magistrates Court directly opposite.</p> <p>The demolition of the WMC presents an opportunity to erect a quality building on the site and in honesty the original proposal was of fairly standard hotel design. However further to our discussions on the design issues etc improvements to both its styling and choice of materials etc have been secured and resulted in an improvement to the appearance.</p> <p>In that regard the amended proposal will have no worse an effect on the setting of the listed building opposite nor the conservation area than the existing building, in fact to a degree it represents an improvement to the street scene.</p>	<p>The building is situated on the outskirts of the designated Conservation Area but on a prominent roadside frontage within the town. The setting of the Conservation Area is a material consideration.</p> <p>The hotel would consist of three floors with a hipped pitch roof giving an overall height of 14 metres. The proposal has been amended so that the principle elevation will have a projecting gable which has enhanced the entrance into the hotel with the breakfast area being located on the corner to provide natural surveillance and add interest along the street frontage. An additional gable is also featured which has a slight projection but will have a hipped roof to allow for slightly bigger twin rooms to be provided. The arrangement of windows gives a coherent appearance and it is proposed to recess the facing brickwork to the windows to add dimension. It is proposed to construct the building from brick and render, whilst orange brick has been proposed a condition is required to provide samples to ensure that the materials reflect the character of the area.</p>

	<p>The existing building has little architectural merit and sits along the back edge of the highway with no significant contribution to public amenity. Through siting the building further back, the streetscene would be improved through the introduction of a public amenity area which is to be landscaped, with shrubs and small trees. Connectivity to the town has been provided through including a pedestrian link from the hotel to Norman Way, benefiting from the pedestrian crossing over Norman Way.</p> <p>The NPPF seeks to promote a ‘sense of place’ (chapter 7) The building will be visible and will be recognisable to its function as a hotel. The neighbouring buildings are of single storey industrial units occupied by various commercial uses. It is considered that the design is appropriate to the hotel development and offers some improvement to the streetscene. The proposal is considered to comply with the local plan policies OS1 and BE1 and will not have a detrimental impact upon the character of the area.</p>
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Representations:

A site notice was posted and the immediately neighbouring properties consulted by letter as a result four letters of representation has been received. Three are supporting the application whilst one is making comment on the design. The matters raised are summarised below

Representation	Assessment of Head of Regulatory Services
<p>Melton Mowbray Chamber of Commerce:</p> <p>Fully supports the proposed application for the provision of a town centre accommodation provider.</p> <p>The Chamber has long had concerns regarding lack of hotel facilities in the central location of Melton, particularly a hotel which would be used for commercial accommodation and a local facility for tourists who only require a convenient base for a short time.</p> <p>We would not see this business conflicting with other hotels on the outskirts of Melton Mowbray but complimentary to the needs to a town which is on the brink of expansion promoting the ‘Food Capital of England’ and other specific interests.</p>	<p>The East Midlands Regional Plan - contains advice on regional priorities for tourism. Tourism is a growth industry desirable not only for the economic benefits obtained but also important in improving the quality of life in the region. Day visitors provide economic benefits but also mean that the environmental impact is proportionately large due to additional car traffic. Increasing the portion of visitors who stay overnight is therefore a regional priority.</p> <p>The plan seeks to encourage provisions for additional tourist facilities, including accommodation, close to popular destinations that have adequate environmental and infrastructure capacity, particularly those within walking and cycling distance.</p>
<p>Support –</p> <p>A welcome addition to the Town which will also improve the general appearance of Norman Way.</p> <p>The setting back of the building and landscaping will improve the area.</p>	<p>See above. Conservation Officer comments.</p>

<p>The design is an improvement on the existing building</p> <p>The site will appear more open improving the relationship with B & H Printers</p>	
<p>Melton Mowbray Civic Society -</p> <p>The Society welcomes the application for a hotel close to the centre of the town. However, the elevations of the proposed development seem to be inappropriate for the location near the centre of town. Melton Mowbray is a market town with an interesting history and any new building should try to enhance a 'sense of place' as discussed in the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>	<p>Since receiving the comments the design of the front elevation and roof have been amended. No further comments have been received on these amended plans.</p>

Other material considerations (not raised through consultation or representation)

Considerations	Assessment of Head of Regulatory Services
<p>Sustainable Development:</p> <p>The Governments primary objective is to promote Sustainable Development introducing three elements consisting of social, environment and economic.</p>	<p>It is considered that the proposal meets these requirements. The East Midlands Regional Plan seeks to ensure that there are sufficient accommodation facilities with in the area to allow for over night stays. This will help to reduce the impact on the environment; objectives of the 'Framework' and will help to boost the economy as generally visitors that stay longer spend more. The borough of Melton would benefit from this type of facility which gives the visitor greater flexibility.</p> <p>It is considered that a Hotel would be appropriate in this edge of centre location and would meet the objective to promote sustainable development.</p> <p>The Railway station is located approximately 600 metres to the north of the site and is on the Birmingham to Stanstead Airport Central Trains Line. The bus interchange is located along Windsor Street and St Mary's Way where buses connecting Melton to Leicester, Nottingham, Grantham, Oakham operate.</p>
<p>Vitality and Viability of the Town Centre:</p> <p>For Melton in particular, opportunities exist within the food and drink sector and related supply chain. Tourism links directly with food and drink and that part of the food and drink experience that makes up and contributes to the overall 'Visitor Journey' experienced by day and staying visitors visiting Melton and the wider Leicester and Leicestershire destination. Event development and promotion as demonstrated by the highly successful East</p>	<p>The redevelopment of the site for a Hotel will ensure the continual vitality of the town centre by encouraging visitors to stay over night and providing a needed facility. It has been identified that Melton has a shortfall of bed space and the proposal would support the Town Centre Master Plan objectives.</p> <p>The proposal includes a small restaurant area to provide a buffet breakfast only along with vending machines which are to be located in the lobby.</p>

<p>Midlands Food Festival is also an important constituent of the visitor offer in and around Melton, together with heritage and family experiences associated with Belvoir Castle and Twinlakes. Currently, there is a need to convert more day visitors to staying visitors within the destination, including within Melton Mowbray and district.</p>	<p>There is potential for the restaurants and bars located in the town centre to benefit from this development supporting the evening economy, whilst providing job opportunities with the day to day running of the facility.</p>
<p>Sequential Test The NPPF (para 24) requires Local Planning Authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. They should require applications for main town centre uses to be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre.</p>	<p>The application has been accompanied by a sequential test that looked into possible alternative sites within the town centre of with equivalent linkages to it. The result of this exercise was As follows: Site 1 – The Bell Centre – site too small and unavailable; little scope for expansion Site 2 – The Mall - redevelopment for a hotel unviable due to need to relocate existing businesses. Site 3 – Brooksby College – extensive costs associated with relocating the college Site 4 – Burton Street – available part of the site (the gap facing Burton St) too small for the development. Site 5 – Chapel Street Car Park – site not available.</p> <p>These details have been reviewed and it is considered that they are effective in negating the sites as potential alternatives. The Council is not aware of further sites that could accommodate the development which are equal or superior to the application site (in terms of proximity and accessibility to the town centre) and as such the assessment is considered adequate.</p>
<p>Compliance (or otherwise) with Planning Policy</p>	<p>As stated above, the development is considered to accord with the applicable Local Plan polices except in the interpretation of ‘small scale’. In this instance, the policies are not considered to be complemented by the NPPF The NPPF is considered to introduce a significant re-emphasis of national policy in terms of its encouragement for economic growth and the application of the sequential test, neither of which are present within the Local Plan. The NPPF advises that “significant weight” should be assigned and as such it is considered to weigh substantially in favour of the proposal.</p>

Conclusion

The proposal seeks to apply for full planning permission for a 50 bedroom hotel development on the edge of town centre. The location has policy support and the proposal is considered to comply with the objectives of the Local Development Framework, regional and national planning policies in terms of generating tourist accommodation. The objectives of NPPF to promote sustainable patterns of development are achievable given that there are good public transport links in the form of bus and train services. Accordingly the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:- Permit subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the plan drawing nos. 146.09 Rev A, 146.05 Rev G, 146.04 Rev E, 146.03 Rev D and 146.11 Rev B submitted on the 30th November 2012.
3. No development shall start on site until representative samples of the materials to be used in the construction of all external surfaces have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
4. The gradients of the vehicular accesses serving the site shall not exceed 1:12 for the first 5 metres behind the highway boundary.
5. Before first use of the development hereby permitted, drainage shall be provided within the site such that surface water does not drain into the Public Highway and thereafter shall be so maintained.
6. For the period of the construction, the applicant shall take measures to ensure that the highway is kept free of mud, water, stones etc, in accordance with details that shall have first been approved in writing by the LPA in consultation with the Highway Authority.
7. For the period of the construction of the development, vehicle parking facilities shall be provided within the site and all vehicles associated with the development shall be parked within the site.
8. The car parking and turning facilities shown within the curtilage of the site shall be provided, hard surfaced, marked out and made available for use before the development is first brought into use and shall thereafter be permanently so maintained.
9. Before the development is first brought into use, Soho Street shall have been widened as shown on the submitted plan, in accordance with Highway Authority standards.
10. Notwithstanding the details submitted, minimum visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 7 metres to the right and 20 metres to the left shall be provided out of the proposed access on to Soho Street. These splays shall be cleared of any obstruction that exceeds a height of 600mm above the level of the adjacent carriageway before the access is first brought into use and shall thereafter be permanently so maintained.
11. Before the development hereby permitted is first used, the proposed cycle parking provision shall be made to the satisfaction of the LPA and once provided shall be maintained and kept available for use in perpetuity.
12. Before first use of the development hereby permitted the proposed access to the car park to the rear of the site shall have been provided and have been surfaced with tarmacadam, concrete or similar hard bound material (not loose aggregate) for a distance of at least 10 metres behind the highway boundary and shall be so maintained at all times.
13. Notwithstanding the details submitted, no planting shall overhang the public highway, but shall at all times be kept trimmed so that it has a minimum clearance of 500mm from the edge of the highway boundary.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety

The reasons for the conditions are:-

1. To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2. For the avoidance of doubt.
2. To ensure a satisfactory standard of external appearance.
3. In the general interests of highway safety.
4. To reduce the possibility of surface water from the site being deposited in the highway causing dangers to road users
5. To reduce the possibility of deleterious material (mud, stones etc) being deposited in the highway and becoming a hazard for road users.
6. To ensure that adequate off-street parking provision is made to reduce the possibilities of development of the site leading to on-street parking problems in the area during construction.
7. To ensure that adequate off-street parking provision is made to reduce the possibilities of the proposed development leading to on-street parking problems in the area.
8. In the interests of highway safety.
9. In the interests of highway safety.
10. In the interests of the sustainability of the development and to encourage alternative transport choice.
11. To reduce the possibility of deleterious material being deposited in the highway (loose stones etc.)
12. In the general interests of highway safety and in particular pedestrian safety.

Officer to contact : Mrs D Knipe

Date: 19th December 2012