

Reference: 06/15/00769/F

Parish: Great Yarmouth
Officer: Miss G Manthorpe
Expiry Date: 22/03/16

Applicant: Mr C Abbott

Proposal: Full planning application for the conversion of floors 4,5 and 6 into 18 self-contained flats.

Site: 32 Marine Parade, Atlantis Complex, Great Yarmouth.

REPORT

1. Background / History :-

- 1.1 The site comprises 1896 square metres over three floors of former hotel located on the western side of Marine Parade. The first, second and third floor are to remain in commercial uses and do not form part of this application. The seventh floor is not part of the application and as such shall not be assessed.
- 1.2 The hotel has not operated, according to the information provided, since 2000. There has been a feasibility statement provided within the design and access statement outlining the cost and viability of re-opening the site for holiday accommodation.
- 1.3 There have been numerous applications on the site, in excess of 50, although the relevance to this application is limited. A full list is available online or on the paper file. The most relevant historical application to the current application is 06/02/0569/F which was approved 28th February 2003. The application was for the refurbishment of the hotel, change of use of disco to casino, first floor balcony extension, restaurant, catering facilities/retail and general refurbishment of the building.

2 Consultations :-

- 2.1 Highways – No objection following additional information provided.
- 2.2 British Pipeline Agency – Not in a zone of interest.

2.3 Neighbours – no comments received.

2.4 Conservation Officer – This proposal has no consequence in terms of environmental character or quality. Perhaps some consideration to gains being made with regards the rear ramp.

2.5 Building Control – no adverse comments.

2.6 Environmental Health – No comments received

2.7 Strategic Planning – No comments received.

3 Policy :-

3.1 Local Policy - Saved Great Yarmouth Borough-Wide Local Plan Policies (2001):

3.2 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The closer the Local Plan is to the policies in the NPPF the greater the weight that is given to the Local Plan policy. The Great Yarmouth Borough Wide Local Plan was adopted in 2001 and the most relevant policies were 'saved' in 2007.

3.3 The Saved Policies listed have all been assessed as being in general conformity with the NPPF, and add further information to the policies in the NPPF, while not contradicting it. These policies hold the greatest weight in the determining of planning applications.

3.4 HOU16: A high standard of layout and design will be required for all housing proposal. A site survey and landscaping scheme will be required will all detailed applications for more than 10 dwellings. These should include measures to retain and safeguard significant existing landscape features and give details of, existing and proposed site levels planting and aftercare arrangements.

3.5 HOU17: requires housing developments to have regard to the density of the surrounding area.

3.6 BNV10: New development in or adjacent to a conservation area will be required to be sympathetic to the character or appearance of the area in terms of scale, height form, massing, materials, siting and design.

(Objective: To retain and enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas)

- 3.7 TR4: Proposals to change the use of tourist facilities attractions or accommodation to purposes which are not tourist related will not be permitted where the site or premises are within primary holiday accommodation and primary holiday attraction areas, as shown on the proposals map. In secondary holiday accommodation areas, as shown on the proposals may, policy TR12 will apply.
- 3.8 TCM18 – Within Gorleston and Great Yarmouth Town Centres ,Great Yarmouth Seafront, Hemsby commercial centre and Caister High Street, where non-operational car parking cannot be provided to serve a development proposal in accordance with the Councils standards, or the standards are not waived in respect of an application for a change of use on a town centre site, in lieu of such provision, the Council may require developers to pay a commuted sum which will be used for provisions of public car parking or improvements to public transport facilities.

4 National Policy:- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.1 The presumption in favour of sustainable development is set out under paragraph 4.
- 4.2 Paragraph 49: Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- 4.3 Paragraph 50 states that to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should:
- Plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes);
 - identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand; and
 - where they have identified that affordable housing is needed, set policies for meeting this need on site, unless off-site provision or a financial contribution of broadly equivalent value can be robustly justified (for example to improve or

make more effective use of the existing housing stock) and the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.

4.4 Paragraph 63 states that: 'in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area'. Paragraph 64 states that '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.

4.5 Paragraph 17. Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These 12 principles are that planning should:

- encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value;

4.6 Paragraph 111. Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value. Local planning authorities may continue to consider the case for setting a locally appropriate target for the use of brownfield land.

4.7 Paragraph 173. Pursuing sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision-taking. Plans should be deliverable. Therefore, the sites and the scale of development identified in the plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens that their ability to be developed viably is threatened. To ensure viability, the costs of any requirements likely to be applied to development, such as requirements for affordable housing, standards, infrastructure contributions or other requirements should, when taking account of the normal cost of development and mitigation, provide competitive returns to a willing land owner and willing developer to enable the development to be deliverable.

5 Core strategy – Adopted 21st December 2015

5.1 Policy CS2: Achieving sustainable growth. This policy identifies the broad areas for growth, sets out the sustainable settlement hierarchy for the borough and two key allocations.

5.2 Policy CS4: Delivering affordable housing. This policy sets out the thresholds for the provision of affordable housing. The site is within affordable housing sub-

market area 3 Great Yarmouth Town Centre with a threshold of 15 dwellings providing 10% affordable housing.

- 5.3 Policy CS8: As one of the top coastal tourist destinations in the UK, the successfulness of tourism in the Borough of Great Yarmouth not only benefits the local economy but the wider sub-regional economy as well. To ensure the tourism sector remains strong, the Council and its partners will:

b) Safeguard the existing stock of visitor holiday accommodation especially those within designated holiday accommodation areas, unless it can be demonstrated that the current use is not viable or that the loss of some bed spaces will improve the standard of the existing accommodation

(note only b of a-o is shown)

- 5.4 Policy CS9: Encouraging well designed and distinctive places. This policy applies to all new development.

6 Assessment :-

- 6.1 The application, is for the conversion of three floors of a disused hotel to 18 no. residential flats. The Atlantis complex comprises three floors of commercial use including amusement arcade, food sales and drinking establishments. Planning permission was granted in 2003 for a refurbishment which included external improvements to the appearance.
- 6.2 The Atlantis Complex is a prominent feature on Great Yarmouth's seafront and is a focal central point located opposite the Marina Centre. The 2003 refurbishment updated the eastern elevation and provides a frontage which is in keeping with the tourism and commercial use of the area. The site is located within a conservation area.
- 6.3 The proposal involves the removal of the balcony's which currently serve the hotel rooms to the north and southern elevation. The existing windows will be replaced to the north, south and western elevation in white UPVC. The change of windows and alterations to the appearance will enhance the external appearance as the current elevations are tired and worn and do not add to the conservation area. The conservation officer has noted that the rear of the building, western elevation, could benefit from works to remove the ramp and improve the appearance of this elevation. Although any improvement would be beneficial given the character of the area to the rear of the building improvements are not deemed intrinsically linked to the approval of the application. It is further noted that any alterations to the rear access would require a fresh application and may,

depending on what is deemed possible, impact on the commercial and tourism uses.

- 6.4 The internal configuration will be altered to accommodate the proposed new residential dwellings. Each floor will comprise 2 no. 1 bed dwellings, 3 no. 2 bed dwellings and 1 no. large 2 bed dwelling. The difference in size and bedrooms provides for a mix of units seeking to meet different needs for housing. The seventh floor will be mothballed until, according to the submitted details, there are funds available.
- 6.5 The site is located within an area designated as prime commercial holiday and as such tourism policies apply to the application. Policy TR4 states that development shall not be permitted for the change of use within prime holiday areas to uses that are not tourism. Policy CS8 of the Core Strategy, while not superseding TR4 allows for changes of use to occur if they are not viable. The viability appraisal within the design and access statement seeks to show that the use is no longer viable and details the demand for bed spaces and the current availability. While accounts have not been provided to demonstrate the viability at the time of closing it is accepted that major upgrade would be required and that the hotel use has been closed for several years.
- 6.6 The proposal retains the holiday uses at the lower levels which is mitigation against the loss of the holiday accommodation. It is noted that the applicants agent states that there is no loss of accommodation as the hotel has not operated in several years however this is not compelling in isolation. The loss of holiday accommodation, while resisted, can be looked at in terms of CS4 and it is accepted that the accommodation available has changed over the years. Marine Parade, unlike other accommodation areas, is a mixed use area with commercial tourist uses at street level for the majority of the golden mile. Other properties have first and second floor tourist and commercial uses such as Mission nightclub however there are a notable number of properties which are commercial on the ground floor and residential on the upper floors.
- 6.7 The viability assessment that has been submitted covers the changing nature of accommodation and character of the area. Given the size of the building and the length of time that the hotel use has been inactive it is accepted that the use in this would not be demonstrably harmful to the character of the tourism area. The use of the lower floors would not be acceptable as residential as this would have a significantly detrimental effect on the viability and vitality of the area.
- 6.8 Sufficient parking is being provided for the development. It is noted by the Highways Officer that the site is in a sustainable location with good links to public transport however given the number of dwellings proposed it is likely that there would be a displacement of parking were spaces not provided.

- 6.9 The Core Strategy policy CS2 identifies Great Yarmouth as a Main Town where approximately 35% of all new residential development should be located as it is a sustainable location. Policy CS4 requires 10% affordable housing for new residential development over 15 dwellings within this area.

7 RECOMMENDATION :-

- 7.1 It is accepted that the conversion of the hotel to residential use is contrary to policy TR4 of the Borough Wide Local Plan however provision is made within the Core Strategy to change the use of existing holiday or commercial uses if they are not viable. The closure and disrepair of the building and the cessation of the holiday use is not alone in proving a lack of viability however this, coupled with the distinct character and size of this building adds weight to the argument and compliance with CS8.
- 7.2 It is recommended that the application be approved as, on individual merits, the loss of the holiday accommodation would not have a significant adverse effect on the existing holiday accommodation or commercial uses and would provide housing in a sustainable location. Any application should be subject to all conditions appropriate to secure a satisfactory form of development. Should members be minded to approve the application it is recommended that the permission not be issued until the section 106 agreement securing the affordable housing provision has been agreed and signed.