

Scheme assessment



1 | 5 | 2021

Conversion of holiday lets of existing garage and out-building

The Cross Keys Main Road Henley Ipswich

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Document	Scheme Assessment
Reference	2554/sec
Client	Mr C. Burnard
Project	Conversion to Holiday Lets and Tourist Facilities
Site Location	Cross Keys Henley Ipswich
Site Area	2080 sqm
National Grid	

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Date	Revision	Status	Prepared	Checked
1.5.2021	-	ISSUE	AP	



The application proposes to convert a section of the ground floor of the Cross Keys public house and an associated out-building to a residential use as two holiday lets. In addition, and in support of further tourist proposals outside the scope of this Application, supplementary tourist facilities are proposed.

Only minor construction works are required to convert and extend that portion of the main building proposed for conversion with the out-building needing a small extension. Given the limited extent of the proposed works this Assessment is submitted in place of a formal Design and Access Statement which, it is considered, is not required in this case.

The Application site is northern section of the greater curtilage of the Cross Keys public house in an area identified as Bells Cross. The site is on the corner formed by the junction of Main Road and Clay Lane. The character of the area is rural. The larger southern section of the pub curtilage contains a large open and currently unused area.

The greater site has well-defined boundaries as follows. The western boundary is the adopted carriageway of Main Road further defined by a low hedge-line and to the east is a landscaped boundary comprising hedging and small trees with fields beyond. The northern boundary is the carriageway of Clay Lane with the southern boundary being a well-landscaped and screened division to open country.

The site is entirely flat and level.

In the northern section – the Application site – is the building currently the Cross Keys together with a separate out-building and the car parking used for the pub.

As noted above, the Cross Keys is currently a public house, however for reasons of financial viability, it has not been trading since 2014. The Application is supported by a Consultant-prepared Viability Assessment which comprehensively reviews and assesses the operation and financial performance of the pub over recent years. Beyond the technical details given in the VA the viability of the pub has been impacted due the following.

- The pub is in open-country
- Not on primary routes
- The pub is associated with Henley but is 1.25Km from its centre with no connecting footpath
- Henley has a large well-funded Village Hall - Henley community Center - offering all the services and facilities of a public house
- The drinking habits of the public has changed over recent times

More recently and at the time of this application the restrictions created by the COVID pandemic has further removed the possibility of trading and hence any chance of viability moving forward. For reference, the Premise licence expired January 2015.

The Council have the following adopted Planning Policies which are applicable to the proposal.

Taken from the Core Strategy – Focused Review

**Policy FC3**

**Rural Economy**

**In rural areas we will support economic development proposals, including tourism and farm diversification proposals that cannot be more sustainably located closer to existing settlements and where the proposal is restricted in size, scale and type appropriate to a rural setting.**

The proposal perfectly meets the requirements of this Policy. The scheme proposes two serviced holiday lets using part of the existing building and out-building and is at a scale and type appropriate to its rural setting. These holiday lets will be augmented by the Certified Location (CL) for caravan/RV pitches in the southern section of the Cross Keys curtilage outside the Application site.

From the Core Strategy : Employment Land : Tourism  
Para 3.111

**The prime need at present is for a variety of different types of good quality, short-stay accommodation and this will continue to be facilitated through development control policies that encourage small-scale tourism development providing they do not prejudice the landscape, environment and biodiversity that is the main attraction of the district.**

The scheme meets the aims and aspirations of this Policy support extract. The proposal delivers the provision of small-scale tourism accommodation.

The revised NPPF includes the following extract.

**Supporting a prosperous rural economy**  
**83. Planning policies and decisions should enable: a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;**

It is proposed to retain the use of the building as a Public House. However, the ground floor currently provides significant floor area, which it is considered, is beyond that which is required to allow the pub to be viable. On that basis it is proposed to create a separate holiday let from the slightly extended northern end of the ground floor footprint. The separated holiday accommodation will have its own access and facilities and does not rely on or compromise the operation or function of the pub.

The submitted floor plans show the pub retains all the operational spaces required together with substantial floor area for customers comprising bar and restaurant areas. The areas to be converted to the ground floor holiday let are separated from the pub thus no loss of functionality or viability occurs. In addition, large external areas are retained and more appropriately defined to provide beer gardens and sitting areas.

The first floor of the pub will remain as existing and will provide accommodation for the pub owner/manager.



The conversion of the northern section of the ground floor will remove an unattractive garage door to the front elevation and replace it with a complimentary window. Three further smaller openings are proposed to the flank elevation and an entrance door to the rear. All elevations will receive refurbishment using matching materials and components where necessary.

Pub car-parking provision is unchanged from that existing but additional parking for the holiday lets are noted on the Site Plan. Two points of access will be retained from Main Road as will the full extent of the large car park.

A second part of the Application proposes the extension and conversion of an existing single-storey out-building to a second holiday let. The out-building is a separate structure from the main building and is located to the rear of the main building and as such, has a limited presence in the public realm.

The related drawing shows the existing footprint can be readily and simply extended to create attractive compact accommodation. The proposed extension is to the eastern elevation and the Site Layout indicates there is ample room to introduce it. Access is shown to the car park noted above and both holiday lets will benefit from the large rear garden area.

The conversion proposes new openings to the eastern elevation only with roof-lights to the western roof plane. The building is shown to be clad with horizontal boarding; this treatment gives the building the appearance of a traditional out-building converted to a residential use.

The Site Layout indicates the location and detail of additional tourist facilities – cycle store, drying room, dog shower and group BBQ station – which will further increase the attractiveness and sustainability of the location.

## 5.0

## Supplementary

In addition to the above, which is subject to the a formal Application process, the large southern section of the overall curtilage is to become a caravan and RV park. The park will be a Certified Location (CL) a form of facility not requiring the consent of a Local Authority. To give further clarity and information the formal application set includes a document prepared by the Caravan and Motorhome Club.

The area identified for the site – the area edged blue on the Site Location plan – is easily large enough to accommodate five pitched the maximum allowed number of CL pitches. The

existing boundary landscaping and the cluster of trees in the southern-most section can be fully retained to give the site established boundary screening and an attractive setting.

This Certified Location will add to the viability of the converted Cross Keys combining to create a more integrated location.

## 6.0

## Tourism Assets

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In support of the proposed conversion to holiday lets the following tourism attractions are available.

Local attractions

<https://www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk/>

<https://www.visitsuffolk.com/see-and-do/history-and-heritage.aspx>

Footpaths

<https://my.viewranger.com/>

<https://getoutside.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/local/henley-mid-suffolk>

Cycle routes

<https://www.komoot.com/guide/885739/road-cycling-routes-around-henley>

Bus routes, Debenham-Ipswich

<https://bustimes.org/stops/390040323>

The Cross Keys public house has not traded since August 2014 and prior to that its financial viability was marginal. A professionally prepared Viability Assessment this confirms the business is not viable.

The result of a PreApp Submission offered the possibility of a change of use to holiday accommodation to the whole building subject to meeting certain criteria. This Application however, proposes to retain the pub use and supplement its viability by introducing two holiday lets. And, although outside the scope of this Application, the large unused southern section of the greater Cross Keys curtilage will become a Certified Location providing caravan or RV pitches.

The existing building can be easily converted and refurbished with almost no change to its external appearance. An existing and separate out-building will be extended and converted to a separate holiday let as noted above. The whole curtilage of the Cross Keys can be further enhanced to support the proposed conversion by introducing a Certified Location for caravans and RVs in its southern section.

The completed scheme for change of use and the complimentary proposal for the balance of the site will deliver an attractive viable location compliant with the Council's Policy on rural diversification and employment and supporting the important tourism industry. The Applicant considers the diversification proposed is essential to ensure long term viability of the pub and is a form of supplementary business supporting development often seen in rural pubs.