

Blackpool Council - Development Management

Pre-application advice report

Reference: 20/0176

Address: 86 PROMENADE, BLACKPOOL, FY1 1HB

Proposal: Demolition of existing building and erection of six storey building to form a Cafe to ground floor and permanent flats to the upper floors.

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The site is currently occupied by a three storey brick building incorporating a ground floor shop 'Gifts Galore', which projects forward of the main building (the upper two floors are boarded up), and the adjoining single storey hot food retailer which projects forward to the same level as Gifts Galore. The premises are bounded by the Superbowl building to the south and by Roberts Oyster Bar to the north on the Promenade, close to its junction with West Street, and located within the town centre. Directly to the rear of the site is the Mitre PH, a small two storey public house fronting West Street.
- 1.2 The site and the immediately surrounding area are designated as part of the Resort Core and Leisure Zone within the adopted Blackpool Local Plan. The site is within the extended Town Centre Conservation Area and there are two locally listed buildings in the immediate vicinity – Roberts Oyster Bar and The Mitre PH.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Erection of seven storey building (including a basement). To the side of the proposed building abutting Roberts Oyster Bar is a tiled lift shaft. There is a gap between the proposed building and Roberts Oyster Bar at upper floor levels with an attached single storey projection at ground floor level which contains the entrance to the flats. The building abuts the Superbowl building. The building projects forward of the Oyster Rooms but not forward of the Superbowl building. The bays on the Superbowl frontage are not accurately reflected in the north elevation, neither is the canopy. Also, the canopy on the Oyster Rooms projects much further forward than the Superbowl building, this relationship is not shown accurately on the elevational drawings.
- 2.2 The building proposes a café and toilets on the ground floor, with kitchen, cellar store, bottle and bin store and plant room in the basement. The upper floors comprise a two bedroomed permanent flat on each floor i.e. five flats in total, each with a Promenade facing balcony and with an open roof terrace above. The south side elevation does not correlate with the north elevation and the east elevation appears to show the gap between the proposed site and the Oyster Bar closed up.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 07/0743 Erection of a six storey building with basement to form bar(s) and associated facilities in the basement, ground and first floors, office space on the second floor, two self-contained

permanent flats on the third and fourth floors and winter garden and store area on the fifth floor. GTD This was a modern and distinctive glass fronted building with a projecting and suspended central glass feature the full height of the building above ground level on an otherwise tiled front elevation.

- 3.2 06/0944 Erection of seven storey building with basement to form bar(s) over five floors with associated offices and two self-contained permanent flats above and nine roof top-mounted wind turbines. WDN. This earlier application involved the erection of a 7 storey building with bar(s) over the first four floors, offices on the fifth floor and two apartments on the upper two floors. Nine wind turbines were proposed on the roof of what was then a fairly non-descript modern building.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY/LEGISLATION

- 4.1 Your application will be considered against the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the relevant policies of the Council's Core Strategy and saved Local Plan.

- 4.2 The following local policies are considered relevant to your proposal:

- CS2 Housing Provision
- CS4 Retail and other town Centre Uses
- CS7 Quality of Design
- CS8 Heritage
- CS12 Sustainable Neighbourhoods
- CS13 Housing Mix, Density and Standards
- CS17 Blackpool Town Centre
- CS21 Leisure & Business Tourism
- BH3 Residential and Visitor Amenity
- LQ1 Quality of Design
- LQ2 Site Context
- LQ4 Building Design
- LQ9 Listed Buildings
- LQ10 Conservation Areas
- LQ11 Shopfronts
- LQ12 Shutters
- BH3 Residential and Visitor Amenity
- BH17 Restaurants, Cafes, Public Houses and Hot Food Take-Aways
- AS1 General Development Requirements
- RR1 Visitor Attractions
- SR8 Leisure Zone
- SR9 Use of Upper Floors
- AS1 Access, Parking and Highway Safety

- 4.3 Your proposal will also be considered against the Government's Technical housing standards SPG

5.0 ADVICE

5.1 Principle

- 5.1.1 The site currently contains two ground floor outlets, one retail and the other selling hot food, which project forward of the upper two floors. The units do not have shop fronts but utilise security roller shutters outside of business hours and are fairly typical of the central Promenade area. The upper two floors of the retail outlet are of brick construction with attractive architectural detailing, although the windows are boarded up and the building shows evidence of structural instability. The proposal represents a regeneration opportunity of premises that, as a whole, are not particularly attractive, within the heart of the town centre, within the extended Town Centre Conservation Area and the resort core/ leisure zone.
- 5.1.2 The proposed café over two levels (including basement) is in accordance with Policy SR8 of the Local Plan which states the Leisure Zone will be promoted for bars, pubs, nightclubs, restaurants and cafés. Policy SR9 states that for amenity reasons offices and residential accommodation will not be permitted within the Leisure Zone. Although the ground floor use of the property is appropriate to the Leisure Zone allocation the permanent flats are not, a viability assessment would need to accompany the proposal justifying the loss of the building and the allocation as permanent flats rather than a holiday offer.
- 5.1.3 The 2007 scheme pre-dated the local list and the extension of the Conservation Area. The proposed building would have an impact on the character and visibility of Roberts Oyster Rooms. The existing building steps up from the Oyster Rooms to the Superbowl building, and is set back so you can see the south elevation. If the principle of demolishing the building is accepted, the replacement it would have to be an appropriate design, height and materials.

5.2 Amenity

- 5.2.1 The proposal, given its size in comparison with what exists at present, and the proximity to the Mitre PH and Roberts Oyster Bar, which are very much smaller in scale than the proposal, will inevitably have a fairly significant impact on these two properties in particular. There would be some loss of light to private accommodation within the Mitre PH.
- 5.2.2 There would be no buffer between the bar and flats; and the bedrooms on the east elevation would overlook the service areas of other bars and clubs. Noise is likely to be an issue and a noise impact assessment should accompany the application, together with mitigation measures. A sound insulation condition would also be imposed on any approval to protect future residents/holiday makers.
- 5.2.3 There does not appear to be any refuse storage for the upper floor flats; nor access to a communal refuse storage facility at ground floor level.

5.3 Design and visual impact

- 5.3.1 The proposed building would occupy an important and prominent location. Policy LQ4 refers to larger scale buildings (not less than four storeys in height) being encouraged on the Promenade and also larger scale buildings within the town centre. However, given the height of the existing building occupying the site, the adjoining Oyster Bar and The Mitre PH directly to the rear, the scale of the proposed development is not considered to be appropriate in this location. The proposal involves the erection of a six storey building which is similar in height

to the adjoining Superbowl building, however the roof terrace would require a larger wind break than shown and that in itself would have a visual/adverse impact on the height and scale of the building. Any new building should step down in height from the Superbowl building to the surrounding, locally listed buildings to better fit within the context. Detailed approval of facing materials would be dealt with via an appropriate condition.

5.3.2 The main front elevation of the proposed building lies behind the Superbowl frontage, as do the balconies. The three storey height Roberts Oyster Bar projects forward to the same level as the main front elevation of the Superbowl. Roberts Oyster bar has a single storey canopy projecting further still. In terms of the position of the proposed building within the Promenade streetscene insufficient clarity has been provided to ensure that it would be acceptable.

5.3.3 The design takes its cues from the former Savoy café to the right. However, as stated, the height needs to be reduced so it steps up more gradually from Roberts Oyster Rooms by losing the top floor (so the roof terrace is lower down). It also makes permanent the current poor design which has brought forward the building line at street level. The proposed stairs to the upper floors from this area would mean the small infill next door to Roberts Oyster Rooms would become a permanent fixture, not only diminishing its individual character as one of the oldest buildings on the Promenade but also bringing forward the upper floors so they cover more of the side elevation of the Oyster Rooms. It would obscure some of the existing features of the building principally the name sign on the side elevation, which is part of the fabric of the building. Whilst the Oyster Bar is not statutorily listed it is nevertheless of local historic interest and the obscuring of the building detailing is not acceptable on this Locally Listed Building within the Conservation Area.

5.3.4 I would suggest that the infill/lobby for the stairs is removed to open up the gap between the Oyster Rooms and the new building. The building line for the whole building should be set back (so the café is flush with the upper floors and should not project forward of the adjacent Oyster Rooms) and the entrance for the flats should also be set back. The vents should be set further back within the site. The design would need to reflect the locality (i.e. art deco like the remainder of this block with appropriate materials). The ground floor infill detracts from the setting of the Oyster Rooms. This would be an opportunity to enhance it whilst mitigating the loss of a building which has some architectural merit. If the scheme is eventually approved then it should be recorded by the appropriate RIBA standard before demolition.

5.4 Other issues

5.4.1 Traffic and servicing has not been considered at this stage, however I do not anticipate any issues arising in this Town Centre location.

5.4.2 With regard to surface water drainage, all new development of this scale should offer some degree of betterment to reduce the amount of surface water going in the sewer network. If sustainable options are not possible, the best alternative is likely to be on-site storage/attenuation and controlled rates of discharge.

5.4.3 In terms of the Climate Change Act (2008) some analysis of sustainable design and renewables (Policy CS10), should accompany the application. I understand that green roofs are not an option here, but grey water harvesting and potentially solar panels could form part of an

assessment. As this is a residential development it would not be required to achieve BREEAM “very good”.

6.0 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

6.1 An application for planning permission would need to include the following as a minimum:

- Application form including ownership certificate and signed declaration
- Fee
- Location plan showing two named roads
- Proposed site layout plans, including the correct relationship with properties either side
- Elevations
- A street scene and CGI's if available
- A Heritage Statement
- A Design & Access Statement
- Viability Statement justifying demolition
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Materials palette
- Bat Survey

7.0 OTHER

7.1 Any advice given by Council officers for pre-application enquiries represents their professional opinion, without the benefit of a site visit, and should not be taken as indicating any formal decision by the Council as local planning authority due to the democratic requirements of the application process. Any views or opinions expressed are given in good faith and, to the best of the officer's ability, without prejudice to the formal consideration of any planning application following statutory public consultation. Any subsequent alterations to local and national planning policies might affect the advice given and the subsequent formal consideration of the application, especially if some time elapses between the pre-application advice and the submission of an application. The weight that can be given to the pre-application advice will, therefore, diminish over time.

7.2 The details of any pre-application enquiry and responses given are treated in confidence as far as the law will allow. Please be aware that under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations any information submitted as part of pre-application discussion cannot automatically be deemed to be in confidence as the Council may receive a request for information under these Acts. If such a request is received the Council will ask you to identify any information that you require not to be disclosed under these Regulations together with any supporting reasons. Please note, however, that the Council shall be responsible for deciding at its absolute discretion whether any information requested is exempt from disclosure under the Regulations.

Case officer: *P. Greenway*

Date: 17/04/2020

Agreed by: *S. Palmer*

Date: 20/04/20