

Change of use from C1 hotel back to C3 dwelling
Paschoe House, Bow

Combined Design and Access and Heritage Statement

1.0) Introduction

The applicant has recently purchased Paschoe House which was previously used as a boutique hotel and wedding venue but went bankrupt due in part to the pandemic but also more recently in response to the recession and the increase in fuel costs. It has not been used as a hotel for some time now and the applicant has no intention of using it as such.

It does not have any employees as it has ceased trading for some time. It was then marketed as a business site but failed to sell.

He would like to return it to family home having purchased it with that intention. There are no works proposed as the property is already set out as a dwelling. This approval seeks to replace planning approval 15/01318/FUL so that the property can be used as a house.

2.0) Background

The applicant has to demonstrate that the business is/was not viable, and that it was offered for sale proving there was no probability of it being sold as a hotel.

Planning approval 15/01318/FUL was granted in 2016 to convert the house into a hotel. The previous owner invested heavily in the enterprise and established a business running wedding events and other events such as day shooting parties and so on.

This proved successful until 2020 when all weddings and Christmas parties were cancelled. There were no bookings for the foreseeable future. Offering meals alone was not enough to sustain the business or pay for the property upkeep and staffing costs. These had spiralled out of control in recent months.

The current economic downturn had made matters worse with no prospect of a recovery and even less chance of selling the business as a going concern, with no current bookings or any prospect of them in the future.

To that end the previous owner brought the property to market as he could no longer afford to run or maintain it.

3.0) Former business summary

Originally the previous owner hoped that he could simply continue running it as a restaurant but that also proved to be unsustainable due to staffing costs, the size of the building and the associated energy and maintenance costs.

The previous business model was not sustainable and there was little if any likelihood of conditions improving fast enough to save the business. That is still the situation due to the ongoing economic downturn, general economic uncertainty, increasing interest rates and high energy prices.

There was no income being generated and the previous owner was forced to sell. As things stood they could not generate enough income to support a hotel business with its significant overheads and staffing requirements. All of the staff were released.

That has clearly also proven to be a barrier to it selling as a C1 hotel as evidenced by the marketing strategy to sell it as such. The marketing details and letters from agents are attached as confirmation of same. Please see **Document 1 and Document 2** attached.

As the property has now been purchased by the applicant we ask that these documents not be made available in the public domain as they includes sales figures for the property which the applicant considers sensitive and would prefer not to reveal.

4.0) Planning considerations

With regard to this proposal, Mid Devon's development plan seeks to:

- 1) Avoid dwellings in the countryside unless certain exceptions are met and,
- 2) To protect employment uses.

Considering these in relation to this proposal :

- 1) The development would be a conversion back to a dwelling (with no development involved) which is one of the exceptions and,
- 2) There is no employment use of the site and there hasn't been for some time. It will not be used as a hotel again as it is not viable.

In order to establish that the business was not viable, evidence of marketing has to be provided to show that it was diligently marketed and did not sell. That information is attached as Document 1 and Document 2, which includes the marketing information and covering letters from the agents.

This demonstrates compliance with the requirements of Policy DM9 for the conversion of a redundant building, and Policy DM19 for the protection of employment land.

The site was marketed for well in excess of 18 months and there is no employment use on the site as it is not viable. As such the proposal is considered to comply with those planning policies (DM9 and DM19 being considered those most relevant).

The building has existed as a dwelling for the majority of its existence apart from the recent short change to a hotel which unfortunately did not work out. Returning it to its former use a single family home as originally intended is considered to be a sensible option now that the hotel venture has failed and ceased to trade.

The hotels commercial kitchen was removed and sold by the previous owner prior to exchange, so the property no longer has a commercial kitchen. The applicant is having a conventional domestic kitchen fitted in the space formerly occupied by the commercial kitchen to serve the families needs in line with their proposed use of the property as a family home.

For the avoidance of doubt, they have not done this to '*jump the gun*' in planning terms. The simple fact being that they needed a kitchen as the commercial one had been removed when they moved in, so they have no choice other than to progress with that side of things to have cooking facilities in the house.

The new kitchen is effectively a like for like swap in the same space, no different to someone changing the kitchen in any other house.

5.0) Sustainable design considerations

The conversion back to a dwelling has significantly reduced the number of vehicle movements to and from the site. The sites carbon footprint has already been reduced through that change alone. This is considered to be a recognisable benefit through the change of use back to a dwelling.

There are no works associated with the proposal. The internal room layouts will stay exactly the same as shown on the attached sales details. There were no detailed floor plans submitted with the original 15/01318 change of use application as the internal layout remained the same.

As such there are none included with this application as it is a straight forward change of use with no development work involved. The sales particulars do however detail the internal layout as a point of reference.

There are no materials or building works required to facilitate the change of use back to a dwelling, this being the most sustainable type of conversion when using an existing building.

The proposal will result in a less intensive and more sustainable and sympathetic use of the building, which is also considered to be beneficial with regard to its listed status and standing in the area. It will ensure its future conservation as a single dwelling as originally intended.

6.0) Heritage statement

Paschoe House was built around 1850 - 1860 as a single dwelling and is now Grade II listed. The only recorded alteration to its layout being the subdivision of a ground floor room circa 1969. Other than that it has existed in its current form since being built. The recent use as a hotel appears to have been its only change of use from a family home. There are no alterations or internal works proposed with this application, it is a straight forward change of use of an existing building utilising its existing layout.

This proposal forms part of the history of the building, and its use as a hotel for a short period of time is now part of its documented history over time. That is not uncommon with many large country houses, which have seen changes of use over the years depending on either the political or economic situation that existed at the time.

Fortunately the change of use back to a dwelling does not involve any alterations to the building. Its existing bedrooms and ground floor rooms are all being kept as is, other than for changes of use, such as the lounge bar (not a residential requirement) now to be used as the living room for example.

Its physical setting in the landscape remains unaltered from its former use as a hotel. There is not considered to be any detrimental impact on the listed building through the change of use back to a family home. This will secure its future conservation, which is a perceived benefit by comparison to the possibility of it having been left empty and uncared for. A picture of the primary elevation is attached as Image 1 over showing the domestic nature of the entrance and parking area.

7.0) Other hotels and accommodation locally

There are two other hotels in the area and a number of holiday cottages in Bow and the surrounding area that can still provide bed space for holiday makers. Some are detailed below.

The Waie Inn
East Hillerton House
Little Nymet
The Cider Barn boutique cottages
Zeal Cottage
Manor Cottage
Gratton Cottage

8.0) Summary

The hotel was not viable and ceased trading. There are no longer any employment opportunities on the site. The previous owner marketed it diligently with a number of agents but there was no interest in it as a hotel. The only interest in it being its use as a dwelling once more. It is therefore considered to comply with Policy DM19.

The change of use will be through the conversion of a redundant building. It is therefore considered to comply with Policy DM9.

There is still adequate provision locally for holiday makers wishing to visit the area with a number of hotels, guest houses and holiday cottages still located in close proximity to the site.

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END



Image 1

Paschoe House
Front elevation and parking-turning area