

Town Centre Assessment



**The Change of Use of Outbuildings to Form an Events Venue and the
Erection of a Spa**

At

**Hotham Hall
The Park
Hotham
East Yorkshire
YO43 4UA**

On Behalf of Hotham Hall Estate

January 2024

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The planning application and listed building consent that this Town Centre Assessment accompanies have been submitted on behalf of Hotham Hall Estate and relate to a proposed development at the Grade II* listed Hotham Hall in East Yorkshire. The site of application is identified in the location plan extract below at Image 1.

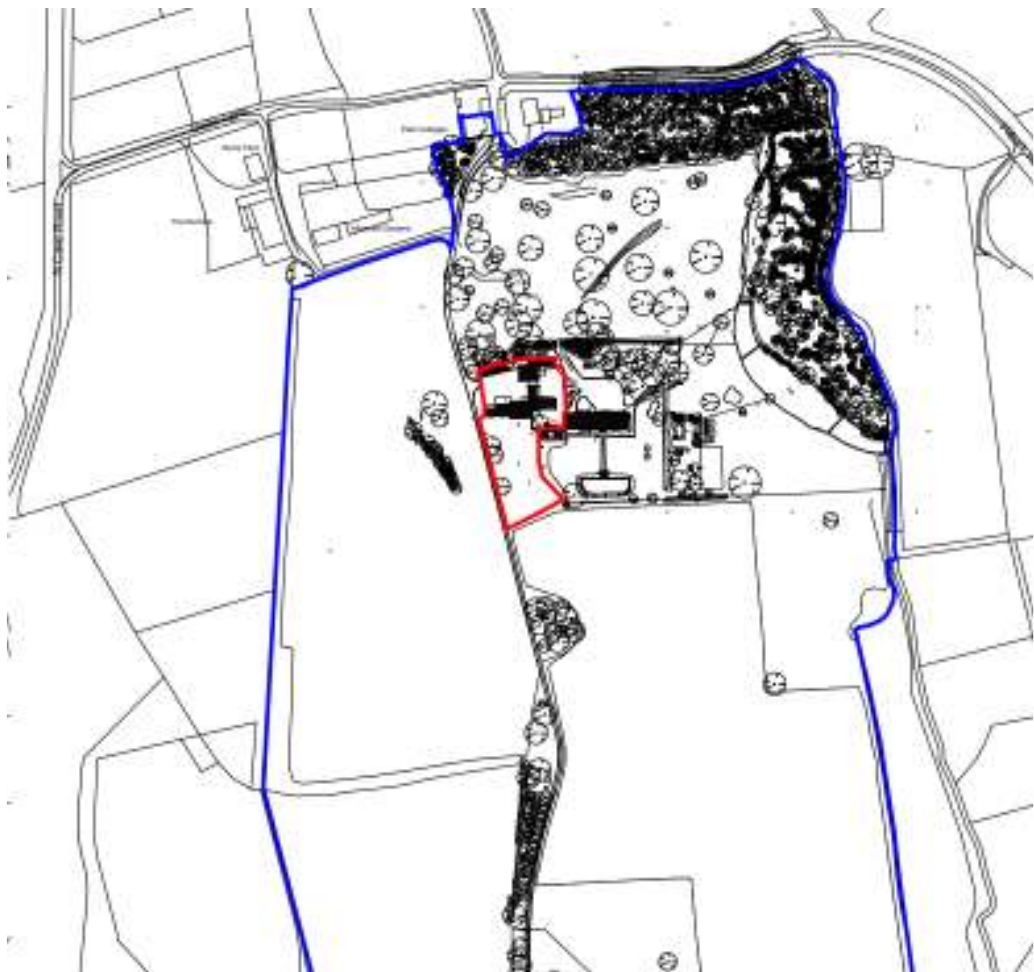


Image 1: Site Location Plan Extract (Brown and Company)

1.2 The proposed development involves the change of use of a range of outbuildings associated with Hotham Hall to form an events venue and related uses and the erection of a purpose built spa within the Hall's grounds.

2.0 Description of Site and Proposed Development

2.1 Hotham Hall is, as mentioned above, a grade II* listed building and the stable block it is proposed to convert is itself Grade II* listed. The gates and gate piers within the stable yard are also separately listed as Grade II. Hotham Hall lies to the south of the village of Hotham in the East Riding of Yorkshire and is within the Hotham Conservation Area. The village of North Cave lies approximately 1km to the south of the Hall. The site is located in open countryside in planning policy terms.

2.2 The Heritage Statement which accompanies these applications (prepared by Purcell) sets out a brief history of Hotham Hall as follows:

- Hotham Hall was begun around 1720 for William Burton, possibly to the designs of gentleman architect James Moyser. The original house was of five bays, two storeys with attics and cellars.
- The house was extended in 1772 by Robert Burton, with the addition of east and west pavilions to complement the existing house and create new entertaining spaces. A year later, Burton extended the park when he purchased a neighbouring manor in North Cave; he may have moved the ballroom panelling to Hotham from the North Cave manor at this time.
- When Hotham Hall was inherited by Lieut. Col. Edward John Stracey-Clitherow in 1869, he set about making improvements to the Hall. The west pavilion was demolished, and a new wing built in its place 1872, probably to the designs of William Moseley. The wing was designed to appear as two separate villas, to help break up the frontage.
- During the 20th century, the Hall was modernised; heating was installed in 1921 and bedrooms received ensuite bathrooms. The service quarters were also transformed, the floor was partially raised, and the kitchen moved to the south front with a breakfast room created adjacent.
- The Hall was purchased by Mr & Mrs Stephen Martin in 1985 who set about making extensive repairs and further alterations to Hotham Hall, including building a terrace, repairing and replacing fireplaces, installing a decorated ceiling, fitting cupboards and shelving to a number of rooms.
- The Hall was purchased by the present owner in 2020.

2.3 The current owners of the Hall and Estate embarked upon a major project of renovation at the Hall and have invested substantial capital in the property. As set out in the planning history section below, the Hall itself is now part private residence and part an events venue (sui generis). The vision of the applicants is to *“create a sophisticated destination for events and country pursuits which make create use of a wonderful historic building and its grounds and allow it to be enjoyed by local communities as well as by a much wider audience. The approach is a heritage led regeneration project which will create jobs and develop visitor assets. The overall objective is to create an economically resilient estate which will ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.”*

2.4 Image 2 below is view of the Hall's primary (southern) facade.



Image 2: Photo of Hotham Hall

2.5 The proposed development consists of the following:

- Change of use of the former stable block to form an events venue, guest accommodation, ancillary retail space, member's area and a proposed extension to the stable block to provide sanitary facilities

- Erection of a spa building within the curtilage of the Hall (to the south west)

3.0 Planning Policy

3.1 Main town centre uses are defined in the NPPF's glossary as

“Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).”

3.2 The NPPF provides guidance as to how applications for town centre uses in non-town centre locations should be considered by a Local Planning Authority in paragraphs 91 through to 95 inclusive:

“Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should:

a) define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters;

b) define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations, as part of a positive strategy for the future of each centre;

c) retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones;

d) allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed, looking at least ten years ahead. Meeting anticipated needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over this period should not be compromised by limited site availability, so town centre boundaries should be kept under review where necessary;

- e) where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available for main town centre uses, allocate appropriate edge of centre sites that are well connected to the town centre. If sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, policies should explain how identified needs can be met in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre; and*
- f) recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.*

Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations; and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered.

When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are fully explored.

This sequential approach should not be applied to applications for small scale rural offices or other small scale rural development.

When assessing applications for retail and leisure development outside town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500m² of gross floorspace). This should include assessment of:

- a) the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and*

b) the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider retail catchment (as applicable to the scale and nature of the scheme).

Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more of the considerations in paragraph 94, it should be refused.”

3.3 We note that paragraph 94 states that the sequential approach should not be applied to small scale rural development.

3.4 Policy EC 3 part C of the East Riding Local Plan Strategy Document 2016 states:

“Proposals for retail, office and leisure uses, that are not in accordance with an allocation, will be required to assess the impact of the development where they comprise more than:

- 1. 500sqm (gross) floorspace in an edge of Town Centre or out of Town Centre location; or*
- 2. 250sqm (gross) floorspace in an edge of District Centre or out of District Centre location.”*

4.0 Sequential Test

- 4.1 National Planning Practice Guidance sets out that the sequential test should be considered first as this may identify that there are preferable sites in town centres for accommodating main town centre uses (and therefore avoid the need to undertake the impact test). The sequential test will identify development that cannot be located in town centres, and which would then be subject to the impact test.
- 4.2 It is assumed that the aspect of the proposed development that the Council considers to be a town centre use is the use of buildings as guest accommodation, events venue and potentially the spa building (if considered to be a leisure use). The application site is out of centre and accordingly we must establish if there are any town or edge of centre sites available that could accommodate the proposed development.
- 4.3 We firstly consider the development site's essential characteristics and then consider if there are any sequentially preferable sites which are suitable or viable available.
- 4.4 The site's essential and defining characteristics are as follows:
- Hotham Hall already benefits from planning approval to be used as an events venue
 - The application development is an expansion of this use
 - Hotham Hall and its outbuildings and demesne are in the applicants' ownership
 - It is close to the village of Hotham
- 4.5 The nearest defined town centre to the application site are Beverley and Brough. North Cave and Hotham do not have a defined town centre. The only land available physically capable of accommodating such a development in Beverley or Brough are out of centre sites and accordingly are not sequentially preferable to the application site.
- 4.6 There is a town centre allocation in Beverley Town Centre which is owned by the East Riding Council but this land is not on the market and is therefore not available.

- 4.7 The application site is already in occasional use as an events venue. The proposed development as a necessity needs to be co located with Hotham Hall. There are a) no sequentially preferable sites available and b) no suitable sites available.

5.0 Impact Assessment

5.1 It is also required that the impact of the proposed development on town centres be taken into account. As discussed above the nearest town centres are Brough and Beverley.

5.2 There is no comparable venue to Hotham Hall in either Brough or Beverley (or anywhere in East Yorkshire). The events that will be held at the Hall would not be held at any other location in Brough or Beverley.

5.3 As such there is no town centre use that competes with Hotham Hall. Accordingly, there is no impact on any town centre or existing town centre use.

5.4 The various socio-economic benefits (direct and indirect) of this project include:

- A significant investment of around £7 - 8 million (with a further £1m million per annum to run the estate). HHE has already created 20 jobs with direct employment figures anticipated to reach at least 55 with the proposed development.
- The investment in restoring and developing the existing buildings (which are in poor condition) and in building the new spa will create a thriving business which will attract a wide range of customers from up to a 50-mile radius and more.
- The proposed new development will also service the local community by building high-quality facilities and providing employment and business opportunities for local companies. The inclusion of the new spa building, which has been discussed with the local planning and conservation officers, is a necessary addition to this development and will provide one of the strongest income streams, and allow the business to compete with other high-end destinations in Yorkshire and beyond.

- Not to be discounted is the impact that such a business will have on the wider East Yorkshire community. This type of high-quality facility will add to the general broadening of the local economy and will attract a different level of investors and businesspeople, who currently aren't catered for in the area.
- The business case for the development of further leisure facilities is indeed a strong one, we believe that we have demonstrated that the business benefits far outweigh any harm to the fabric of the somewhat dilapidated buildings and establish a clear future and plan for repurposing Hotham Hall. In addition, creating employment for local people and business opportunities in what is essentially a rural community are to be significantly increased.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 We believe that the principle of the development is acceptable and that the proposals represent an entirely appropriate land use which are in accordance with town centre policies in the NPPF and the East Riding Local Plan. The proposed development will not harm the vitality and viability of any nearby town centre.