

PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

DATE – 28 / 03 / 2024

CLIENT – Woolpack Operating Co. Ltd

ADDRESS – The Woolpack Inn / Totford near Northington / Alresford / Hampshire / SO24 9TJ

INTRODUCTION

This planning statement has been prepared in support of an application for full planning and listed building consent for various internal and external works (including ground floor extensions) to the public house and associated hotel building at the Woolpack Inn, Totford near Northington.

The site is occupied by the Woolpack Inn which dates from the 18th and 19th Century.

The Woolpack Inn is a Grade II listed building and its current use is a public house with a bar, dining area and commercial kitchen.

The works include the construction of new ground floor extensions to both the pub and hotel buildings and landscaping works including a new raised decking area with pergola and a retractable canopy. External refurbishment work comprising of redecoration of external finishes, new lighting scheme, outdoor seating, planting, retention of the covered pergola/outside kitchen space, new fencing and paved areas. Internal work proposed includes the full redecoration of the interior including toilet facilities, alterations to the lighting scheme, new and existing refurbished fixed seating, new flooring with existing stone paving retained, external doors and windows installed in the proposed extensions, repair work to existing windows and doors and the refurbishment and update of the existing bar servery layout, counters and backfitting.

There will be a separate advertisement consent application submitted for the new signage scheme and associated lighting.

This planning and heritage statement covers planning, design, access and heritage matters and should be considered alongside the accompanying forms, drawings and information submitted with this application.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND ITS SURROUNDING CONTEXT

APPLICATION SITE

The application site sits within the Candover Valley in central Hampshire and is situated along the B3046 in Totford near the villages of Northington and Brown Candover, which lies within the administrative boundary of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

The Woolpack Inn public house is situated in a prominent position along the B3046 at the northern end of Totford hamlet consisting of a small group of buildings on the eastern side of the road.

The site is occupied by the clients business and is currently trading.

The property was formerly a private two storey dwelling before becoming a licensed premises and the Grade II listed building dates back to the 18th and 19th centuries. The building has been developed in the past with a number of 20th century additions, extensions and alterations to the original. Situated to the East behind the public house is a former outbuilding which has previously been refurbished and is now used as letting rooms for visiting guests.

A lawned garden is located behind with a timber fence separating the beer garden and a tall laurel hedgerow adjacent the letting rooms.

The property overlooks open countryside and farmland to the West beyond the B3046 and to the North beyond the car park.

The Woolpack Inns garden and lawn is located adjacent the car park and is defined by traditional timber cleft rail and post fencing with outdoor furniture, planting, raised timber planter beds and semi mature and established mature trees with a cobbled path leading to the main entrance porch.

A rear yard faces the garden with timber shiplap fence panels and access gates next to a covered pergola surrounded by a vertical hit and miss timber fence around a private garden space with a low brickwork wall and stone paving

Towards the rear boundary at the eastern edge of the site is a detached single storey timber structure with a pitched roof. The building is surrounded by laurel hedges, trees and shrubs with an area of lawn and gravel pathway providing access from the rear of the letting rooms.

The western boundary is defined by low flint walls with access steps, planting, hedgerows and cleft rail fencing with a timber field gate. Pedestrian and vehicle access is available from the western boundary of the site and provides access from the road to the pubs main entrance, the rear letting rooms and park.

Timber posts are located along the front of the site along a grass verge by the roadside.

The car park is surfaced with loose gravel laid over plastic gravel grids and bounded by hedgerows cleft rail fences and timber knee rail fencing. The main car park has approx. 26 parking bays.

A child's play area is situated at the back of the site beyond the car park.

There is additional outdoor seating overlooking the road with a bound gravel surface and planting that is defined by a cleft rail fence with a timber field gate for pedestrian access. A brickwork step leads up to a stone paved terrace area with outdoor furniture and a timber pergola with retractable fabric canopies situated at the rear of the building. Adjacent is an additional covered pergola over an outdoor kitchen with a brick built oven and counters with conifers, willow fence panels and low timber sleeper planters around the perimeter of the terrace. The boundary to the south of the site is defined by conifer trees, hedgerows and shrubs. Further paved steps within a retaining brickwork wall lead up to a pathway providing access up to the letting rooms and a covered walkway leading down towards the garden and car park.

The sites existing materials comprise of flint walls with stone detailing to the principle elevations of the main two storey building with red clay tiles on the hipped roof. The rear outbuilding is also constructed with flint walls and red brickwork details including window and door heads, cills, brick banding and window surrounds with red clay roof tiles covering the hipped roof.

Various single storey extensions have been constructed at the rear of this building constructed from a mixture of flint walls in keeping with the existing building and red brickwork with flint panels set within the brickwork. The single storey extensions have a mixture of hipped and gabled pitched roofs finished with red clay tiles. Existing timber window frames are a painted finish with some doors either painted or in hardwood timber finishes. The main entrance porch has a gable roof canopy above with red clay roof tiles supported with timber posts and vertically hung red clay tiled wall cladding.

There is an existing lobby with a mono pitch sloped roof with vertically hung red clay tile cladding that match the roof tiles.

The property was listed on 16th October 1984 under the list entry number 1093007 and the official list entry states the following –

“L-shaped 2-storeyed house with 1 window on each main facade (inside angle and gables). Hipped old tile roof. Flint walling with small stone quoins and window surrounds, stone flush strings at the level of first floor cills, ground-floor window heads (wider) and transomed Casements. Boarded door within the angle, beneath an open porch with a tile roof.”

SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The site is not within any planning or environmental designation and the site lies within Flood Risk Zone 1 on the government's flood map which is an area at least risk of flooding. The property has a very low probability of flooding from surface water or rivers.

The building is Grade II Listed and does not sit within a conservation area. Following a check of the council map there are no protected TPO's within the site demise.

The property is accessible by public transport with bus services running along the B3046 with a number of bus stops and shelters on both sides. There is a train station approx. 9 miles away in Winchester city centre which offers direct links to Reading and the wider national rail network.

Totford is well connected and close to a number of cities and towns for example Winchester to the South and Basingstoke to the North. Junction 7 of the M3 to the North of the site is approx. 8-9 miles drive from the site.

The immediate surrounding area to the East and South has a small number of cottages and farm buildings that are now used as private dwellings with more modern properties constructed on adjacent plots of land that vary in architectural styles, age, materials and scale that form the Totford hamlet. Other outbuildings are located in the immediate area and are still used for commercial operations in keeping with the local area for example the sawmill situated South of the site.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission and Listed Building Consent is sought for the following proposals described below. Full planning and Listed Building Consent for various external and internal works including the construction of single storey extensions to both the licensed premises and the rear detached building containing letting rooms.

External work includes the redecoration of external paint finishes, outdoor seating, soft landscaping and new planting, alterations to the external lighting scheme, repairs to existing fencing and the installation of new fencing, localised repair to the existing buildings, new extensions including new glazed doors and windows, repair and re-laying of paving, new external surfaces including new paving to the existing terrace, access steps, new raised decking and pergola over with a retractable canopy is proposed. The proposals include the retention of an existing outdoor kitchen space situated on the paved terrace.

Internal works include general refurbishment including fixtures and fittings, new lighting positions, alterations to existing flooring finishes, new sanitaryware where required, removal of 1no internal timber window, removal of section of wall to gents toilets, allowing for new cubicle and blocking up internal windows to toilets where required to allow for extensions.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENT

EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS – Refer to the associated layouts.

- Demolition of an existing porch extension and the construction of a single storey timber clad extension with a brick plinth below and glazed timber framed windows and french doors fitted with a red clay tiled hipped mansard roof with a hidden flat roof and skylight.
New pergola with retractable fabric canopy installed over a raised decking area with a stepped access and post and rope guarding around the perimeter.
- Existing outdoor seating area maintained with bound gravel floor replaced with new paving and outdoor furniture provided.
- Existing pergola with retractable roof removed and replaced with a new extension having timber cladding above a brick plinth, glazed timber framed bi-folding doors fitted and a red clay clay tiled hipped mansard roof with a hidden flat roof and skylight.
- Rear timber yard fence, associated gates, pergola and vertical slatted fencing removed and replaced with a new single storey extension constructed and finished with timber cladding and a hipped clay tiled mansard roof. Windows fitted in materials, and finishes to match existing.
New timber glazed double doors installed to provide access to the new raised decking area leading to a private garden space.
- New timber vertical slatted fence fitted around the perimeter of the private garden space with external garden furniture and pots placed on the decking area.

- New single storey extension constructed to the end gable of the letting rooms to create an accessible WC and plant room finished with timber cladding above a brick plinth and a red clay tiled hipped roof over to match the existing building materials and architecture.
- Retention of an existing covered pergola/outdoor kitchen space including the retained brick built oven and counters with a new poly carb sheet roof fitted to replace the existing damaged sheets.
- New fence and gate installed to the rear of the new plant room with a path leading to the car park.
- General repairs undertaken to existing retained timber fencing and gates.
- Black finished guttering, fall pipes and waste pipes installed to match existing.
- Painted timber barge boards and soffits installed.
- Proposed DDA compliant access steps with a planter bed installed to replace existing steps.
- New paving installed to replace existing on the terrace and in the outdoor kitchen space.
- New paving installed around the perimeter of the private garden with a pathway leading to the rear car park.
- A general tidy, prune and weeding of the site is to be undertaken.
- Existing gravel car park surfaces to be tidied and weeds removed.
- Full redecoration of the existing building elevations.

HERITAGE STATEMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

The historic context and appearance of the original two storey building facades will be maintained with the addition of a single storey extension to replace an existing porch that will be sympathetic to its size and scale and would be subservient to the main building. The maintenance and enhancement of community facilities including pubs and restaurants is supported within Local Policy.

The proposals retain a visual reference to its 'L' shaped form that does not detract from the architectural significance of the building.

Externally the proposals seek to improve the street scene and enhance the principal facades of the building. The current fabric canopy will be removed and replaced with a traditional pergola structure with a retractable canopy that will provide shade and shelter for guests using the new raised decking. The pergola will not be fixed to the existing fabric of the building although it will be adjacent the proposed new addition to the elevation. The proposed extension will improve the internal space available for access by wheelchair bound and ambulant disabled guests. Materials will be used to either match or compliment the existing building with a hipped mansard roof (with a hidden flat roof with rooflight behind) fitted with natural clay roof tile to match and natural timber cladding fitted above a reclaimed brickwork plinth. Timber post and rope barriers will be provided to define the perimeter of the decking.

Existing landscaping including surfaces, low boundary walls and fencing around the outdoor seating area, along the front boundary and the rear car park will be maintained and repairs undertaken where necessary to enhance the appearance of the listed building. Existing planting will be retained with general pruning and weeding undertaken along with an overall site tidy. New planting is proposed within the rear garden and the existing lawn will be maintained. Existing semi mature trees will also be retained along the path to the main entrance. Existing ship lapped fence panels and associated gates that are in poor condition will be removed. In addition to this an existing covered pergola with horizontal hit and miss fence and low brick walls will also be removed to accommodate the new extension facing the car park.

A single storey extension will be constructed using vertical timber cladding above a brick plinth along the existing rear GF extension and original two storey building that will improve the current kitchen/staff facilities and extend the private dining space.

This extension overlooks the garden and car park beyond and will have a hipped mansard roof (with a hidden flat roof behind) fitted with red clay tiles, black gutters, fall pipes, fascia boards and soffits to compliment the existing buildings architecture and materials. The private dining space will have its own private garden that is bounded by a new approx. 2mtr height horizontal slatted fence that will be accessed from new glazed double doors leading to a decking area with external garden furniture and plant pots.

It is proposed to construct an additional single storey extension on the end gable of the rear two storey building to accommodate an accessible letting room with accessible shower at GF level.

This involves the removal of an existing cold room/walk in freezer and storage spaces internally to accommodate the additional GF letting room. The new extension will be constructed with vertical timber cladding above a brick plinth to a height and footprint to compliment the scale of the host building. A new pitched hipped roof will be fitted and finished with red clay tiles with all gutters, fall pipes, fascia boards and soffits to match existing. The extension will be at the rear of the site and will be predominately screened from view by new fence panels and tall hedgerows that define the perimeter of the letting rooms garden and lawn.

An existing timber pergola with retractable canopy will be removed from the paved terrace area to make way for a proposed extension to provide additional dining space within the pub. The extension will be constructed from an existing rear single storey extension and provide access onto the terrace via bi-folding timber doors. Timber cladding will be fitted above a reclaimed brickwork plinth. The extension will also receive a new hipped mansard roof (with a hidden flat roof behind and rooflight) finished with red clay tiles with all gutters, fall pipes, fascia boards and soffits to match existing. This extension is relatively sheltered away from the principal elevations of the original two storey building and overlooks the paved terrace.

Adjacent this extension is an existing covered pergola with a large brick built oven and brick built counters that will be retained, repaired and refurbished where required including a replacement polycarb sheet roof to replace the existing sheet roof.

New ambulant disabled Part M compliant steps will be installed within an existing modified retaining wall leading up to the hotel rooms via a paved walkway along the front of the building. Guarding or fence screening will be installed along the perimeter of the retaining wall overlooking the outdoor kitchen pergola and terrace.

It is proposed that existing external and internal lighting is improved through a new lighting scheme to both existing and new positions for safety of guests and improved security.

The proposed internal works would overall be in keeping with the character and architecture of the listed building. The interior works would revitalise and enhance the setting of the listed building and adjoining extensions.

It is considered that overall the proposed development would improve the appearance of the public house and letting rooms, both inside and out. The implementation of attractive alterations and additions would provide a high-quality design that responds to the local context and enhances the existing character and local distinctiveness of the listed building.

The client has identified that the current building requires considerable investment and revitalisation to both the interior and exterior in order to protect and preserve the listed building whilst remaining competitive and still meet modern customer expectations.

The NPPF states the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation can make a positive contribution to sustainable communities and their economic viability.

Therefore, the rationale for development is to upgrade the building to meet present day needs and commercial expectations by allowing the continued success and viable operation of the pub and heritage asset.

Ongoing investment and maintenance are essential for the long-term protection and use of such a building. The proposed works are sensitive to the host building and are considered to have a negligible impact on the wider surrounding area therefore conserving the character of the Listed Building and its setting.

The proposal would not remove traditional local features of the host dwelling nor materially alter the prevailing character and architectural interest of the Listed Building.

No substantial harm or loss would result from the proposed external and internal works to the Listed Building. The proposed works would revitalise and refresh the listed building for the benefit of members of the public and residents of the local area, as well as patrons of the pub.

The proposals will help to provide substantial benefits for the area, in terms of economic growth and will assist in maintaining the viable use of the site as a licensed premise by bringing in further revenue. This investment will support a sustainable community and the economic vitality of the local amenity. The proposed works are considered to provide a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and enhance the building's historic and architectural interest.

SCALE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL AND NATIONAL POLICIES

The NPPF places weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity, accounting for both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

It also states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. The need for significant weight is to be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

Following the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality sector, cost of utilities and the current cost of living crisis, this proposal would seek to maintain and enhance the offer provided and aid in meeting current demands and support economic growth.

The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth and the NPPF places significant weight on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.

The application site is an existing public house whereby the current use of land is established and the proposals do not undermine the building's identity as a pub or harm its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest while the use remains at an appropriate scale without detriment to the surrounding area.

The alterations will retain the character of the pub because there is no change of use or development that would detract from this.

The design has been developed to a high standard and is considered suitable for this site and will not result in the loss of or negatively impact upon the functioning of the pub, in fact it will provide a much-needed refresh of both the exterior and interior of the building and its grounds. The proposal will improve the current offer provided and represents a significant investment in the building.

Although the application building is listed, it does not fall within a designated Conservation Area, however the proposals would seek to enhance the building's setting sensitively with the aim of revitalising the appearance of the surrounding area. The scheme will maintain the pub's focal point for local people and business while recognising the vital role public houses play in the local community.

The proposal intends to benefit operations at the pub and letting rooms by providing new updated facilities to allow a greater customer experience to enjoy the dining and drinking facilities on offer as a community pub and destination venue.

The materials and finishes that will be used and the scale of the proposals are in keeping with the vernacular nature of local construction methods and regional materials of the existing building and local area.

The proposed development is sympathetic to the scale of the existing building and its architecture, so it will not have an adverse impact upon the local amenities or detract from the character of the area.

Therefore, the submitted proposals are in line with current local and national planning policy guidance.

It is considered that the proposals accord with the principles outlined within these policies.

Consideration has been given to the overall layout, scale and design of the proposals in accordance with the current NPPF, National Planning Policy Framework (and other local and national policies that may still be relevant subject to the Councils Local Plan) to avoid any detrimental and overbearing impact or loss of local amenity and privacy to surrounding properties.

Proposed external works are to be in keeping with the character and scale of the surrounding architecture.

The site has not been over developed and would not deprive neighbouring properties and residents of light, privacy or raise security and noise issues.

The proposals will not have a detrimental effect on the existing roads, public transport network, sewers or public services. The submitted proposals do not overdevelop the existing site. It is considered that proposals of this scale would be appropriate in the context of the area and would not be harmful to the host building or its surrounding area. The overall development would improve the current offer provided at the site which would be beneficial to both the client, Woolpack Operations Co. Ltd, patrons of the pub and the wider community. Therefore the submitted proposals provide a high quality design in compliance with current local and national planning policy guidance.

APPEARANCE

The proposed external finishes and materials will be used to match and compliment the existing buildings on site.

SITE ACCESS

The site is easily accessible from the M3 with car parking on site and adequate space for deliveries. The site is also well-connected to public transports links.

USE

The property currently trades as a licensed premises and this use will remain unaffected by the proposals which seek to improve the buildings operation as a vibrant pub serving the community with further upgrades to the external areas. The use of the existing two storey outbuilding to the rear of the property is also unaffected by the proposals and will continue to be used as letting rooms following the refurbishment work.

SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

The efficient use of energy is a strategy that our client is passionate about and forms part of a wider strategy to ensure the longevity of the building as an asset and reduce the carbon footprint of their estate. This policy has been adopted to mitigate the effect of carbon emissions and to improve overall energy efficiency. Existing retained and new light fittings that are installed within the premises will be fitted with more energy efficient fittings i.e. compact fluorescents, LED lighting fitted etc. New external lights will be more energy efficient LED fittings with existing fittings upgraded with LED fittings.

BIODIVERSITY STATEMENT

A biodiversity statement is not required and has not been provided as it is considered that a protected species or habitat is not likely to be affected by the proposals.

FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

The site lies within Flood Risk Zone 1 on the government's flood map which is an area at least risk of flooding. The property has a very low probability of flooding from surface water or rivers.

DAYLIGHT AND SUNLIGHT ASSESSMENT

There are no major changes that have the potential to negatively impact the existing levels of daylight or sunlight to neighbouring properties, therefore an assessment has not been provided.

ACCESS STATEMENT

Access arrangements via the existing main entrance will remain unaffected by the proposals, and would continue to operate in its current form upon completion of the external and internal works outlined below. Level access is currently provided from the car park into the building via the main entrance lobby. There are existing steps within the premises due in part to the sites existing topography and level changes internally because of previous additions to the building and its listed status. Existing guest and staff facilities within the building will be retained. Level access will be provided from the new extension leading to the new raised external decking area.

A new accessible bedroom will be provided at the GF level of the rear detached building that will have an accessible shower room. An accessible WC will be provided within part of the new rear extension of the letting rooms providing toilet facilities for wheelchair bound or ambulant disabled guests using the garden.

TRANSPORT STATEMENT

All existing customer vehicle access into the site, parking arrangements, deliveries, refuse collections and public transport links will remain unaffected by the proposals.

EMPLOYMENT STATEMENT

The continued operation and economic viability of the building and site trading as a licensed premises and letting rooms will benefit the area and continue economic growth of the business. This in turn will continue to provide employment in the area now and into the future.

CRIME PREVENTION

Our client operates a company policy to provide a safe and friendly environment for all guests and staff in order to prevent any criminal or unsociable activities taking place.

A safe environment will be achieved with the use of existing and new external lighting, CCTV, staff training and high management standards implemented by our client and their staff.

The above policies are implemented to prevent any criminal or unsociable activities taking place.

CONSULTATION

No pre-application advice has been sought from the local planning authority (Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council) prior to the submission of this application. Reference has been made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Local Development Plan Documents where relevant. No initial consultations have been undertaken.

CONCLUSION

The proposal offers continued economic viability to the building and will provide substantial benefits for the area, in terms of economic growth and the contribution to the local amenity and street scene.

The design will ensure the continued preservation of an existing heritage asset and its historic features within the building. The development will also form an attractive environment for visiting guests which is a reflection of our clients approach to their estate and is considered acceptable in planning terms when assessed in line with current planning policy. The proposals will provide a much needed refresh of the exterior and interior of the premises to improve the current offer while meeting commercial expectations and present day needs for the future of the business. Overall this represents a significant investment by Woolpack Operations Co. Ltd in the building and its community while further ongoing investment and maintenance are essential for the long-term protection and use of the listed building.

The proposals will enable the public house and its grounds to be updated, sympathetically modernised and maintained, thus contributing to the preservation and enhancement of the heritage asset. This investment will ensure the continued success of the business and will enable the pub to continue to be an attractive and popular destination for local residents and tourists.

The work will be finished to a high quality while respecting the existing building architecture. Something that will lead to the continued success of the business enabling the town and wider area to carry on attracting visitors and remain a popular destination for local residents and tourists.

In summary the proposals represent an improvement to the future operation of the pub and does not create any adverse impact to the design or amenity. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in planning terms when accessed in accordance with the development plan, NPPF and other relevant material considerations and therefore should be granted planning permission subject to conditions where necessary.