

**CIRCULATED AT THE MEETING - UPDATE SHEET**

**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**21 February 2019**

**Item 1 - Application DC/18/3989/FUL- Change of use from A2 to C3 for ground floor of 48 High Street, Aldeburgh.**

**Additional Information/Documentation received:**

Letters/statements have been received from the applicant, agent and three commercial valuers.

**The Agent** is critical of the response from the Economic Development Team and Committee Report which he considers do not provide commentary on:

- The tertiary location of the property within the High Street.
- The awkward layout of the property which shares a common entrance and heating system with the first floor flat and the practical difficulties associated with separating the ground and first floors.
- The fact that the property lies in that part of the Town Centre where historically there has been an ebb and flow of uses between residential and commercial.
- Letters have been submitted by three independent commercial valuers (Bedfords, Flick and Son and Simon Wright) who have detailed knowledge of the Aldeburgh commercial market and who all consider the property to be generally unattractive to a commercial user.

Policy SSP28 supports a more flexible approach. DM10 pulls in the opposite direction. The decision maker must decide how much weight is given to each in deciding the planning balance.

Given the clear problems associated with the application property, extending the ground floor into the established holiday let makes commercial sense and will provide similar economic benefits to those from an independent commercial user, assuming one could be secured which is doubtful. To require the marketing of the property for a further 12 months is unreasonable and runs contrary to the advice from the three commercial valuers. The ground floor will remain empty for another 12 months.

Planning decisions should be taken in accord with the Development Plan 'unless material considerations indicate otherwise'. There are material considerations in this case that weigh heavily in favour of the grant of permission.

**The applicant** states that the property has been a residence for the last 25 years except for the period when it was in use by Suffolk Secrets.

The two rooms have no direct connection between them, being fully separated by the staircase and have no independent access from the street. The central heating system serves the whole property with one central controller and the services (gas, electricity and water) are single supplies for the whole property. The ground floor rooms are really part of the whole house. Whilst this was suitable for Suffolk Secrets were located there, it makes things highly unsuitable for third party tenants.

We brought together our business with that of Suffolk Cottage Holidays in 2017 and moved our office from 48 High Street to 152 High Street. This has led to the creation of two jobs over the last year despite onslaught from large national cottage agencies and internet giants who are so damaging for our High Streets. We employ over 30 staff in our offices strung along the Suffolk Coast, we support local events.

The EDO's only suggestion is that you require us to spend time and money advertising a property for which there is w which there is no reasonable expectation of letting. This will divert management time and funds that would otherwise be spent investing in our locally based business as well as leaving the ground floor rooms empty for a second year.

**Flick and Sons** state that the building is capable of being occupied in a variety of ways but with minor modification although the southern of the two offices is a little too small to be occupied independently.

There is only a remote chance of the ground floor rooms attracting retail occupiers. The buildings optimal economic use is likely to prove to be residential as opposed to retail or office use.

**Bedfords** write with reference to marketing the unit as a shop with flat above. They confirm that it might lend its self better to be used as an office space, although the size necessitates a relatively small business. Other than a few one-man-bands looking for a single inexpensive room, he can recall nobody seeking an office premises on Aldeburgh High Street of this type.

The further difficulty when a business premises has a shared access with a flat above are both privacy for the flat and security for the business below. Furthermore you would have to undertake the process of splitting the shared heating system. Meters and services accordingly.

**Simon Wright** FRICS confirms 'I consider the tertiary location of the subject site to be generally unattractive to a commercial user which seems substantiated by the property lying vacant.'

**Item 8 – DC/18/4844/FUL - Construction of new dwelling in the grounds for use as short term holiday let. Great House, Orford**

RAMS Contribution has been received.

**Item 11: WOODBRIDGE – DC/18/3456/FUL – Woodbridge Community Resource Youth Centre, The Avenue, Woodbridge, IP12 4BA for The Jetty Lane Community Interest Company (CIC).**

**Amendment to the report** – The application description was unfortunately missing from the published report. It should have read:

*“Ground, Mezzanine and First floor Community centre and car parking. (Including accommodation for Art Studios / Art Exhibition Hall (Kingston Hall), Scout facilities (scout hall- Deben Hall and ancillary accommodation, Co-working office accommodation on the upper floor to generate revenue to sustain the other facilities offered to the community. Car parking, Vehicle crossover (existing location).”*

This is description as was originally submitted, and that which has been consulted on.

**Consultation responses:**

3.10 A number of additional consultation responses have been received since the report was drafted (after the expiry of the consultation period). The total number third party representations (including those referred to in the published committee report) are:

- 24 representations of objection, including three petitions with identical text (72 signatures).
- 56 representations of support.

One of the representations, was in the form of “A briefing paper” dated 19 February 2019, submitted by Mr Robeson (Martin Robeson Planning Practice) summarising representations previously submitted by Mr Robeson on behalf of his client (anonymous). In addition, this correspondence responds to the following proposed conditions included within the officer’s report:

- Condition 16: restricts use of building to B1(Business), D1(non-residential institutions) and D2(assembly and leisure) uses. Raised concerns in relation to the potential for unrestricted uses within these classes and the resulting impact on amenity.
- Condition 8: restricts public use of the building outside the hours of 8am to 11pm, Monday to Sunday. Raised concerns that opening hours differ from those requested on the application form.
- The exclusion of a recommendation from the Highway Authority to seek a bond via a Section 106 agreement for use in the event a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).

**Officer Comments on these matters:**

Condition 8 within the officer recommendation proposes 8am to 11pm following subsequent discussion with the applicant who voiced concerns that some groups (i.e The Scouts) may not finish until after 10pm.

The concerns relating to the Section 106 and a Traffic Regulation Order, are addressed within paragraph 5.27 of the officer’s report which concluded that such a provision would be contrary to the tests set out within Paragraph 56 of the NPPF.

**Additional Information/Documentation:**

The applicant provided an updated visualisation of the proposal to reflect previous amendments to the arrangement of second-floor glazing on the west-facing elevation, as depicted in drawing B5-ELE-05. This visualization will be included within the officers presentation.

**Agenda Item 8 – Local Planning Enforcement Plan**

**Revised recommendation:**

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Planning Committee notes the content of the Local Planning Enforcement Plan and recommends any changes or alterations ahead of consideration by Cabinet.