

Change of use of existing residential dwelling to a commercial holiday let

Northgate Mount
Honley
Holmfirth
HD9 6LN

Planning Statement

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1 Site Description

- 1.1 The application site comprises a large, detached house constructed from Ashlar dressed stone with a slate roof. The house dates from circa 1820 and is a grade II Listed Building.
- 1.2 The house is set within extensive wooded grounds within the village of Honley. To the east of the application premises, beyond a woodland, can be found Honley High School. To the west and south east can be found other residential properties.
- 1.3 The property has a long private access drive from Huddersfield Road. At the entrance to the property there is a Gate House that is within the same ownership, but is rented as a separate dwelling on a short hold tenancy basis.
- 1.4 The property is not within a designated Conservation Area. Trees within the grounds are protected by a preservation order. Neither the dwelling nor its' grounds are within a flood risk area. Honley railway station is approximately 200 m to the east.

2 Development Proposal

- 2.1 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the property from C3 (dwellinghouse) to a sui generis use (commercial holiday let). No physical alterations to the property are proposed by this application; the proposal is for the change of use of the building and its' grounds only. Since no physical works are proposed, an application for Listed Building Consent has not been submitted.
- 2.2 The letting of a dwellinghouse as holiday accommodation would ordinarily not require planning permission. There is much case law on the need for planning permission (or not), but one of the key considerations is whether the dwelling is let out and occupied by 'single households' and genuine 'family groups'. If the accommodation is occupied by a single household or genuine family group then ordinarily there would be no change in use involved and planning permission is not required.
- 2.3 In this instance the property is sizeable, comprising 8 bedrooms and extensive ground floor accommodation. The intention is to let the property as one unit of accommodation. It is envisaged that most bookings will come forward from extended family groups, or groups of friends, looking to meet together and holiday in a luxury property. Due to the size of the premises, few bookings are likely to be made by what would be considered to be a single household (although most visiting guests will use and interact within the property as a single household throughout the duration of their stay). For the avoidance of doubt, and provide the Applicants' with certainty that they will be able to use the

premises in the way that they intend, this application for planning permission has been submitted to change the use of the premises.

- 2.4 The property has one large kitchen area and other shared living accommodation and facilities that will be used by all guests at the premises. Existing facilities such as the swimming pool, gym, games room, and garden room are likely to be very popular with guests. Externally the premises has extensive grounds, and a generous parking and manoeuvring area to accommodate vehicles.

3 Planning History

- 3.1 The only planning applications revealed through searching the Council's Public Access planning application database are numerous applications made for works to protected trees, and the applications for the swimming pool extension that were submitted in 2004. There is no other planning history of relevance.

4. Planning Policy

Local Policy

- 4.1 The Kirklees Local Plan was adopted in February 2019. The Local Plan policies map identifies that the site is within the Green Belt. Local Plan policies seek to ensure that development proposals do not have an unacceptable impact on the openness of the Green Belt. Since the application is for the change of use of the building only, with no new built development, there is no conflict with these policies.
- 4.2 Within the Kirklees Local Plan there is limited other planning policy of direct relevance to the development proposal. However, policy LP10 'Supporting the rural economy' outlines that the economic performance of the rural economy will be improved by supporting and increasing tourist related development, including encouraging new facilities and accommodation for tourists.
- 4.3 The site is also within the boundary area of the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan. Policy 7 'Supporting Economic Activity' is of relevance. The policy outlines that proposals will be supported which result in the creation or sustainable expansion of existing and new businesses.
- 4.4 The specific section of Policy 7 on 'Encouraging Tourist and Visitor Facilities' states that '*Proposals that contribute to and strengthen the visitor and tourist economy of Holme Valley will be supported. These include the creation of new accommodation and tourism facilities through the conversion of existing buildings or associated with existing attractions and new development, where proposals are acceptable having regard to other local and national policies.*' The policy states that '*All proposals must demonstrate how they meet the following specific criteria:*

1. *The site is located outside the Green Belt or the development is acceptable in terms of national Green Belt policy.*
2. *Development for new and of existing caravan, chalet, camping, cabin or lodge style developments, or other visitor accommodation, may be supported where they:*
 - a) *Contribute to improving the offer to tourists;*
 - b) *Are appropriately screened;*
 - c) *Provide adequate car parking spaces;*
 - d) *Are accessible to people with disabilities;*
 - e) *Do not generate traffic movements of a scale and type likely to have severe adverse impact on highway safety and efficiency; and*
 - f) *Mitigate any adverse impact on the capacity of road, sewerage or other infrastructure.'*

National Policy

- 4.5 A draft revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework was published by the new labour government at the end of July 2024. Consultation on that document is in progress. That document places an increased emphasis on supporting economic development, but there are no proposed changes within in it that are of direct relevance to the application.
- 4.6 The last fully revised version of the NPPF is that which was published in December 2023.
- 4.7 Paragraph 155 of the NPPF relates to development within Green Belt. It states that the re-use of existing buildings, provided that they are of permanent and substantial construction, should not be regarded as inappropriate development.
- 4.8 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF is of particular significance and relates to supporting a rural economy. The advice is that: -

'88. Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) *the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, beautiful new buildings;*
- c) *sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside;'*

5. Assessment of the Application

a) Principle of development

- 5.1 The development involves the re-use of an existing dwelling as holiday accommodation. No extension to the property is proposed. Such tourism and business proposals are given general support by both policies within the Kirklees Local Plan and the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 5.2 The site is within the Green Belt, but the re-use of buildings within such designated areas for other purposes is compatible with Green Belt planning policy. No extensions to the building are proposed that would impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

b) Economic benefits

- 5.3 The application proposes a business / tourism development that is supported in principle by planning policy. There are direct economic benefits for the local economy associated with the management and servicing / maintenance of the accommodation (which will be to the benefit of local contractors). Furthermore, the provision of the accommodation is likely to benefit other local businesses such as public houses, restaurants, takeaways, shops, taxi operators, and visitor attractions.

c) Highway Safety / Sustainability

- 5.4 The existing access and parking areas to the application premises are to be re-used. There is already more than adequate parking at the dwelling to meet the requirements of the proposed use. The existing access to the site is wide with good visibility.
- 5.5 Due to the sites close prominence to Honley railway station (located approximately 200 m to the east), there are also realistic alternative transport links to the site to avoid reliance on the use of private cars.

d) Other Issues

- 5.6 Since no new built development is proposed are no resulting physical impacts. There are no impacts on heritage assets or the character or appearance of the area.
- 5.7 The proposed use as a commercial holiday let is broadly very similar in character as the existing authorised use for residential purposes. Furthermore, the application site is very discretely located and is not readily visible from public

viewpoints. There will consequently be no unacceptable impact on the local area.

- 5.8 The existing gatehouse, whilst within the same ownership as the main house, will be unaffected by the proposals and is not included within the application site. The property will continue to be rented out as a separate dwelling on a short hold tenancy basis. Ideally the property will be let to someone associated with the management and servicing of the holiday let accommodation, but this may not be achievable.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 Planning legislation requires that applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the reasons set out in this supporting statement the development is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the Kirklees Local Plan and the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 6.2 The Council is therefore requested to support the application. Should it transpire that there are outstanding concerns, or matters that require addressing, the Applicant would appreciate being given the opportunity to work with the Council to resolve them.