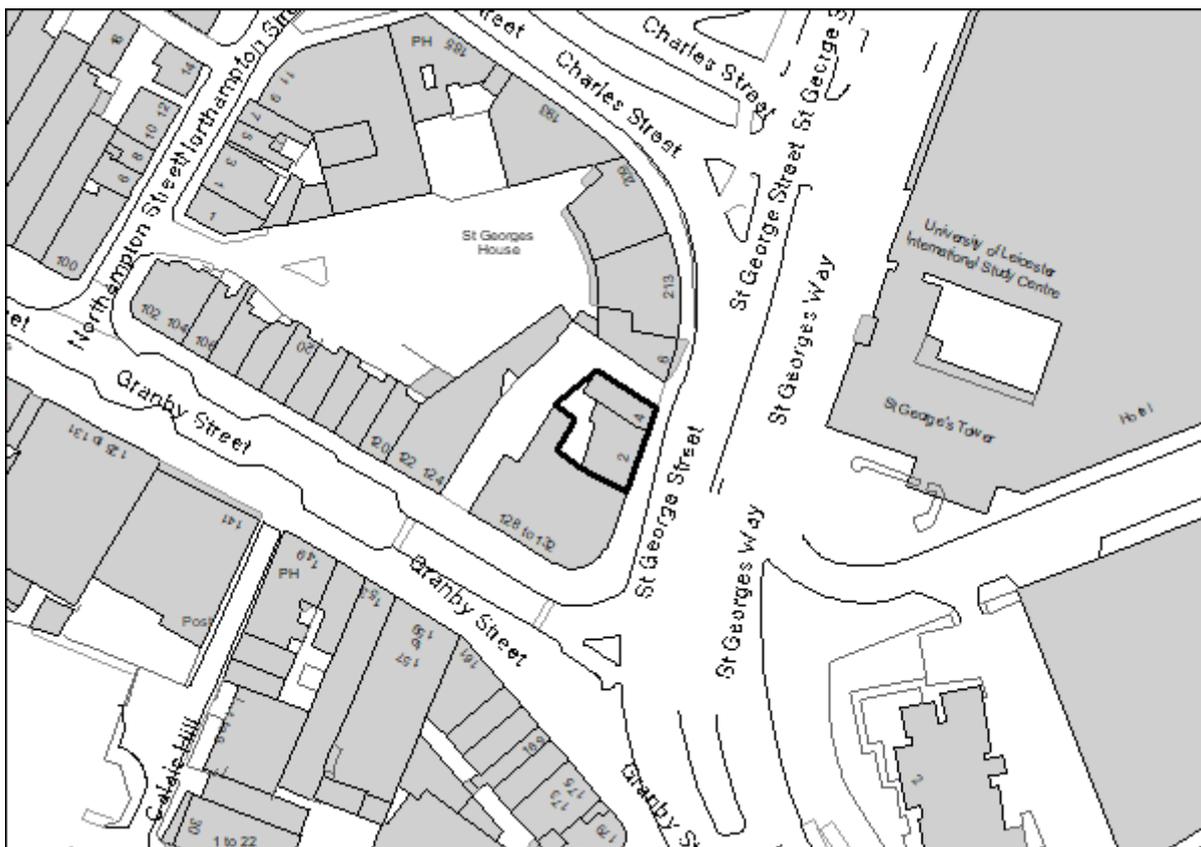


COMMITTEE REPORT

20222453	2-4 St Georges Way	
Proposal:	Change of use from offices (Class E) to hotel (14 Bed) (Class C1); construction of additional storey to create two additional bedrooms	
Applicant:	HSK Property Management Limited	
App type:	Operational development - full application	
Status:	Minor development	
Expiry Date:	15 February 2023	
TEI	TEAM: PD	WARD: Castle



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Summary

- The proposal is before planning committee at the request of Cllr Kitterick to discuss the principle of people potentially being housed for the long term in hotel accommodation in the city.
- Two other objections have been received, principally in relation to the use of the rear yard but also on the impact on the heritage of the adjacent Grade II listed Blunts Building and concerns over flooding of the basement.

- The main issues are the principle of the development, the quality of the accommodation and impacts on neighbouring residential properties, the design of the proposal and its impact on heritage and highways, servicing and waste management considerations.
- The recommendation is for conditional approval subject to receipt of acceptable amended plans.

The Site

The application relates to a four storey office building and the inner ring road opposite the station. It sits just within the Central Shopping Core and adjacent to and within the setting of the Granby Street Conservation Area and the Grade II Listed Blunts Building. It is also within the setting of the Grade II listed YMCA building. It is also within a critical drainage area and is adjacent to the Air Quality Management Area.

Background

Conditional approval (20181585) was granted on 08.11.18 for the construction of a single storey extension to the roof to provide additional office space, extensions to the rear at ground, second and third floors and for other alterations, and for the change of use of the ground floor to a restaurant. Conditions were attached requiring all external materials to be submitted and agreed, ensuring that there was no live or amplified music or voice that would be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring properties and requiring that only food that does not require a flue be installed unless details of a flue had previously been agreed. The approval was not implemented and has now expired.

The Proposal

The proposal is for a fourth floor extension to and the change of use of the existing building to provide a hotel (Class C1). The extension will be flat roofed and will be 2.5 metres in height bringing the height of the building in total to 16.5 metres. The footprint of the extension will be the same width and depth of the existing building but with the fourth floor set back by one metre. The front elevation will be heavily glazed and the walls will be finished in green zinc cladding. There will also be a chrome balcony at the front.

The ground floor will have the entrance hall, lobby and reception at the north and a café and bar at the south. The basement will support ancillary uses such as toilets, staff rooms, kitchen and storage. The floor plans of the first, second and third floors will mirror each other, with four bedrooms (three of which will be double bedrooms and the other a disabled bedroom) which range in size from 20 metres² to 25 metres². The fourth floor (within the proposed extension) will have two larger bedrooms with balcony access measuring 39 metres² and 42 metres² respectively.

Amendments have been agreed in principle providing additional details on the finish of the eaves, and the reveal and section details of the windows. These amendments have been requested and confirmation they will be made has been received and the Plans should be available before your committee meeting.

Policy Considerations

Development plan policies relevant to this application are listed at the end of this report.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraphs 2 (Application determined in accordance with development plan and material considerations)

Paragraph 11 (Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development)

Paragraphs 39 and 40 (Pre-applications)

Paragraphs 43 (Sufficient information for good decision making)

Paragraph 56 (Six tests for planning conditions)

Paragraphs 86 to 91 (Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres)

Paragraphs 111 and 112 (Highways impacts)

Paragraphs 126, 130, 132 and 134 (Good design and ensuring high standard of amenity)

Paragraph 154 (Climate Change)

Paragraphs 159 and 167 (Flooding and Drainage)

Paragraphs 185 to 188 (Noise Pollution)

Paragraphs 194, 195, 197, 199, 201, 202, 203, 206, and 208 (Heritage Assets)

Development Plan policies

Development plan policies relevant to this application are listed at the end of this report.

Other legal or policy context

Granby Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Consultations

Local Highway Authority (air quality) (LCC): - concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) are not expected to exceed national air quality objectives. The proposed change of use would not typically be considered as sensitive receptors with regards to air quality exposure. In any case ventilation is proposed to be incorporated into the building. Dust emissions as part of the development process have been assessed as negligible to low risk and suitable mitigation measures have been provided to mitigate the latter. These can be secured by condition. There are no car parking spaces proposed and so there will be minimal increase in vehicle movements and associated pollutant concentrations.

Environmental Health (pollution) (LCC): - satisfied with the assessment and conclusions given in the noise report. The recommended measures in Section 5 of the assessment are suitable. More detail is required on ventilation which should provide a minimum of 4 air changes per hour.

Waste Management (LCC): - the proposal is for a commercial use and so no comments are made.

Representations

Two objections have been received from neighbouring addresses. The objections raise the following concerns:

- incorrect location plan (this has subsequently been corrected)
- no right of way over the land at the rear
- the north line boundary is too narrow for a vehicle to turn (the proposal has subsequently been altered to involve no vehicular use of the rear)
- vehicular movements at the rear causing potential danger to cyclists and pedestrians on Granby Street (the proposal has subsequently been altered to involve no vehicular use of the rear)
- insufficient parking and access for goods vehicles to the north and west
- concern over drainage at south perimeter walls and potential for damp and water to adjacent basement
- the height of the extension detracting from the Art-Deco design of the Grade II listed Blunts Building.

Councillor Kitterick makes the following comments:

- no objection to hotel use in principle
- concerned about possible use for long term residential occupation and requests Committee consideration of this principle

Consideration

Principle of development:

The proposal will result in a Class E use in the Central Shopping Core. However, the building faces St Georges Way, located away from Granby Street and I consider it to be less appealing to commercial and retail uses. In any case the proposal is for the creation of a new hotel, albeit a small one, in the city centre and is in keeping with the objective of Core Strategy CS12 of supporting new hotels and conference venues. It will also provide an associated café/bar on the ground floor with a separate entrance resulting in a more active frontage than currently. The proposal is acceptable in principle.

The length of stay at a hotel is primarily determined by the guests and cannot be controlled effectively through planning. However, the proposal is for a hotel which is Class C1 and such uses are appropriate in the city centre.

Quality of accommodation:

Hotels are not covered by the National Space Standards which govern internal floorspace for Class C3 residential development. No planning standards therefore control the specification or size of hotel rooms but in terms of the proposed development the outlook and comparative floorspace proposed is as follows.

The guest rooms in the converted existing building will all have a good level of outlook over St Georges Way and towards London Road and the station and have a reasonable level of floorspace for temporary accommodation (with the disabled rooms providing additional space for better circulation). The two guestrooms in the new extension on the fourth floor will also have a good level of outlook and will have comparatively large floorspace.

A noise assessment was carried out and the results and recommended mitigation measures submitted to the Council. Noise measurements were taken at two external locations. The noise at the St George's Way elevation was defined primarily as road traffic and pedestrian noise from St George's Way. The noise at the rear of the site was primarily derived from road traffic from St George's Way and Granby Street, raised voices from employees at the rear and shoppers and residents off Granby Street. There was no perception of fixed plant at either measurement location during the noise survey. I am satisfied with the assessment of environmental health colleagues that the recommended acoustic performances of windows will mitigate these noise impacts and these can be secured by condition. However, I consider it necessary to attach an additional condition requiring details of ventilation to be submitted.

The noise assessment also considered the impact that the ground floor café/bar might have on the guest bedrooms directly above and recommended suitable floor/ceiling insulation between the two floors. It also considered the Class E usage of the adjacent premises meaning that adjacent premises could change to cafes or restaurants without needing planning permission. Suitable insulation to the walls adjoining the adjacent Blunts shoe shop was recommended to account for this possibility. Both the floor/ceiling and wall insulation can be secured by condition.

Hotels and their guests will adopt commercial letting policy outside of planning control to meet legitimate demands. Permanent occupation would be likely to fall outside the C1 (Hotel) use class and as such a further consent may be required depending on the extent of such use. There is a demand for non-permanent short/medium stay/'apart-hotel' accommodation possibly up to a number of months for regular contractors etc which is important to accommodate to support economic activity in a city such as Leicester.

With these conditions attached and given the size of rooms and the level of the outlook I consider that the proposal will provide a good level of accommodation for guests.

Impact on neighbouring residential amenity:

The nearest residential properties are the flats at Burdett House, approximately 14 metres from the rear of the site and on the other side of the service yard. The activity at the proposed hotel is predominantly St George's Way facing with only bin storage, a goods lift and staff entrance facing the rear. The scheme has also been amended so that the proposal no longer includes vehicular use of the rear yard area. As such the proposal is unlikely to have a harmful impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

There is some potential for any use of the goods lift or bin storage area at unsociable hours to cause disturbance by way of noise. However, I consider that this can be suitably addressed in the delivery and waste management plan condition discussed below.

Heritage and design considerations:

Given the siting of the existing building adjacent to and affecting the setting of the Granby Street Conservation Area and the Grade II listed Blunts Building and across the road from but affecting the setting of the Grade II listed YMCA Building, heritage and design considerations are intrinsically linked and as such are considered together.

The extension has been designed so that its scale, massing and positioning are all appropriate to the setting of these heritage assets. The increased height will be in keeping with the Blunts and YMCA buildings, both of which form the visual entrance to the Granby Street Conservation Area and the set back at fourth floor level ensures that the roof of the Blunts building is left unobscured and remains the primary visual landmark on this corner.

As the Heritage Statement submitted with the application points out, the Granby Street Conservation Area has a rich history of hotels, including the Wellington Hotel, Carlton Hotel, Temperance Hotel and Grand Hotel, aided perhaps by its location on the route from the train station to the city centre. As such the proposed use itself preserves the character of the conservation area.

The proposal also includes improvements to the existing building itself including retaining the heavily glazed frontage, removal of the degrading tiling and the installation of a more active frontage.

However, given the impact of the proposal on the setting of neighbouring heritage assets and given that there is limited detailing in the submission regarding materials I consider it appropriate to secure these details by condition.

Additional details have also been agreed in principle regarding the finish of the eaves, and the reveal and section details of the windows. These amendments have been requested and should be forthcoming- an update will be provided at the meeting.

Highways, servicing and waste management considerations:

There is no parking on site. However, the site is only 130 metres from the train station and from London Road which has good bus routes in and out of the city and is in a very sustainable location in terms of guest arrivals and connectivity with the rest of the city. Staff would also be able to use the same public transport links though in antisocial hours would more likely use taxis. I do not consider this to be an uncommon arrangement for hotels.

There is no vehicular access to the rear yard available to the site. However, amended plans have been received demonstrating how the loading bay on Charles Street at 45 metres away from the site would be used for servicing and waste collections. I consider this arrangement to be workable provided that it is carried out in accordance with an

agreed servicing and waste management scheme that takes into account for example dates and timings of deliveries and collections, contingency plans in the case of delays and a designated responsible person/single point of contact who can be contacted when issues are identified. A note to applicant would be required for clarity that any changes to the plan would require a separate and new application to discharge the condition. With a condition securing a suitable servicing and waste delivery plan attached I consider that the proposal will be acceptable in terms of impacts on parking and the function of the highway.

Planning cannot reasonably control operational letting policy of hotels and short/medium term accommodation is a necessary component of economic and business demands in the city.

I therefore recommend APPROVAL subject to the receipt of acceptable amended plans in respect of eaves detailing, and window reveals and sections and subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

1. START WITHIN THREE YEARS
2. The development shall not commence until the following measures are completed:
 - a) glazing to all first, second, third and fourth floor windows on the front elevation that achieves a minimum acoustic performance of 43dB Rw + Ctr as detailed at paragraph 8 of page 3 of the Noise Assessment by Sanctuary Acoustics (November 2022)
 - b) ceiling insulation between the ground and first floor that achieves an acoustic performance equivalent to that of the "Ground to first floor structure with a tile-in-grid ceiling" shown at Figure 22, or "Ground to first floor structure with a suspended Fireline plasterboard ceiling" shown at Figure 23 of the Noise Assessment by Sanctuary Acoustics (November 2022)
 - c) wall insulation to all walls of the first, second, third and fourth floors that are adjacent to the Blunts Building that achieves an acoustic performance equivalent to that of the "1 x 15mm Soundbloc plasterboard on a resilient bar attached to a steel stud erected off the existing wall surface" shown at Figure 25 of the Noise Assessment by Sanctuary Acoustics (November 2022)

These measures shall be retained as such and at the same minimum performance indicated above for the lifetime of the development.
(In the interests of the amenities of future guests, and in accordance with saved policies PS10 and PS11 of the City of Leicester Local Plan.)
3. The development shall not commence until details of mechanical ventilation that allows for 4 air changes per hour and does not exceed 30dB(A) in

bedrooms, and 35dB(A) in all guest bedrooms rooms are submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

These measures shall be retained as such and at the same minimum performances indicated above for the lifetime of the development.

(In the interests of the amenities of future occupiers, and in accordance with saved policies PS10 and PS11 of the City of Leicester Local Plan.)

4. The development shall not commence until the following has been submitted:
 - a) a sample of the metallic zinc cladding to be used for the fourth floor extension,
 - b) a sample of the material to be used for the roof of the fourth floor extension,
 - c) a sample of the textured render to be used for the front elevation,
 - d) a sample of the brick cladding to be used for the side elevation,
 - e) a sample of the chrome and tinted glass to be used for the balcony above the third floor,

and approved by the City Council as local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with these agreed details.

(To preserve the character and appearance of the Granby Street Conservation Area and the significance of the Grade II listed Blunts and YMCA buildings, and in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS18.)

5. The development shall not come into use until a Delivery, Servicing and Waste Management Plan has been submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority. The Delivery, Servicing and Waste Management Plan shall include:
 - a) a schedule of weekly dates and times for deliveries and waste collections
 - b) arrangements for deliveries and waste collections (including notification of vehicle arrival to staff and collection points shown on a plan and noted in the schedule required under a) above)
 - c) a schedule of anticipated routine servicing throughout an annual period
 - d) the name/role and contact details of the responsible person or single point of contact delegated to oversee the Delivery, Servicing and Waste Management Plan.

The Delivery, Servicing and Waste Management Plan shall be operated from the date of the development coming into use and shall be maintained throughout the lifetime of the development.

(In the interests of the proper functioning of the highway and the residential amenity of neighbouring properties and in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS14 and saved City of Leicester Local Plan policy PS10).

6. Development shall be carried out in full accordance with the following approved plans:

Proposed Site Plan, ref. no. 22035-DSA-XX-XX-DR-A-003, received 26.04.2023

Proposed Floor Plans, ref. no. 22035-DSA-XX-XX-DR-A-004, received 21.12.2022

Proposed Elevations and Section A-A, ref. no. 22035-DSA-XX-XX-DR-A-005, received 26.04.2023

Existing and Proposed Street Elevations, ref. no. 22035-DSA-XX-XX-DR-A-006, received 26.04.2023

Waste Management Plan, ref. no. 22035-DSA-XX-XX-DR-A-007, received 26.04.2023

(For the avoidance of doubt).

NOTES FOR APPLICANT

1. Any changes to Condition 6 ('Delivery, Servicing and Waste Management Plan) will require a subsequent application to agree details of this condition.
2. The City Council, as local planning authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received. This planning application has been the subject of positive and proactive discussions with the applicant during the process (and pre-application).
The decision to grant planning permission with appropriate conditions taking account of those material considerations in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF 2021 is considered to be a positive outcome of these discussions.

Policies relating to this recommendation

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 2006_AM01 | Planning permission will only be granted where the needs of pedestrians and people with disabilities are incorporated into the design and routes are as direct as possible to key destinations. |
| 2006_AM02 | Planning permission will only be granted where the needs of cyclists have been incorporated into the design and new or improved cycling routes should link directly and safely to key destinations. |
| 2006_AM11 | Proposals for parking provision for non-residential development should not exceed the maximum standards specified in Appendix 01. |
| 2006_PS10 | Criteria will be used to assess planning applications which concern the amenity of existing or proposed residents. |
| 2014_CS03 | The Council will require high quality, well designed developments that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the local natural and built environment. |

The policy sets out design objectives for urban form, connections and access, public spaces, the historic environment, and 'Building for Life'.

2014_CS12 In recognition of the City Centre's role in the City's economy and wider regeneration, the policy sets out strategies and measures to promote its growth as a sub-regional shopping, leisure, historic and cultural destination, and the most accessible and sustainable location for main town centre uses.

2014_CS14 The Council will seek to ensure that new development is easily accessible to all future users including by alternative means of travel to the car; and will aim to develop and maintain a Transport Network that will maximise accessibility, manage congestion and air quality, and accommodate the impacts of new development.

2014_CS18 The Council will protect and seek opportunities to enhance the historic environment including the character and setting of designated and other heritage assets.