

# COMMITTEE REPORT

<b>20241513</b>	<b>107 Granby Street</b>	
Proposal:	Change of use from student accommodation (Sui-Generis) at part-ground floor, first–fourth floors to hotel (C1)	
Applicant:	Mr J Kotecha	
App type:	Operational development - full application	
Status:	Smallscale Major Development	
Expiry Date:	2 January 2025	
JL	TEAM: PM	WARD: Castle



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## Summary

- The application is being brought to committee at the request of Councillor Kitterick to consider the acceptability of the living accommodation.
- The main issue to consider is the living accommodation for prospective occupiers of the hotel accommodation.
- The application is recommended for conditional approval.

## The Site

The application site is the former Last Plantagenet public house, located at 107 Granby Street, fronting Granby Street and Dover Street. The building was originally a furniture store (Maples), constructed in the 1950s and is clad in Portland stone. The building is a significant example of transitional art-deco to modernist architecture. The building is five storeys in height and includes a plant room to the roof and a basement. At present, the building is vacant at ground floor with part ground floor converted to reception area and first floor and above as student accommodation. The site is located within the Granby Street Conservation Area and a Critical Drainage Area. To the rear of the ground floor of the building is an electricity substation.

## Background

Planning permission had previously been approved in 2017 (20171448) for conversion to a 38 bed hotel at floors 1 – 4. An application was made to discharge the condition relating to noise insulation in 2020, however the permission was not implemented. Prior to this, there have been historic applications to change the use of floors 1-4 to a 35 bed hotel with external changes, and other minor works related to the former public house use.

In 2021, planning permission was granted by the Planning and Development Control Committee for the change of use of the building at part ground floor and floors 1-4 for student accommodation under application 20201018. It was proposed that the ground floor would be retained as a restaurant / drinking establishment. Since then, there have been a number of applications to discharge the conditions of the application. Application 20221211 was submitted for a non-material amendment to the 2020 application for amendments to the facade of the building.

Advertisement consent was granted under consent 20232035 for a non-illuminated projecting sign.

## The Proposal

This application seeks permission to change the use of part ground floor and floors 1-4 from student accommodation to hotel. The proposed change of use would not result in any external changes and very minor internal changes. The proposal would result in 56 self-catering hotel rooms.

## Policy Considerations

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

Paragraph 2 (Primacy of development plan)

Paragraph 11 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development)

Paragraph 29 (Early engagement)

Paragraph 48 (Determination in accordance with development plan)

Paragraph 49 (Emerging plans)

Paragraphs 56 and 57 (Planning conditions)

Paragraph 85 (Economic growth)  
Paragraph 90 (Support town centres)  
Paragraph 98 (Social, recreational and cultural services/facilities)  
Paragraph 118 (Travel plan)  
Paragraph 135 (Good design and amenity)  
Paragraph 139 (Design decisions/poor design)  
Paragraph 140 (Clear and accurate plans)  
Paragraph 200 (Agent of change)  
Paragraph 210 (Sustaining significance of heritage assets)

### Development Plan policies

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

The most relevant Core strategy policies are CS03, CS12 and CS18, and Local plan policy PS10.

### Other Guidance

Granby Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal (March 2007)

### Other legal or policy context

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 outlines the statutory duty of local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas.

## **Consultations**

Highways – TRAVEL PLAN: The Travel Plan is considered to be satisfactory in scope. While the Travel Plan makes reference to information for future hotel guests, no equivalent to a Travel Pack was submitted with the application. Instead, it suggests such information would be made available on request by guests. It is recommended that a Travel Pack be produced and made available to guests. The pack should incorporate the necessary sources of information to encourage sustainable travel. In practice, such a pack needs to be made available electronically to allow guests to access the information before and/or with their booking. The Travel Plan makes reference to relevant websites, which would help achieve this.

In other respects, Highways DC standing advice should suffice in relation to any design or access issues, and the Leicester Street Design Guide can be used for further advice if necessary. Therefore, in light of the comments above, the Highway Authority does not raise any objections to the proposal, subject to conditions relating to a travel plan and travel packs.

Noise Pollution – Do not object to the granting of this application, however would recommend a condition restricting plant/ machinery and the installation of extraction flues.

## **Representations**

### **Cllr Kitterick – (First representation)**

- Object to the application. Believes that there is a demand for genuine hotel accommodation in the city especially given the amount of hotel accommodation being used to house people in need of long-term accommodation.
- Fear that living standards in this and other hotel accommodation is designed for short term occupation but is increasingly being used for long term residences. No residential development would be allowed to have such poor amenity provision and hotel status is a back door to substantially sub-standard accommodation.
- One way to protect against this in new hotel applications is to have a condition about the maximum length of accommodation a resident can stay. This would be particularly useful when it comes to public housing contracts with government departments such as the Home Office and City Council being inhibited in taking over these hotels on long term accommodation contracts as they will be in breach of a council planning condition.

### **Cllr Kitterick – (Second representation)**

- Re-iterate my strong objections to the application for a hotel on Granby Street 20241513.
- It appears that the City Council itself is planning to remove the restriction on student accommodation and not only will place people in accommodation well under the Designated National Space Standards but intends to house vulnerable adults with substance abuse issues in concentrated numbers in this accommodation. The plan to justify this is that it will be "temporary accommodation" by which they mean 18 months which I am sure will be varied should it get permission to allow for longer occupation at the whim of the Housing Department.
- Need to be viewed in the context that the City Council could buy these developments and install long term residents with a high concentration of vulnerable persons in them which would be highly inappropriate.

## **Consideration**

### Principle of development

A hotel is listed in Appendix 2 of the NPPF as a main town centre use. Core Strategy (2014) policy CS12 'City Centre' promotes the growth of the City Centre as "the most sustainable location for main town centre uses and in recognition of its central role in the city's economy and wider regeneration" by adopting a strategy which includes "developing an economically prosperous Centre through the location of small offices and creative industries and supporting related uses including new hotels and conference venues". It is noted that the site has previously been granted approval for change of use to a hotel. Therefore, the principle of a hotel use at this site is already established and is supported by national and local planning policy.

## Design

As no external changes are proposed, there are no design issues to consider in relation to the external appearance of the building.

Internally, there is a small change proposed to the first floor where a cleaner's cupboard, toilets and a multi-function space will be created from what is currently communal areas for the student accommodation use. There will be no internal alterations to create the hotel rooms, which will be the same as the rooms which were created for the student accommodation use.

## Heritage Assets

107 Granby Street is the former Leicester branch showroom of the Maples of London furniture manufacturers, constructed c. 1954. It is a prominent Portland stone/cast stone building and a significant example of transitional art-deco to modernist architecture. It has strong group value with other Art deco Portland stone buildings along Granby Street - Blunt's shoe shop 128-132 Granby Street, 117-119 Granby Street, 35-43 Granby Street and 42 Granby Street, and is located within the Granby Street Conservation area.

There would be no objections from a building conservation perspective to the proposed change of use from student accommodation (sui-generis) to hotel (C1) at part ground floor, first - fourth floors. This change of use would not impact the external appearance of the building, no external alterations are proposed in this application and as such there would be no discernible impact on the wider character and appearance of the Granby Street

Any external signage required as a result of this change of use would be subject to a separate application for Advertisement Consent.

## Living conditions

It is proposed that the room sizes to be provided are the same as the existing student accommodation, with rooms ranging in size from 19sqm to 27sqm.

At the time of determining the previous application, it was noted that many of the rooms were rectangular in shape and quite deep compared to the width of the room. Beds and the living area of the rooms had been placed closer to the window, with the kitchen and bathroom to the rear of the room, to maximise light to the main area of accommodation. The sizes of the rooms were previously noted and the fact that these were below the National Design Space Standards applied to general residential use. However, as it was proposed that the accommodation was for student occupation and would have a student occupation condition and given the location of the building, it was considered that the size of the rooms would be acceptable. In addition to this, the proposal involved the conversion of the existing building and no extension and as such, there was a restriction to the space available for the conversion.

Taking into account the proposed occupation of the rooms for hotel use and that this would not form permanent accommodation, it is considered that the room sizes would be acceptable and a condition will be included to restrict the occupation for 60 days.

#### Residential amenity (*neighbouring properties*)

Due to the location of the development and proposed use, it is not considered that the proposal would have an impact on residential amenity.

#### Highways and Parking

There is no parking provision associated with the development. The site is in close proximity to public car parking provision and public transport including Leicester Railway Station and local and national bus services. Cycle storage is available at ground floor inside the building. The site is in a highly sustainable location and the proposal is considered to be acceptable taking into account highways and parking and in accordance with the development plan and NPPF. A travel plan and travel pack will be requested as pre-occupation conditions.

#### Other matters

In response to Cllr Kitterick's allegations about potential Council Housing use of the building, the Director of Housing states:

*The Council do not use and have not approached The Last Plantagenet for use of any accommodation at the unit. Equally the Council is not planning to remove the restrictions on other student accommodation and apply for a change to hotel use equivalent to this planning application*

## Conclusion

The proposed change of use of the building from student accommodation to hotel is acceptable in principle. Planning permission has previously been granted for a hotel use in this building and there have been no policy changes which would be at odds with the principle of changing the use.

While more rooms are proposed than the previous hotel use permitted, and therefore the rooms are smaller than previously permitted, it is considered that due to the proposed use as a hotel that this would not be a reason for refusal due to the short-term nature of occupancy.

Concerns have been raised by the local ward Councillor in relation to the potential occupancy of the building, however the Local Planning Authority has no information or evidence to suggest that the building would not be used as described and the Council's Director of Housing has confirmed that there have been no discussions in respect of this building as alleged.

To ensure that the building is not used for long term occupancy, a condition restricting the length of stay has been recommended. The proposal will not affect nearby

neighbour amenity or the character and appearance of the Granby Street Conservation Area.

I consider that the proposal accords with the NPPF (2024), saved Local Plan policies and the Core Strategy.

I recommend that this application is APPROVED subject to conditions:

## CONDITIONS

1. The development shall be begun within three years from the date of this permission. (To comply with Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.)
2. No part of the development shall be occupied until the measures within the approved Travel Plan for the development have been initiated in accordance with a timetable contained within the Travel Plan, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council. The Plan shall: (a) assess the site in terms of transport choice for staff, users of services, visitors and deliveries; (b) consider pre-trip mode choice, measures to promote more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling, car share and public transport (including providing a personal journey planner, information for bus routes, bus discounts available, cycling routes, cycle discounts available and retailers, health benefits of walking, car sharing information, information on sustainable journey plans, notice boards) over choosing to drive to and from the site as single occupancy vehicle users, so that all users have awareness of sustainable travel options; (c) identify marketing, promotion and reward schemes to promote sustainable travel; (d) include provision for monitoring travel modes (including travel surveys) of all users and patterns at regular intervals, for a minimum of 5 years from the first occupation of the development brought into use. The plan shall be maintained and operated thereafter. (To promote sustainable transport and in accordance with policies AM01, AM02, and AM11 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and policies CS14 and CS15 of the Core Strategy).
3. Prior to the first occupation of any hotel accommodation, a 'Guest Travel Pack' shall be made available for hotel guests, both as printed copies and electronically. The contents of this shall be submitted to and approved in advance by the local planning authority and shall include walking, cycling and bus maps, latest relevant bus timetable information and bus travel and cycle discount vouchers. (In the interest of sustainable development and in accordance with policy AM02 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and policy CS14 of the Core Strategy).
4. No plant or machinery, including kitchen extracts flues shall be installed unless details have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. (In the interests of the amenities of nearby occupiers, and in accordance with saved policies PS10 and PS11 of the City of Leicester Local Plan.)
5. The hotel hereby approved shall only be used as a hotel (Class C1) and none of the rooms shall be occupied by any person or persons for longer than 60 consecutive days in any one calendar year, except in the instance where a room may be occupied by a member of staff employed by the hotel business occupying the site

at the time and with their employment requiring primarily on-site duties. (In the interests of the amenity of future occupiers and in accordance with Saved City of Leicester Local Plan Policy PS10).

6. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings:

A1822 P014A - Proposed Basement Plan,  
A1822 P015A - Proposed Ground Floor Plan,  
A1822 P017A - Proposed Second Floor Plan,  
A1822 P018A - Proposed Third Floor Plan,  
A1822 P019A - Proposed Fourth Floor Plan, and  
A1822 P020A - Proposed Roof Plan, received by the local planning authority

on 23 August 2024.

A1822 P013B - Proposed Site Plan, and  
A1822 P016B - Proposed First Floor Plan, received by the local planning authority on 3 October 2024.

(For the avoidance of doubt).

#### NOTES FOR APPLICANT

1. 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/or 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 2024 is considered to be a positive outcome of these discussions.

2. Noise from any plant/machinery should not exceed 5dB(A) below the existing background noise level. A correction factor should be added to the measured sound pressure level if noise contains any distinguishable characteristics (whine, hiss, screech, hum, etc.) or is irregular enough to attract attention, when measured at 1 metre from the facade of any nearby residential properties.

#### **Policies relating to this recommendation**

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.

2006\_PS11 Control over proposals which have the potential to pollute, and over proposals which are sensitive to pollution near existing polluting uses; support for alternative fuels etc.

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\_CS10 The Council will seek to ensure that Leicester has a thriving and diverse business community that attracts jobs and investment to the City. The policy sets out proposals to achieve this objective.
- 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\_CS18 The Council will protect and seek opportunities to enhance the historic environment including the character and setting of designated and other heritage assets.