

Committee: **PLANNING**

Date of Meeting: **15 September 2010**

Title of Report: **S/2010/1062**
Ribble Buildings, Lord Street, Southport
(Dukes Ward)

Proposal: Conversion of existing building and erection of a six storey extension to the rear to create a 92 bed hotel, including ground floor restaurant, layout of car parking area and external refurbishment works after removal of existing canopies

Applicant: Trident Equity Investments LLP

Executive Summary

The key issues with the application relate to the design and visual appearance of the new building, its impact on the character and appearance of the Lord Street Conservation Area, the effect on the setting of the adjacent listed bingo hall, plus the impacts on other nearby users. It is also key to consider the implications for the new use of the existing building and the extent to which the proposal adequately addresses the public realm and how it will sit within the context of surrounding activities.

Recommendation(s) **Delegate approval to officers subject to receipt of satisfactory bat survey information**

Justification

The proposal will enable another scheme of high quality for Southport Town Centre, providing enhancement to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, whilst maintaining the setting of the nearby listed building and facilitating improved confidence in the area through the delivery of a commercially viable scheme bringing key vacant buildings back into meaningful use.

The scheme is consistent with the policies of the Sefton UDP and having had regard to all other material considerations, the granting of planning permission is justified in line with the content of the report.

Conditions

1. T-1 Full Planning Permission Time Limit
2. S-106 Standard S106
3. M-2 Materials (sample)
4. H-5 Off-site Highway Improvements
5. H-9 Travel Plan required

6. Canopy details (full)
 7. P-5 Plant and machinery
 8. P-8 Kitchen Extraction Equipment
 9. a) Details of all tables and chairs to be used in the outdoor cafe and any enclosures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.
b) The outdoor cafe shall operate in accordance with the approved details.
 10. X12 Local Labour Agreement
 11. M-6 Piling
 12. H-6 Vehicle parking and manoeuvring
 13. H-7 Cycle parking
 14. The clock shall be reinstated to full working order within 2 months of the commencement of the development hereby permitted, or in accordance with a schedule to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
 15. All brickwork exposed following the removal of existing canopies shall be reinstated in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted.
 16. The development shall derive a minimum 10% of all its energy requirements from renewable sources as set out by the approved scheme.
 17. B-8 Pavement cafés (opening hours)
- X1 Compliance

Reasons

1. RT-1
2. RS-106
3. RM-2
4. RH-5
5. RH-9
6. RM-4
7. RP-5
8. RP-8
9. RM-1
10. Local Labour
11. RM-6
12. RH-6
13. RH-7
14. To safeguard a feature of notable interest on the building in the interests of the character and appearance of the Lord Street Conservation Area and to comply with Policy HC1 of the Sefton UDP.
15. To safeguard the building's external appearance and to comply with Policy HC1 of the Sefton UDP.
16. To ensure the provisions of energy from on-site renewable sources and to comply with Policy DQ2 of Sefton's UDP.
17. RB-7
18. RX1

Notes

1. The applicant is advised that the proposal will require the formal allocation of addresses. Contact the Highways Development Control Team on Tel: 0151 934 4175 to apply for a new street name/property number.
2. The applicant is advised that all works to the adopted highway must be carried out by a Council approved contractor at the applicant's expense. Please contact the Highways Section on 0151 934 4175 or development.control@technical.sefton.gov.uk for further information.
3. There are significant bands of peat deposits in Sefton and this development is in an area where these deposits may be substantial. Peat produces naturally occurring methane and carbon dioxide and if sufficient amounts of these gases are allowed to collect under or within a newly erected or extended building, there is a potential risk to the development and occupants.
4. Bats may be present in your building. Bats are protected species. If you discover bats you must cease work immediately, contact Batline on 01704 385735 for advice.
5. Planning permission is granted subject to an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in relation to trees and public greenspace.
For advice with regard to Local Labour Agreements (condition 10) please contact Karen Towle, Employer Liaison Officer, Sefton@work, 268-288 Stanley Road, Bootle, L20 3ER. Tel 0151 934 2621.
6. The applicant is advised that if unexpected contamination is found after development has begun, development must be halted on that part of the site affected by the unexpected contamination to the extent specified by the Local Planning Authority.

Drawing Numbers

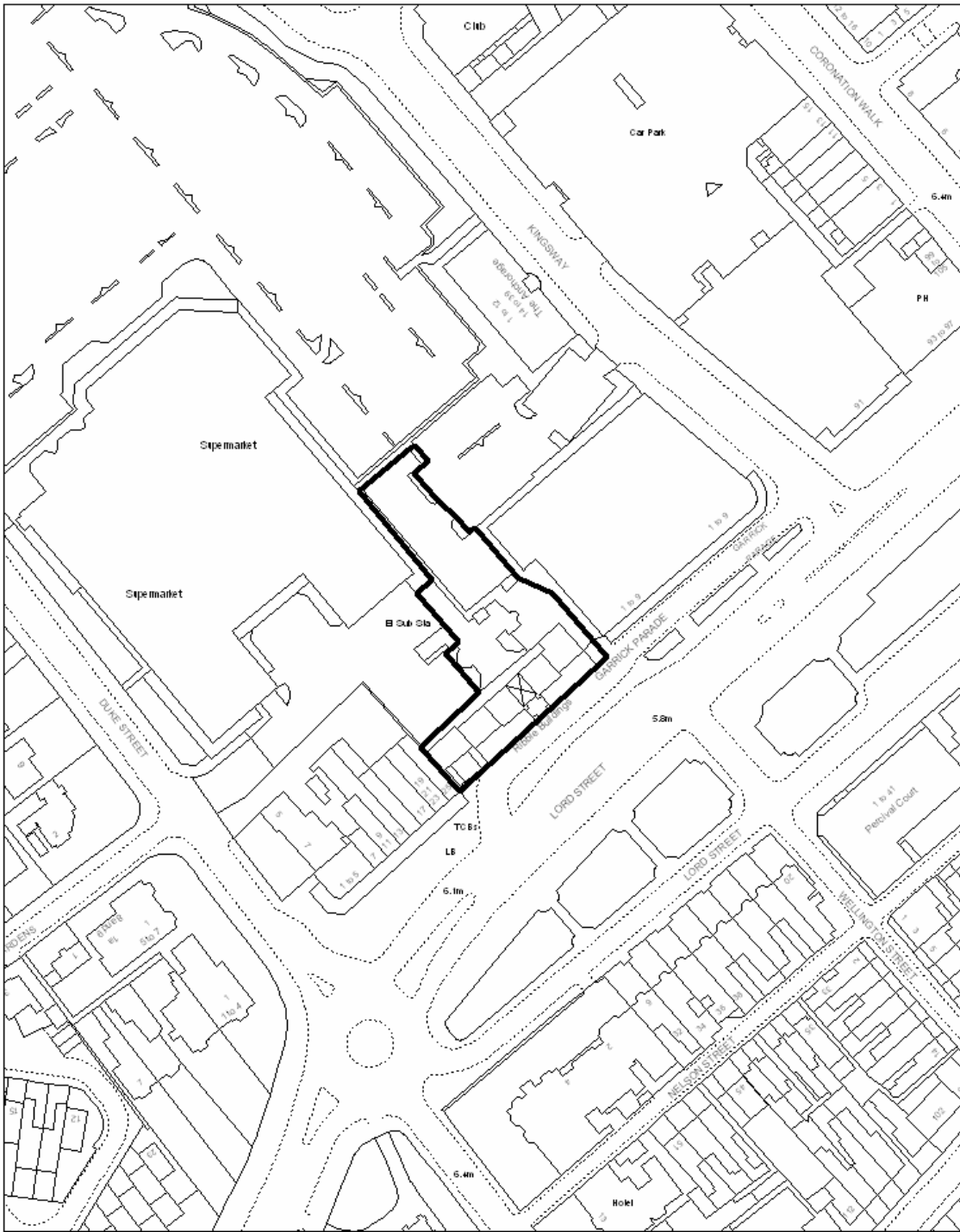
02, 03, 04, 05_P1, 06_P1, 07_P1, 08_P1, 09_P1, 10_P1, 11_P1, 12, 20, 21, 22, 200_P1, 201_P1, 202_P1, 203_P1, 204_P1, 205_P1, 260_P1, 261_P1, 262_P1, 263_P1, 500_P1, 1000_P1, Planning Statement, Renewable Energy Statement, PPS5 Heritage Statement, Interim Travel Plan.

Financial Implications

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	2006/ 2007 £	2007/ 2008 £	2008/ 2009 £	2009/ 2010 £
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
REVENUE IMPLICATIONS				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

List of Background Papers relied upon in the preparation of this report

History referred to
Policy referred to



Sefton Council
Planning & Economic
Regeneration Department
 Andy Wallis - Director
Planning & Economic Regeneration is part of the
 Regeneration & Environmental Services Directorate

S/2010/1062
 Robble Buildings,
 Lord Street
 Southport
 OSGR: 333176, 416987 Sheets: 4896, 469A Area: 1945 sqm

Standard Site Plan
 Scale: 1:1250
 Date: 2/9/2010
 Drawn By: BEERT on
 Ward(s): Dukes
 Postcode Sector(s): PR8 1
 Polling District(s): W3
 Parish(es): None Found

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The Site

The site lies at the south east end of Lord Street, with the main elevation of the existing building fronting Lord Street itself. It is a building of substance, brick with slate and stone features, with a central clock tower that helps make a significant contribution to the street scene and wider setting. The building is widely visible from a number of vantage points beyond Lord Street, including Kingsway and further east along the Promenade.

The adjacent bingo hall to the north east side is listed, and is a classic art deco example. Morrisons Supermarket and its car park are to the north west of the site, and there is established pedestrian access through the building from Lord Street. There are smaller retail units to the south west.

The site lies within the Lord Street Conservation Area. The building is currently vacant and has been for some considerable time, and though partially renovated in the 1990s, is in need of restoration and a development which assists in driving the buildings re-use.

Proposal

Conversion of existing building and erection of a six storey extension to the rear to create a 92 bed hotel, including ground floor restaurant, layout of car parking area and external refurbishment works after removal of existing canopies.

History

The site has been subject to many applications over time, the most significant are as follows:

89/0716/N – Two storey shopping development with central mall, restaurant, facilities and department store, roller rink at 3rd floor level, roof top and multi storey parking for 1,070 vehicles and associated goods/servicing arrangements – withdrawn 20 January 1993.

89/1231/N – Amendment to 89/0716 to provide revised mall arrangement and ancillary services suite behind retained façade to replace buildings – withdrawn 20 January 1993.

89/1232/N- Conservation Area Consent to demolish bus station except for tower and front façade – withdrawn 20 January 1993.

92/0336/N – Supermarket, petrol filling station, retail units and offices with car parking and restoration for future leisure use (now Morrisons) – approved 19 January 1993.

N/2002/0992 – Use of first and second floors as a night club – refused 12 December 2002.

N/2006/0675 - Conversion to a 96 bed hotel with cafe/bar, restaurant and retail unit on the ground floor, involving the erection of a six storey extension, and layout of 14 car parking spaces, to the rear of the premises – approved 27 September 2006.

N/2007/0048- Change of use of part of existing building to A1 retail on ground floor and office accommodation on first and second floors and construction of new access ramp to Lord Street elevation – approved 14 March 2007.

Consultations

English Heritage – no objection to the proposals.

Highways Development Control - The proposal includes the provision of 14 car parking spaces to the rear of the site accessed via the existing car park off Kingsway, however, at least two of the spaces must be marked out for use by disabled persons. This low level of car parking provision is acceptable given the town centre location of the development and the fact that on-street parking in the area is controlled by waiting restrictions.

Some covered cycle parking for both staff and visitors to the hotel has been shown at two locations on the proposed site plan that accompanies this application. It would appear to accommodate up to 20 cycles in total which is in accordance with the requirements of the Supplementary Planning Guidance “Ensuring Choice of Travel”.

Suitable bin and bottle storage is shown within the building, which will be accessed from the service road to the front of the hotel.

An Interim Travel Plan has been submitted alongside this application. On the whole it is a good plan and includes information that would be expected at this stage. There are a wide range of measures included to promote the Travel Plan and sustainable travel in general, together with comprehensive information on timescales and targets.

An accessibility audit of this site has been undertaken and has identified a shortfall in accessibility for users of public transport. Accessibility scores can be improved for users of public transport by providing access kerbs and altering the footway level to the bus stops on either side of Lord Street adjacent to the site.

It is noted that the proposal includes the provision of two separate sets of steps on the footway of Lord Street, one either side of the main pedestrian thoroughfare, however, these should be reduced in depth such that no part of the steps projects forward of the inside edge of the two columns nearest to the main part of the building. The steps are to be situated on the adopted highway and as such the applicant will be required to apply for a licence prior to constructing the steps.

In view of the above, there are no objections to the proposal as there are no highway

safety implications, subject to an amended plan showing the provision of at least two car parking spaces marked out for use by disabled persons and the alteration of the entrance steps to the front.

Environmental Protection Director – no objections subject to conditions on piling, noise/odour controls, pavement café restriction. No remaining contamination based on previous work undertaken, and it is recommended that a piling risk assessment be undertaken.

Merseytravel – no objection subject to no impact on bus traffic from servicing arrangements, attachment of a Travel Plan, access for Merseylink vehicles and improvements to two nearest bus stops.

MEAS – comment that daytime bat survey should be carried out prior to determination of the application.

Neighbour Representations

Last date for replies: 23 August 2010.

Site Notice/Press Notice expiry: 3 September 2010.

Comments from 39 Percival Court, Lord Street: Would be beneficial to develop, existing right of way to Morrison's should be maintained, extension not too intrusive from Lord Street, car parking will be a significant problem, local permit holders will find it difficult to obtain a space.

4 Regent Road, Southport: desirable for pedestrian access to be retained in its current form, new building bigger than original and top two storeys are mainly responsible for 'over dominance of extension'.

6 Lord Street – would like development to go ahead but no pile driving following damaging effect of similar works at the Kingsway and other listed buildings.

18 Lord Street – support the application which will rid Lord Street of an eyesore and give visitors a more welcoming sight when entering Lord Street from the Liverpool direction. Will also improve outlook from property.

Southport Civic Society – welcome application but further information required; the loss of canopy would be detrimental to Lord Street; full details should be shown now. Should also be a programme of repairs obtained from the applicant and an undertaking from them to complete them failing which the Council will undertake the works at the owner's expense.

Policy

The application site is situated in an area allocated as Town Centre on the Council's Adopted Unitary Development Plan.

National Planning Policy

PPS4	Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (2009)
PPS5	Planning and Heritage (2010)

Local Plan Policies

AD2	Ensuring Choice of Travel
CS1	Development and Regeneration
CS3	Development Principles
DQ1	Design
DQ2	Renewable Energy in Development
DQ3	Trees and Development
DQ4	Public Greenspace and Development
EDT13	Southport Central Area - Development Principles
EDT18	Retention of Local Employment Opportunities
EP2	Pollution
EP3	Development of Contaminated Land
EP6	Noise and Vibration
HC1	Development in Conservation Areas
HC4	Development Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building
R2	Southport Town Centre
R8	Upper Floors in Defined Centres and Shopping Parades
UP1	Development in Urban Priority Areas

Comments

The proposal is for a hotel partially within the Ribble Building as existing and accommodated within a six storey rear extension. A retail unit would be provided to the southern side of the existing building. Access to the hotel would be via the Lord Street frontage with access to the restaurant and bar off the public thoroughfare to the supermarket.

The proposals will involve the renovation of the existing buildings and introduce the new block to the rear which will take a contemporary form, projecting back to a point just beyond the rear elevation of the existing bingo hall. Limited car parking will be provided and accessed from Kingsway.

Whilst not significantly different to the previously approved scheme, there are some differences with the revised application. Firstly, the number of bedrooms reduces from 96 to 92, with more use is made of the existing building for bedroom space.

Additionally, the previously proposed retail unit on the left side of the frontage to Lord Street is omitted and a separate independent restaurant proposed to the right hand side, which will nevertheless be an integral component of the new building. The scheme also proposes the removal of canopies and replacements to the Lord Street frontage. It is important to recognise that these do not represent part of the original building.

The previous application S/2006/0675 was partly implemented, due to some internal alteration to a staircase within the existing building, but is now in new ownership. The principle of development for this purpose is therefore not open to being challenged, however, the intended uses of the building as extended are consistent in any event with established policy requirements and there is no objection to the

principle of the development. As such, the issues the application will raise relate to:

The visual effects can be judged primarily on the basis of two factors; the implications from the existing building being brought back into use and the impact of the new six storey building, in particular having regard to its impact from a variety of positions both within and looking into the Conservation Area.

The existing building is, at present, boarded up on the Lord Street frontage. In addition, the clock is known not to be working, but it is also understood that the mechanism has been removed altogether. There is a canopy on the rear elevation, which dates back to 1993, which would be removed.

The proposals would revitalise the shop fronts, with the provision of new hardwood frames to the Lord Street elevations. A condition is attached requiring the reinstatement of the clock. The removal of canopies will require a method statement for reinstating newly exposed brickwork on the rear of the building. This will represent a positive in respect of the Conservation Area's character and appearance.

The extension would represent an individual and contemporary insertion when compared against the existing. The rear elevation would be visible from the roundabout to the north looking across the supermarket car park from Kingsway, but this view would be set in the context of the adjacent bingo hall and is framed by the supermarket immediately to the west and north of the site.

There are also views from the Duke Street/Lord Street roundabout looking across the site. From this point, though the extension will be taller than the existing building, it will be set back and the visual focus will remain that of the central tower. Views looking west will be obscured by the existing bingo hall, and from directly front on, the top floor will be visible to varying degrees depending on how far back from the building one would elect to stand.

The applicants have employed a variety of materials in the new building, and it is proposed to match the brick of the existing buildings to form the primary base of the extension, with terracotta rain screen cladding of a finish consistent with the stonework of the existing building. Windows will be of long rectangular profile and these will be set in reveals, which help provide a vertical emphasis reflecting the fenestrative arrangements of the bingo hall adjacent, but again of modern interpretation.

The proposal seeks to provide a distinct breakage between old and new and the extent to which the existing rear elevation of the Ribble Buildings will be covered by built form is minimised by taking advantage of the site's depth to run the extension north-west/south east.

The scheme will also critically maintain the pedestrian walkway through the Ribble Buildings which links Lord Street directly to the supermarket. The link will be

primarily glazed and will assist significantly in providing the level of distinction desired whilst suitably easing the transition between old and new.

The principal views of the adjacent listed building are taken from Lord Street and Kingsway. The rear elevation has clearly been subject to alteration over time to varied standards and has a patchwork appearance. Additionally, the potential for appreciating the south western elevation is limited all the more so due to being obscured by the extension. There will be no physical attachment of development to this building and it is overall considered that the effects on the setting will be minimal and therefore there is no unacceptable impact on the setting of the listed building.

The proposal enables the provision of an outdoor seated café and a restaurant and bar fronting the walkway. The plan will achieve a lively, active frontage, removing one of the two display windows previously proposed to enhance views into an area of activity.

The rear elevation comprises a ground floor window and door but discussion is being undertaken with a view to improve this further, with recognition that there will be a need to accommodate certain functional requirements of both uses.

The overlooking and surveillance of this walkway is critical and will reduce the prospect of crime and anti-social behaviour, whilst bringing a general feel of safety and encouragement for its usage. External uplighting at evening times will further assist in this aspect, and closed circuit television.

A restrictive covenant is known to exist on the land and has been varied to prevent the supermarket vetoing the ground floor bar/restaurant use, and also to prevent them from cordoning off the pedestrian walkway. This is also critical in the sense that level access to the development is derived from this entrance.

The acceptability of the principle does not raise significant amenity issues. However, as most activity will be to the Lord Street frontage, it will enable a natural continuation of active ground floor retail use and whilst the proposal does well designing out crime and reducing the opportunity for anti-social behaviour, the possibility of vandalism is not a material planning consideration and there are other measures available to deal with such issues.

A total of 14 parking spaces are to be provided. This may not appear to be a significant number for a 92 bed hotel plus retail and restaurants, however, it is entirely consistent with wider aims to reduce car dependence and increase reliance on other forms of transport. All access would utilise the existing arrangement available from Kingsway.

Since the original permission was granted, the Vincent Hotel has been granted permission on Lord Street, comprises no parking, and appears not to have resulted in unacceptable congestion.

There are requirements for cycle parking in the building, and Highways Development Control has also advised that a Travel Plan should be provided as part of the

scheme. This could enable consideration of such measures of car sharing, rental of vehicles and the prospect of subsidised travel for employees. In addition, there are minor improvements required to upgrade access kerbs and upgrading of the footway adjacent to the bus stop to the south east side of the site.

All bin and bottle storage is designed into the building and there is easy access for refuse vehicles to use the service road to the front of the hotel.

With regard to issues of contamination, the building formerly served as the frontage building for the Southport-Crosby-Liverpool Railway, and later, a bus station. Environmental reports have been reviewed by the Environmental Protection Director who considers that the planning conditions previously attached need not be reapplied. The scheme therefore complies with Policy EP3 of the UDP, nevertheless a note is added to inform the applicant that works should stop in the event of any unidentified contamination.

The scheme proposes the use of a combined heat/power plant to meet with renewable energy requirements (previous proposal intended to utilise solar power). This is considered to have no visual implications and is considered viable. The target for renewable energy per year is 68,166 kWh per annum and it is considered that the proposed equipment will achieve this requirement. A condition is attached.

In the event of planning permission being granted, a sum of £204,960.30 will be required by way of Section 106 Agreement towards trees and greenspace under Policies DQ3 and DQ4 of the Sefton UDP. The calculation derives from the requirements of the Supplementary Planning Document 'Green Space, Trees and Development', which require total calculation of hotel bed space and other commercial areas for all major developments.

MEAS have commented that a bat survey should be completed prior to determination of the application and the recommendation is therefore subject to this proviso. The applicant has been asked to carry this out. Some other minor design/parking revisions have also been requested and where necessary, will be reported by way of late representation. It is recommended that planning permission be granted for the scheme subject to these provisos.

Contact Officer: **Mrs S Tyldesley Telephone 0151 934 3569**

Case Officer: **Steve Faulkner Telephone 0151 934 3081**