



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 July 2023

by S M Holden BSc (Hons) MSc CEng MICE CTPP FCIHT MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/W/22/3308813

The Chequers Hotel, Old Rectory Lane, Pulborough RH20 1AD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Trembling against Horsham District Council.
 - The application Ref DC/20/1814, is dated 18 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is a change of use of hotel to single dwellinghouse.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a change of use of hotel to a single dwellinghouse at The Chequers Hotel, Old Rectory Lane, Pulborough RH20 1AD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/20/1814, dated 18 September 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The change of use hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The change of use relates to the details shown on the following approved plans:
 - Block plan – Chequers Hotel, Pulborough;
 - Drawing No 17490920 – floor plans (basement, ground floor, first floor and roof plan)
 - Drawing No 17490920 – elevations

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council failed to determine the application within the statutory period. However, the Council's appeal statement set out the reasons why it would have granted planning permission for a change of use. Consequently, there is no outstanding dispute between the main parties.
3. The proposed change of use would result in the loss of Pulborough's only hotel, a matter of concern to the Council's economic development officer and local traders. However, the appellant submitted a marketing and tourism analysis which indicated that there is an abundance and variety of alternative tourist accommodation within the locality. Attempts at marketing the site as a hotel over a prolonged period were unsuccessful. On this basis, the Council considered the principle of the proposed change of use would be acceptable.

4. The building is Grade II listed and lies within the Pulborough Church Place Conservation Area. As no changes to the interior or exterior of the building are proposed, the significance of these heritage assets would not be adversely affected by the change of use.

Conditions

5. The Council has suggested several conditions should be imposed on a planning permission for a change of use. In considering these I have had regard to the advice set out in paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
6. From the evidence before me it is unclear if the hotel has ceased trading and the proposed change of use has effectively already taken place. I have therefore imposed the standard time limit for the sake of clarity. A plans condition is required in the interests of certainty.
7. The condition suggested for the provision for storage of refuse and recycling would be appropriate for a new building. Although not indicated on the submitted plans, according to the application form there is a bin storage area to the east side of the building to serve the hotel. Whilst collection arrangements for a dwelling will differ from those required for a hotel, there is no evidence to suggest that their location needs to be amended before the building can be occupied and used as a dwelling. I therefore see no reason to impose such a condition.
8. Similarly, whilst the requirement to provide superfast broadband might be justified for a new dwelling, it would appear onerous for the change of use proposed. In any event, I have not been provided with any development plan policy which would justify its imposition and therefore do not consider the condition is necessary.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons set out above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Sheila Holden

INSPECTOR