

Recommendation Report for Planning Permission

REF NO: BR/107/25/PL

LOCATION: Ancient Mariner Hotel
59 West Street
Bognor Regis
PO21 1XB

PROPOSAL: Change of use from single dwellinghouse to 12-bed apart-hotel (C1 use) with associated improvements to the external elevations and replacement of windows and doors. This application may affect the character and appearance of the The Steyne, Bognor Conservation Area, may affect the setting of a listed building and is in CIL zone 4 (zero rated).

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	The application seeks to change the use of a property from a single dwelling to a 12 bed apart-hotel.
TOPOGRAPHY	Predominantly flat.
TREES	None on site.
BOUNDARY TREATMENT	A low, rendered boundary wall to the front and on the western boundary facing West Street.
SITE CHARACTERISTICS	The site consists of a four storey corner property with a rear wing, three storeys in height. It is a locally listed building. Seafront location facing West Street and the Esplanade. There is a small area of amenity space to the front/side of the building, which is enclosed with a low, rendered boundary wall and a small yard enclosed by buildings.
CHARACTER OF LOCALITY	The building has been empty for some time and is falling into disrepair. Prominent seafront locality in the Bognor Regis (Steyne and Waterloo Square) Conservation Area on the junction of West Street and The Esplanade. Grade II listed Royal Norfolk and Bognor Pier to the west. The area also contains several small/narrow service streets or roads, with smaller cottage style buildings, where the scale contrasts with the large, formal space of the main squares. The site lies outside the Economic Growth Area for Bognor Regis Town Centre

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

BR/42/16/CLE	Lawful development certificate for an existing use as private dwelling (resubmission following BR/74/15/CLE).	Approve 25-04-16
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BR/247/21/PL	Change of use from single dwelling (C3) to 6 No self-contained flats (C3), a 10-bedroom co-living housing unit (Sui Generis) & insertion of 3 No new front windows. This application affects the character & appearance of The Steyne, Bognor Conservation Area.	Refused 25-01-22
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REPRESENTATIONS

Bognor Regis Town Council - No objection.

- Members are pleased to see proposals for this prominent site to be improved.
- In relation to the detailing of paint colours, windows etc, it is hoped that these will be sympathetic to the Conservation Area within which the building is located.
- Whilst the plans do not include the installation of balconies, reference was made to the historic presence of such with comment made that it is a shame not to see these reintroduced.
- Any advertisements should be of minimal illuminance.

1 letter of support from a nearby occupier

- The proposal will enhance the area.
- The current state is an eyesore but with investment it will change the perception of Bognor.

COMMENTS ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED:

Noted. No adverts are proposed.

CONSULTATIONS

CONSULTATION RESPONSES RECEIVED:

Economic Regeneration - Support. Pleased to see the building being restored and welcome the addition of a hotel. The recent visitor strategy study found a lack of holiday accommodation was an issue within the district. We would like to see an Employment and Skills Plan as part of this development and would be pleased to work with the developer to create and action that.

Environmental Health - No objection subject to conditions regarding an acoustic assessment for plant machinery.

Area Conservation Area Advisory Panel - No objection. The panel welcomes the refurbishment and its intended use. The existing entrance would be better retained rather than alter a prominent bay window.

Conservation Officer - The application is considered to not cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset.

Environment Agency - No objection, subject to a condition.

WSCC Highways - No objection subject to a condition for cycle parking.

COMMENTS ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Comments noted.

Cycle Storage is shown on the floor plan and submission of an additional plan is not necessary. Due to the scale of the development with limited alterations required, an employment and skills plan is also not necessary.

POLICY CONTEXT

Built up area boundary
Flood Zone 3
Climate Change 2031
The Steyne Conservation Area
Pagham Harbour Zone B
Article 4
Erosion Risk Statement

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Arun Local Plan 2011 - 2031:

DDM1	D DM1 Aspects of form and design quality
DDM2	D DM2 Internal space standards
HERDM2	HER DM2 Locally Listed Buildings or Structures of Character
HERDM3	HER DM3 Conservation Areas
ENVDM2	ENV DM2 Pagham Harbour
DDM4	D DM4 Extensions&alter to exist builds(res and non-res)
DSP1	D SP1 Design
ENVDM5	ENV DM5 Development and biodiversity
HERSP1	HER SP1 The Historic Environment
TOUDM1	TOU DM1 Tourism related development
SDSP1	SD SP1 Sustainable Development
SDSP2	SD SP2 Built-up Area Boundary
TSP1	T SP1 Transport and Development
WDM2	W DM2 Flood Risk

SUPPLEMENTARY POLICY GUIDANCE:

SPD11	Arun Parking Standards 2020
SPD13	Arun District Design Guide (SPD) January 2021

POLICY COMMENTARY

The Development Plan consists of the Arun Local Plan 2011 - 2031, West Sussex County Council's Waste and Minerals Plans, The South Inshore & South Offshore Marine Plan and Made Neighbourhood Development Plans. The policies are published under Regulations 19 and 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:-

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant Development Plan policies with regards to amenity, design, parking and flood risk.

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that

(2) in dealing with an application for planning permission the authority shall have regard to -

(a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application,

(aza) a post examination draft neighbourhood development plan, so far as material to the application,

(b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and

(c) any other material considerations.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no other material considerations to be weighed in the balance with the Development Plan.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

The application is exempt from mandatory BNG due to it being below the de minimis threshold.

CONCLUSIONS

PRINCIPLE

The site is in the built-up area boundary where development is acceptable in principle, in line with Arun Local Plan (ALP) policy SD SP2 and provided it accords with other policies of the Local Plan covering such issues as visual amenity/character, residential amenity and parking.

Policy TOU DM1 states tourism proposals will be supported provided that they: (a) are in accessible locations, (b) are accompanied by workable and realistic travel plans, (c) address visitor management issues; and (d) achieve good design. The site is in close proximity to the Town Centre and is in an accessible location, a travel plan has not been provided although is not necessary in this case, owing to its location. The design of the existing building is retained and is discussed below.

Bognor Regis has a made Neighbourhood Plan although none of the policies are relevant to this application.

DESIGN AND VISUAL AMENITY

ALP Policy D DM1 looks at aspects of form and design quality. Policy D SP1 requires that development proposals make efficient use of land but reflect the characteristics of the site and local area.

The building is situated on a corner and is highly visible from The Esplanade and from the western elevation. The building has been empty for some time and has been falling into disrepair with the external elevations appearing run down.

The change of use will consist predominately of internal changes and will largely retain its existing appearance. The building will undergo a general external upgrade in the form of replacement windows and painting which will improve the overall appearance.

To the west, there is a flat roof porch type structure which appears to be the original entrance. This will be closed up and a new door installed to the bay window to the south which will form a new entrance, fronting the seafront. A second entrance is proposed to the west with the addition of a new door in an existing opening. When viewing the site, the bay window to the south does appear to have an existing opening which serves a door. There is an existing path from the highway to this entrance with an access point already established. Whilst retaining the original entrance would be favourable, the new entrance to the south is acceptable.

The Arun Design Guide (ADG) states 'Conversions must protect the original character and appearance of buildings through careful use of considerate materials, preservation of distinctive features, sensitive placement of additional floors, and minimal internal and external alterations and extensions'. The proposal complies with this, with minor alterations required to enable the development.

The change of use would largely retain the existing appearance of the building, with no extensions proposed. It would result in a visual improvement and would not result in harm to the character of the area in compliance with ALP policy D DM1 and D SP1 and the ADG.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

ALP policy D DM1 states new development will have minimal impact to users and occupiers of nearby property and land, by avoiding significant loss of sunlight, privacy and outlook and unacceptable noise and disturbance.

The change of use seeks to convert the property from a C3 dwelling to a 12 bed apart-hotel. This would result in an increase in the number of people visiting the site. Due to its location near the town centre and with the main entrance fronting the seafront, this would not result in significant harm in terms of the noise or disturbance that is created.

The use is proposed as an apart-hotel which seeks to enable people to stay for a longer period of time at the property. As a result, the changeover of occupants and subsequently any disturbance may be less than that of a standard hotel/bed and breakfast accommodation.

No additional windows are proposed to serve the development. The windows serving the bedrooms are already in existence and would not result in overlooking that is not already achievable.

The proposal would not result in adverse harm on neighbouring occupiers and complies with ALP policy D DM1.

SPACE STANDARDS

ALP policy D DM2 states that the planning authority will require internal spaces to be of an appropriate size and that the Nationally Described Space Standards apply.

The development seeks 5 bedrooms on the first floor, 4 bedrooms on the second floor and 3 bedrooms on the third floor.

All rooms have a double bed, apart from one which has 2 double beds. There are no specific space standards for hotel rooms although all the rooms are between 21sqm and 32 sqm for the 1 bed and 42sqm for the 2 bed. The rooms all have their own bathroom and kitchen area with a separate table for eating and are acceptable in size.

The development seeks consent for an apart-hotel which essentially enables individuals to stay for an extended period of time when compared to a traditional hotel or B&B. This form of accommodation

should not simply be used as an alternative to a short term let or result in a situation where individuals may live long term in a room which would not comply with normal space standards for residential accommodation.

The ground floor plan is limited in detail but nonetheless provides a room for laundry and has a large front of house which could be used for seating for the guests. All rooms have kitchen and dining areas and would appear to offer sufficient space to be considered an apart-hotel.

There is no private or communal external space on site. The site fronts The Esplanade to the south and Steyne Gardens is a few minutes walk to east with suitable external provision nearby.

The proposal complies with relevant policies.

FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

ALP policy W DM2 states seeks to limit development in areas at risk of flooding.

The site is in Flood Zone 3 as identified by Environment Agency (EA) Mapping. The proposal does not seek any new built development and the change of use is contained within the existing footprint.

The Flood Risk Assessment provided confirms no accommodation will be provided on the ground floor, minimising the risk of exposure to flooding. Flood resilient construction methods are proposed which include - non-return valves, raised electrical sockets, certain materials used throughout such tiles and specific render to restrict water migration. The site is in an area where EA can issues warnings in advance of potential flooding.

The EA have no objection subject that there is no accommodation on the ground floor which will be conditioned.

Southern Water sewer records confirm that public foul and surface water sewers are located in West Street, to the west of the site, and The Esplanade to the south. The existing connections will remain and with regards to surface water, there will be no increase in the impermeable catchment area at the site as a result of the development proposals and no alterations to surface water at the property.

Subject to conditions, the proposal would not result in an increase in flood risk to the area and accords with relevant policies.

PARKING/HIGHWAYS

ALP policy T SP1 seeks to promote sustainable methods of travels and secure parking requirements in line with guidance.

The ADC Parking Standards does not have specific requirements for hotels and parking provision will be determined on a case by case basis. WSCC's standards require 1 space per bedroom, so this development would require 12 spaces. This does not differentiate between town centre and other locations. The development does not provide any parking spaces and is proposed to be car-free.

The site is in a controlled parking zone and would require a permit to park. The site is in a sustainable location with shops and amenities within walking distance. Hothampton Car Park is approximately a 400m walk from the site which can provide longer term parking. The site is also 600m from Bognor Regis Railway Station and bus stops are in close proximity.

Whilst a nil provision does not comply with guidance, in this case, due to its location in a town centre, it is acceptable. WSCC Highways have no objection and do not consider it would result in harm on the

highway network.

WSCC requested a condition for cycle parking to be conditioned. Cycle spaces are shown on the ground floor plan to be stored internally to the rear of the building. This would be covered and secured and is acceptable.

The proposal would not result in harm upon the highways and complies with ALP policy T SP1.

HERITAGE ASSETS

ALP policy HER DM2 relates to locally listed buildings and policy HER DM3 relate to the protection of Conservation Areas.

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF states 'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'.

The Ancient Mariner is identified as a locally listed building and is a non-designated asset. It is located in The Steyne and Waterloo Square Conservation Area.

The building is thought to date to late C19 and occupies a corner plot and is prominent in view. The front part of the building is of four storeys, with the rear reducing to three. Windows consist of a number of styles, with bay windows to two elevations. Given its age, design/style, scale, and prominence in the street scene it is considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area consists of The Steyne which is an open-ended rectangle at right angles to the sea, lined with two and three storey terraced houses with bay windows and balconies; and Waterloo Square which consists of a central open space, flanked by nearly continuous, street fronted, development. Buildings are a mix of 2 and 3 storeys high and reflect the period in which the town developed as a seaside resort.

From a conservation perspective, the introduction of apart-hotel use is considered appropriate, as it aligns with the building's historic association with the tourism industry. It reflects the mixed-use character of the surrounding area and is not expected to result in harm to the significance of the conservation area.

The building is in a poor state of repair and, given the building's prominent location on The Esplanade, detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area. The intention to repair and enhance its external appearance is welcomed and capable of support, subject to appropriate detailing.

The replacement of windows may be acceptable if they are demonstrably beyond repair. As they form a key component of the building's external character, any replacements must be of appropriate design, material, and finish to suit the sensitive context. This can be conditioned.

It is not clear from why what appears to be the original main entrance on the west elevation is to be blocked up, and a bay window utilised for this function instead. This appears out of character.

Subject to the details of windows and doors being secured by condition, the application is considered to not cause harm to the significance of the heritage assets and complies with ALP policy HER DM2 and HER DM3.

BIODIVERSITY

ALP policy ENV DM5 requires that proposals achieve a net gain in biodiversity and protect existing habitats on site.

The site is unlikely to have any potential for habitats for protected species owing to the nature of the site. Bats are unlikely to be roosting in a town centre location and the roof will not be subject to any development and will not likely result in adverse harm.

The proposal would not be subject to statutory BNG because it is a site with 100% sealed (hard) surfaces and there is less than 25m² of affected habitat. The development would nonetheless need to deliver a gain to accord with local policy.

No details have been provided regarding biodiversity. The site has little space to accommodate features such as trees or planters, and the most practical enhancement would be the addition of bird boxes.

Subject to conditions, the proposal comply with ALP policy ENV DM5.

PAGHAM HARBOUR

Pagham Harbour is designated as a Special Protection Area and Ramsar site and ALP Policy ENV DM2 requires any proposals for new residential development within the Pagham harbour buffer zone (0 to 5km) to pay a contribution of £962 per new unit to contribute towards strategic access management measures.

As the development is for apart-hotel accommodation the fee is bespoke based on what is being proposed and is largely calculated based on the number of rooms and the average occupancy rate and would be £1416.76.

The S106 has been completed and therefore suitably mitigates against harm on Pagham Harbour and accords with ALP policy ENV DM2.

SUMMARY

The application complies with relevant development plan policies and is recommended for approval subject to the following conditions.

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The Council in making a decision should be aware of and take into account any implications that may arise from the Human Rights Act 1998. Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority such as Arun District Council to act in a manner, which is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.

Consideration has been specifically given to Article 8 (right to respect private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property). It is not considered that the recommendation for approval of the grant of permission in this case interferes unreasonably with any local residents' right to respect for their private and family life and home, except insofar as it is necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others (in this case, the rights of the applicant). The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest and the recommendation for approval is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

DUTY UNDER THE EQUALITIES ACT 2010

Duty under the Equalities Act 2010

In assessing this proposal the following impacts have been identified upon those people with the following protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation).

The proposal would have a neutral impact on the protected characteristics.

SECTION 106 DETAILS

The proposal provides a completed UU to mitigate against harm upon Pagham Harbour.

CIL DETAILS

This application is not CIL liable.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 2 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Location Plan - 1179 - (00) - 100
 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan - 1179 - (16) - 100 Rev 02
 - Proposed First Floor Plan - 1179 - (16) - 101 Rev 01
 - Proposed Second Floor Plan - 1179 - (16) - 102 Rev 01
 - Proposed Second Floor Plan B - 1179 - (16) - 103 - Rev 01
 - Proposed Roof Plan - 1179 - (16) - 104 Rev 01
 - Proposed Elevations 02 - 1179 - (17) - Rev 01
 - Proposed Elevations 03 - 1179 - (17) - 102 Rev 01
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of amenity and the environment in accordance with Arun Local Plan policy D DM1.
- 3 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (Ref: SSt/csp/9594adc, dated 3 June 2025) and the following mitigation measures it details:
 - All sleeping accommodation must be restricted to 1st floor level and above.
These mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the scheme's timing/phasing arrangements. The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants in compliance with Arun Local Plan policy W DM2.
- 4 Prior to their insertion details of the windows and doors including their design/appearance (including elevation), specification, glazing bars, glazing (system), method of opening, decorative/protective finish (i.e. stain/paint and colour)

and location within the reveal, in the form of drawings and sections of an appropriate scale, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the windows and doors are installed.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail by endeavouring to achieve a building of visual quality in accordance with Arun Local Plan policies HER SP1, HER DM2, and HER DM3.

- 5 A woodcrete bird box shall be fitted to the external wall of the building prior to occupation and shall be permanently maintained in good working condition. The bird box shall be attached at first floor level and positioned facing either east or south east.

Reasons: In the interests of biodiversity enhancement as per the requirements of ALP policy ENV DM5 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 6 No internally or externally located plant, machinery equipment or building services plant shall be operated on the site until an assessment of the acoustic impact arising from the operation of all such equipment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment shall be undertaken in accordance with BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 and shall include a scheme of attenuation measures to mitigate the adverse impacts identified in the acoustic assessment. The scheme shall ensure that the rating level of noise emitted from the proposed building services plant is 5 dB less than the prevailing background sound level (LA90). The scheme as approved by the Local Planning Authority shall be fully installed prior to first operation of the plant and shall be retained as such thereafter. Any agreed attenuation measures shall be permanently maintained in good working condition.

The applicant should review the Planning Noise Advice Document - Sussex, November 2023: <https://www.arun.gov.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jjm4n19846.pdf&ver=24686>.

Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents in accordance with Arun Local Plan policy QE DM1.

- 7 Notwithstanding the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) or the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)(or any Order revoking or enacting these Orders), the development hereby permitted shall only be used as a hotel within use Class C1 of the schedule of The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification).

Reason: To allow the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail and protect the amenity of the area in accordance with Arun Local Plan policy D DM1.

- 8 INFORMATIVE: Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). The 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 and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the NPPF.
- 9 INFORMATIVE: This decision has been granted in conjunction with a Section 106 legal agreement relating to a financial contribution of £1416.76 towards the Pagham Harbour Access Management Mitigation Measures.