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**From:** Martyn White  
**Sent:** 13 March 2019 11:29  
**To:** Planning.Responses  
**Cc:** Simon Davis  
**Subject:** BR/326/18/PL

**The royal Hotel - BR/326/18/PL**

### **Description of proposal**

The application is for the refurbishment of the existing building, external alterations, extensions and reconfiguration of a previously permitted conversion. The proposal is to provide an A3 restaurant and 27 flats.

### **Site description and locality**

The Royal Hotel is located on the Esplanade, fronting on to the promenade and the beach beyond it. The Esplanade has been the location for some of the larger buildings in the local area including the Royal Norfolk, and the now lost Beach Hotel. The Royal Hotel is located roughly mid-way between these two buildings. It is a very attractive building which plays a prominent role on the sea front.

It is also located on the corner of the Steyne, and forms a focal point when travelling along the esplanade road. The Steyne is almost its own character area within the conservation area. It is an open ended rectangle at right angles to the sea, lined with two and three storey terraced houses with bay windows and balconies.

Whilst an attractive building, it has been vacant for a number of years and it is apparent that it requires a significant amount of maintenance for it to be brought up to an acceptable standard.

### **Assessment and Comments:**

The application site has been identified by the District Council as a Locally Listed Building or Structure of Character. Further, there are a number of other Locally Listed Building or Structures of Character, and Nationally identified Listed Buildings in the local area.

#### Change of use

It is noted that the concept of the change of use to residential has already been granted on the property as part of a previously approved application. I also note that the current application includes an element of restaurant use on the ground, and lower ground floors. Whilst the loss of the hotel use is unfortunate in a tourist focused area (i.e. the sea front), the restaurant use is supported as it will allow greater activity in this part of the town.

The current application, if implemented, will also ensure that the building is brought back in to use, which is a positive. Further, it will also bring activity back to this part of the conservation area.

#### Main Building

I note that the proposal includes the re-instatement of a missing bay window on the ground floor and the loss of the structure which covers the basement area. This will help to restore some of the missing features of the building, which will in turn enhance the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area. I assume that there will be some form of railings to demark the open space in the basement below. These should be of an appropriate, traditional design/colour. The bay should reflect the remaining ones on the building in terms of appearance and dimensions. Details of the railings should be provided to the council by way of condition.

Internally, the building is a mixture of spaces with a variety of features. I consider the most important elements being the staircase, along with the spacious character of the main rooms. The sub-division of the space appears to be acceptable in order to create the residential spaces. It is suggested that traditional internal features such as coving etc. should be used to maintain/introduce character to the internal spaces. Missing features could be replicated, and re-instated.

The conversion of the roof space is considered to be acceptable. Likewise, the addition of the unit on the third floor is also considered acceptable. The use of the mansard roof allows for an additional unit to be provided, whilst doing so in a more traditional way. The rooflights should be of a conservation standard.

The fenestration of the building will have a significant impact upon the success of the works, and should closely reflect the remaining traditional windows. It is considered that the best approach would be to use sliding sash windows. The windows should also be such that the design/measurements closely reflect the existing, remaining traditional windows.

It is therefore considered that these works will have a positive impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area, and can be supported.

#### New building works

The works to provide two additional floors on the western section of the site have the potential to be prominent on the street-scene. I also note that this element of the site will remain subservient to the host dwelling to some extent, in that it will sit just below the existing eaves of the 'main building'. Such a concept would also maintain the dominance of the development when viewed along The Esplanade.

However, the design of the structure is of importance, when considered in respect of The Steyne. I note that the intention is to create a more modern appearance to this element of the site, in order for it to be read as a separate, later addition, whilst reflecting materials found in the locality. Such a concept is noted, but the success of such a proposal will depend upon the quality of the materials and detailing used.

On balance, it is considered that the proposal will have a neutral impact upon the character and appearance of the local area

I should also state that any signage used for the restaurant will potentially have a significant effect upon the building, and character of the immediate area, and will need to be carefully considered.

#### **Suggested Conditions**

It is suggested that details of all of the windows, railings and external paint colours be supplied prior to works commencing in order to ensure that they reflect the traditional character of the conservation area. .