

Application Number 07/2023/00880/FUL

Address 47 Hough Lane
Leyland
Lancashire
PR25 2SR

Applicant BoyleSports (UK) Limited

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Development Change of use from former bank (Use Class E) to Betting Office (Sui Generis) together with new shop front and installation of 2no. satellites

Officer Recommendation **Approval with Conditions**

Date application valid 30.10.2023
Target Determination Date 25.12.2023
Extension of Time 15.01.2024



1.INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application has been called to Planning Committee by two neighbouring Ward Councillors (Cllr Pillinger – Buckshaw and Worden and Cllr Peet – St. Ambrose) to consider the impact of the development on the viability of Leyland Town Centre and the health and wellbeing of the local community.

2. REPORT SUMMARY

2.1 The application relates to an end two-storey commercial unit fronting Hough Lane in Leyland town centre, with the premises being vacant since August 2022 having previously been used as a bank.

2.2 The application site is within Leyland town centre as defined by Policy E3 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

2.3 The proposal is for the change of use from a former bank (Use Class E) to Betting Office (Sui Generis) together with new shop front and installation of 2no. satellites. The former use of the premises ceased in August 2022, with the unit remaining vacant since.

2.4 The Council's most recent Retail Position Statement (2022) identified 30% of units within the primary retail frontage of Leyland Town Centre being in retail use. Whilst Policy E3 of the Local Plan is focused on achieving high levels of retail uses in (at least 60% of premises) in the central town centre area, shopping habitats have unquestionably changed since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2015, with Policy E3 not therefore being reflective of the current issues facing town centres such as Leyland.

2.5 The NPPF, which was first published in 2012, has however been regularly updated in response to issues and Government policy. Town centre strategies contained within the NPPF are therefore considered to be more relevant than aspects of Local Plan town centre policies which are more dated.

2.6 Paragraph 90 of the NPPF encourages town centre to be more diverse against a backdrop of the decline of retail in town centre locations. The NPPF encourages a range of uses in town centres and decision makers to respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries (which the proposed use arguably falls into).

2.7 Also, considering the premises have been vacant for a period in excess of 12 months with no apparent appetite for retail use, weight needs to be given to the proposal bringing a long-term vacant unit back into use, with both the NPPF and Policy E3 seeking to improve town centre vitality.

2.8 Whilst not according with the requirements of Policy E3, in terms of the current retail provision in Leyland Town Centre, the proposal is considered to accord with the NPPF by achieving a mix of retail and leisure uses and would enhance the vitality and viability of Leyland Town Centre by bringing a long-term vacant unit into use.

2.9 The proposed changes to the shopfront configuration are minimal and would not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area. A proposed illuminated signage scheme is subject to a separate application (07/2023/00881/ADV) and is not being considered as part of this proposal.

2.10 Objections have raised, expressing concern at the overconcentration of similar uses, however none of the other premises within the row of terraces to which the application relates are betting offices. Whilst another betting office is present on the opposite side of Hough Lane, the other next closest betting office is 40m to the east, with an intervening road, church and commercial unit. Given the context of the surroundings the proposal is not

considered to result in overconcentration of similar uses to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.

2.11 It is considered the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area and is not considered to impact on the amenities of existing or approved future neighbouring residential properties.

2.12 There are no objections from any of the statutory consultees to the proposal.

2.13 The proposal accords with the NPPF and Policies 1 and 9 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy together with Policies F1 and G17 of the South Ribble Local Plan. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to the imposition of conditions.

3. APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

3.1 The application relates to an end two-storey commercial unit fronting Hough Lane in Leyland town centre.

3.2 On-street parking is present along Hough Lane and along Quin Street to the side of the premises.

3.3 The premises are currently vacant having previously been used as a bank.

3.4 Surrounding uses are predominantly commercial. There are 2 other betting shops (one on the opposite side of Hough Lane and one further east along Hough Lane) within the vicinity of the site.

3.5 The application site is within Leyland town centre as defined by Policy E3 of the South Ribble Local Plan.

4. SITE HISTORY

07/2023/00881/ADV – Illuminated signage scheme. Pending consideration

07/2023/00902/FUL – Change of use of first floor from former bank office (Use Class E) to 1no. residential flat (Use Class C3). Pending consideration

5. PROPOSAL

5.1 The proposal is for the change of use from a former bank (Use Class E) to Betting Office (Sui Generis) together with new shop front and installation of 2no. satellites. The former use of the premises ceased in August 2022, with the unit remaining vacant since.

5.2 In terms of alterations to the shopfront, the front access door is proposed to be relocated within the Hough Lane elevation.

5.3 On the rear elevation of the building 2no. satellite dishes, each 840mm in diameter, are proposed to be mounted to serve the proposed use.

5.4 The proposal would create 3 full time and 3 part time jobs.

5.5 No requested hours of opening have been specified on the application form and these would be controlled by way of premises license.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

2 letters of objection have been received each on behalf of unnamed business clients. A summary of the points raised follows:

- ☐ Proposed use conflicts with the NPPF and Policy E3

- ❑ Potential for anti-social behaviour
- ❑ Potential to increase health inequalities
- ❑ Harmful to Leyland Town Deal and Town Centre Investment Plan
- ❑ Overconcentration of similar uses
- ❑ Poor design

1 letter of support has been received. A summary of the points raised are as follows:

- ❑ Reuse of vacant building
- ❑ Job creation

7. CONSULTATION REPLIES

County Highways have raised no objections to the proposal.

Environmental Health have raised no objections to the proposal.

8. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Policies

8.1 NPPF

8.1.1 In terms of ensuring the vitality of town centres Paragraph 86 of the NPPF states:

90. Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation [...]

8.1.2 In relation to achieving well-design places Paragraph 131 advises *“The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”*.

8.2 Core Strategy Policy Considerations

8.2.1 Policy 1 of the Core Strategy is entitled ‘Locating Growth’ and encourages the focussing of growth and investment in the Key Service Centres of Chorley and Leyland and the other main urban areas in South Ribble.

8.2.2 Policy 9 of the Core Strategy is entitled ‘Economic Growth and Employment’ and encourages the focussing of economic growth in existing main urban areas.

8.2.3 Policy 11 of the Core Strategy sets out South Ribble’s shopping hierarchy of centres.

8.3 South Ribble Local Plan

8.3.1 The application relates to premises within the primary retail frontage of Leyland Town Centre, with Policy E3 stating:

The Leyland Town Centre boundary is defined in Appendix 3. Leyland Town Centre is made up of both Primary and Secondary Retail Frontages as set out below.

Primary Retail Frontage

Within the Primary Retail Frontage of Leyland Town Centre as identified in Appendix 3, planning permission will be granted for new buildings, redevelopment of existing sites, extensions to, or change of use of existing buildings for the following uses:

- a) A1 (Retail Uses) – which will be encouraged to achieve a minimum of 60% of the overall units within the Primary Retail Frontage;
- b) A3 (Café and Restaurant) uses and A4 (Drinking Establishments) uses – to enhance the evening economy; and
- c) Other town centre uses including A2 (Financial and Professional Services) and B1 (Offices) will be permitted where this would not harm the sustainability of the shopping area;
- d) Living accommodation or B1 (Office) use will be permitted at first floor level [...]

[...] Car Parking

New buildings, redevelopment of existing sites, extensions and/or change of use of existing buildings in the Town Centre will either be expected to use existing car parking facilities within the town centre (if they are in close proximity) or provide the appropriate level of car parking based on their location and type of development as set out in Policy F1 Parking Standards and Appendix 4.

8.4 Policy Considerations

8.4.1 Policy E3 of the South Ribble Local Plan encourages a minimum of 60% of overall units within the Primary Retail Frontage of Leyland Town Centre to be in retail use (now Class E (a)). The Council's most recent Retail Position Statement (2022) identified 30% of units within the primary retail frontage of Leyland Town Centre being in retail use, which is significantly lower than the 60% Local Plan target. However, shopping habitats have unquestionably changed since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2015 with Policy E3 not therefore reflective of the current issues facing town centres such as Leyland.

8.4.2 The NPPF, which was first published in 2012, has however been regularly updated in response to issues and Government policy. Town centre strategies contained within the NPPF are therefore considered to be more relevant than aspects of Local Plan town centre policies which are more dated.

8.4.3 Whilst Policy E3 of the Local Plan is focused on achieving high levels of retail uses in (at least 60% of premises) in the central town centre area, Paragraph 86 of the NPPF encourages town centres to be more diverse against backdrop of the decline of retail in town centre locations. The NPPF encourages a range of uses in town centres and decision makers to respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries (which the proposed use arguably falls into).

8.4.4 Also, considering the premises have been vacant for a period in excess of 12 months with no apparent appetite for retail use weight needs to be given to the proposed bringing of a long-term vacant unit back into use, with both the NPPF and Policy E3 seeking to improve town centre vitality.

8.4.5 Whilst not according to the requirements of Policy E3, in terms of the current retail provision in Leyland Town Centre, the proposal is considered to accord with the NPPF by achieving a mix of retail and leisure uses and would enhance the vitality and viability of Leyland Town Centre by bringing a long-term vacant unit into use.

8.4.6 For the above reasons, on balance the principle of the proposed change of use is considered to be acceptable in planning land use terms.

8.5 Character / Appearance

8.5.1 The proposed changes to the shopfront configuration are minimal and would not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area. A proposed illuminated signage scheme is subject to a separate application (07/2023/00881/ADV) and is not being considered as part of this proposal.

8.5.2 The 2no. proposed satellite dishes would be located on the rear elevation of the building and are of a size similar to older tv satellite dishes. Given the size and siting of the proposed dishes these are not considered to have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area.

8.5.3 Objections have raised concern at the overconcentration of similar uses, however none of the other premises within the row of terraces to which the application relates are betting offices. Whilst another betting office is present on the opposite side of Hough Lane, the other next closest betting office is 40m to the east, with an intervening road, church and commercial unit. Given the context of the surroundings the proposal is not considered to result in overconcentration of similar uses to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.

8.6 Relationship To Neighbours

8.6.1 The adjoining commercial premises has a storage room located on first floor level. Whilst planning permission has been granted for residential properties to the rear, these would be separated by a vehicular access from the premises subject to this application, with the activity associated with the proposed use focused to the front of the building. As such the proposal is not considered to result in an undue impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties.

8.7 Highway Issues

8.7.1 Off-street parking and dedicated car parks are present within the immediate vicinity of the site, with County Highways raising no objections to the proposal.

8.8 Other Issues

8.8.1 Objections have been received in relation to the potential for the proposed use to cause anti-social behaviour, however there is no evidence to support this claim. The use of the premises as a betting shop would also require a premises license, which may be revoked in the event of anti-social behaviour issue.

8.8.2 Objection has also been received in relation to the potential for the proposal to increase health inequalities, however legalised gambling is regulated by the Government who require betting companies to adopt safeguarding measures for their customers.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The principle of the proposed change of use is considered to be acceptable in planning land use terms, according with the requirements of the NPPF.

9.2 The proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area and is not considered to impact on the amenities of existing or approved neighbouring residential properties.

9.3 There are no objections from any of the statutory consultees to the proposal.

9.4 The proposal accords with the NPPF and Policies 1 and 9 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy together with Policies F1 and G17 of the South Ribble Local Plan. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to the imposition of conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval with Conditions.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

1. That the development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

REASON: Required to be imposed pursuant to section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development, hereby permitted, shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted approved plan Dwgs ref. 'HLN/LEY/10', 'HLN/LEY/06', 'HLN/LEY/07' and 'HLN/LEY/09'.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with Policy 17 in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Policy G17 in the South Ribble Local Plan 2012-2026.

RELEVANT POLICY

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework

1 Locating Growth (Core Strategy Policy)

9 Economic Growth and Employment (Core Strategy Policy)

POLF1 Car Parking

POLG17 Design Criteria for New Development

Note:
