
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

24th March 2021

Planning Committee

Locality	North Coast and Cumbraes
Reference	21/00054/PP
Application Registered	1st February 2021
Decision Due	1st April 2021
Ward	North Coast and Cumbraes

Recommendation	Approved subject to Conditions
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Location	9 Brisbane Street Largs Ayrshire KA30 8QW
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Applicant	MPB Structures Ltd Fao Mr Simon Machen
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Proposal	Demolition of existing hotel building and erection of new building comprising 14 flatted dwellings with associated landscaping, car parking, cycle parking and bin/recycling store
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1. Description

Planning Permission is sought for the demolition of an existing two and a half storey hotel and the erection of a new four storey building containing fourteen flats. The building would have a three-storey base and a recessed fourth 'roof' storey. Four two-bedroom flats would be sited on each of the first three floors and two three-bedroom flats would be located on the top storey.

The proposed building would have a hipped roof finished in standing seam metal measuring approx. 13.5m high to the ridge. The first three floors would measure approx. 400sqm in area and the fourth floor would measure approx. 310sqm in area. The walls of the first three floors would be finished in a smooth off-white render while the upper floor would be finished in 'Champaign/bronze' aluminium rainscreen cladding. The aluminium cladding would also be used as a secondary material on the lower levels. The design features bay windows on all four elevations and features two balconies on the first, second and third storeys on the front (west) façade.

The building would be located in the eastern portion of the site. To the front of the proposed building would be a car park comprising of 29 spaces accessed via Brisbane Street. The

existing access on the corner of Brisbane Street and Greenock Road would be closed off. A bin store would also be located to the front of the building and would be formed from a 1.8m high stone wall. A cycle store would be located to the rear of the building and would be formed from a 1.5m high rendered wall with a slate coping. There would also be a sprinkler tank with a 2m high rendered screen wall to the rear of the building.

In the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) the site lies within a General Urban Area allocation. The relevant policies of the LDP and therefore requires to be assessed against The Towns and Villages Objective of Strategic Policy 1: Spatial Strategy. All development proposals require to be assessed in terms of Strategic Policy 2: Placemaking. Finally, the proposal must be assessed against Policy 29: Energy Infrastructure Development. In addition, the Largs Seafront Development Brief and Coastal Design Guidance are of relevance as supplementary guidance.

On the 2nd of November 2004, Planning Permission was granted for the demolition of the hotel and the erection of a four-storey flatted residential block comprising of twelve units (ref. 03/00150/PP). The consent expired on the 2nd of November 2009.

On the 4th of December 2006, Planning Permission was granted to extend the front of the hotel to provide enlarged dining, function, and bar facilities on the ground floor. The proposed extension would project by some 10m from the front of the main façade of the building and 5.5m forward of the existing entrance porch (ref. 06/00921/PP). This expired on the 4th of December 2011.

An application (ref. 10/00332/PP) for the erection of twelve flatted dwellings on the site was withdrawn on the 1st of October 2010 following intimation to the developers of concern regarding the scale, design and positioning of the building.

On the 19th of April 2011, Planning Permission was refused by the Planning Committee for the demolition of the hotel and erection of a four-storey flatted residential block comprising of twelve units (ref. 10/00796/PP) on the basis that the height, position, massing and design of the proposed development would be harmful to the setting, character and appearance of Largs seafront. This decision was overturned on appeal to Scottish Ministers and Planning Permission was granted subject to conditions on the 16th of August 2011. This consent expired of the 16th of August 2014.

A Planning Application to demolish the existing hotel and erect a new four storey building containing fourteen flats was approved in October 2018 (18/00845/PP). This application has not yet expired, however, in November 2020 the agent sought advice regarding a revised design and was advised that a new application would be required in order to assess the proposed changes (20/01017/PREAPP).

This scheme would occupy approx. the same footprint as the approved scheme and has the same number of flats. The proposed changes between the approved and proposed are summarised below:

- Change to the design of the car park (no change in the number of parking spaces);
- The bin store has been moved;
- The addition of a cycle store to the rear;

- Change the building from a three and a half storey building to a four-storey building with a step back on the upper storey with an associated increase in roof height from approx. 12.8m to approx. 13.5m;
- Increase in the size of the upper storey roof terrace;
- Changes to the design including changes to the roof design, fenestration and finishing materials.

The application is supported by a Design Statement.

Given the Covid-19 restrictions, a site visit was not undertaken. However, it is considered there is sufficient information to determine the application including that available through aerial photographs and streetview resources.

Relevant Development Plan Policies

SP1 - Towns and Villages Objective **Towns and Villages Objective**

Our towns and villages are where most of our homes, jobs, community facilities, shops and services are located. We want to continue to support our communities, businesses and protect our natural environment by directing new development to our towns and villages as shown in the Spatial Strategy. Within urban areas (within the settlement boundary), the LDP identifies town centre locations, employment locations and areas of open space. Most of the remaining area within settlements is shown as General Urban Area. Within the General Urban Area, proposals for residential development will accord with the development plan in principle, and applications will be assessed against the policies of the LDP. New non-residential proposals will be assessed against policies of this LDP that relate to the proposal.

In principle, we will support development proposals within our towns and villages that:

- Support the social and economic functions of our town centres by adopting a town centre first principle that directs major new development and investment to town centre locations as a priority including supporting town centre living.
- Provide the right new homes in the right places by working alongside the Local Housing Strategy to deliver choice and variety in the housing stock, protecting land for housing development to ensure we address housing need and demand within North Ayrshire and by supporting innovative approaches to improving the volume and speed of housing delivery.
- Generate new employment opportunities by identifying a flexible range of business, commercial and industrial areas to meet market demands including those that would support key sector development at Hunterston and i3, Irvine.
- Recognise the value of our built and natural environment by embedding placemaking into our decision-making.
- Prioritise the re-use of brownfield land over greenfield land by supporting a range of strategic developments that will deliver:
 - regeneration of vacant and derelict land through its sustainable and productive re-use, particularly at Ardrossan North Shore, harbour and marina areas, Montgomerie Park (Irvine) and Lochshore (Kilbirnie).

- o regeneration and conservation benefits, including securing the productive re-use of Stoneyholm Mill (Kilbirnie) and supporting the Millport Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme.
- f) Support the delivery of regional partnerships such as the Ayrshire Growth Deal in unlocking the economic potential of the Ayrshire region.

Strategic Policy 2

Placemaking

Our Placemaking policy will ensure we are meeting LOIP priorities to make North Ayrshire safer and healthier by ensuring that all development contributes to making quality places. The policy also safeguards, and where possible enhances environmental quality through the avoidance of unacceptable adverse environmental or amenity impacts. We expect that all applications for planning permission meet the six qualities of successful places, contained in this policy. This is in addition to establishing the principle of development in accordance with Strategic Policy 1: Spatial Strategy. These detailed criteria are generally not repeated in the detailed policies section of the LDP. They will apply, as appropriate, to all developments.

Six qualities of a successful place

Distinctive

The proposal draws upon the positive characteristics of the surrounding area including landscapes, topography, ecology, skylines, spaces and scales, street and building forms, and materials to create places with a sense of identity.

Welcoming

The proposal considers the future users of the site and helps people to find their way around, for example, by accentuating existing landmarks to create or improve views (including sea views), locating a distinctive work of art in a notable place or making the most of gateway features to and from the development. It should also ensure that appropriate signage and lighting is used to improve safety and illuminate attractive buildings.

Safe and Pleasant

The proposal creates attractive places by providing a sense of security, including by encouraging activity, considering crime rates, providing a clear distinction between private and public space, creating active frontages and considering the benefits of natural surveillance for streets, paths and open spaces.

The proposal creates a pleasant, positive sense of place by promoting visual quality, encouraging social and economic interaction and activity, and by considering the place before vehicle movement.

The proposal respects the amenity of existing and future users in terms of noise, privacy, sunlight/daylight, smells, vibrations, glare, traffic generation, and parking. The proposal sufficiently investigates and responds to any issues of ground instability.

Adaptable

The proposal considers future users of the site and ensures that the design is adaptable to their needs. This includes consideration of future changes of use that may involve a mix of densities, tenures, and typologies to ensure that future diverse but compatible uses can be integrated including the provision of versatile multi-functional greenspace.

Resource Efficient

The proposal maximises the efficient use of resources. This can be achieved by re-using or sharing existing resources and by minimising their future depletion. This includes consideration of technological and natural means such as flood drainage systems, heat networks, solar gain, renewable energy and waste recycling as well as use of green and blue networks.

Easy to Move Around and Beyond

The proposal considers the connectedness of the site for people before the movement of motor vehicles, by prioritising sustainable and active travel choices, such as walking, cycling and public transport and ensuring layouts reflect likely desire lines, through routes and future expansions.

Detailed Policy 29 - Energy Infrastructure Policy 29:

Energy Infrastructure Development

We will support development proposals for energy infrastructure development, including wind, solar, tidal, cropping and other renewable sources, where they will contribute positively to our transition to a low carbon economy and have no unacceptable adverse environmental impacts, taking into consideration (including cumulatively) the following:

Environmental

- o Communities and individual dwellings - including visual impact, residential amenity, noise and shadow flicker;
- o Water quality;
- o Landscape - including avoiding unacceptable adverse impacts on our landscape designations;
- o Effects on the natural heritage - including birds;
- o Carbon rich soils including peat;
- o Impacts on the historic environment - including scheduled monuments, listed buildings and their settings.

Community

- o Establishing the use of the site for energy infrastructure development;
- o providing a net economic impact - including socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities;
- o Scale of contribution to renewable energy generation targets;
- o Public access - including impact on long distance walking and cycling routes and scenic routes identified in the National Planning Framework;
- o Impacts on tourism and recreation;
- o Specific locational opportunities for energy storage/generation.

Public Safety

- o Greenhouse gas emissions;
- o Aviation and defence interests and seismological recording;
- o Telecommunications and broadcasting installations - particularly ensuring that transmission links are not compromised; radio telemetry interference and below ground assets;
- o Road traffic and adjacent trunk roads;

- o Effects on hydrology, the water environment and flood risk including drinking water quality and quantity (to both the public and private water supplies);
- o Decommissioning of developments - including ancillary infrastructure, and site restoration and aftercare.

Proposals should include redundancy plans which will demonstrate how apparatus will be timeously removed as reasonably soon as the approved scheme ceases operation. There may be a requirement for financial bonds to ensure that decommissioning can be achieved. Taking into consideration the above, proposals for wind turbine developments should accord with the Spatial Framework (as mapped) and consider the current Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Farm Development in North Ayrshire. This study will be used as a point of reference for assessing all wind energy proposals including definitions of what small to large scale entails.

Buildings: Low and Zero Carbon Generating Technology

Proposals for all new buildings will be required to demonstrate that at least 10% of the current carbon emissions reduction set by Scottish Building Standards will be met through the installation and operation of low and zero-carbon generating technologies. A statement will be required to be submitted demonstrating compliance with this requirement. The percentage will increase at the next review of the local development plan.

This requirement will not apply to:

1. Alterations and extensions to buildings
2. Change of use or conversion of buildings
3. Ancillary buildings that stand alone and cover an area less than 50 square metres
4. Buildings which will not be heated or cooled, other than by heating provided solely for frost protection.
5. Buildings which have an intended life of less than two years.

2. Consultations and Representations

The standard neighbour notification was undertaken, and the application was advertised in the local press. Five letters of objection, one neutral letter and three letters of support were received, the points raised in which are summarised below:

Objection

1. The proposed building is taller than the existing building, and this would negatively affect the levels of daylight received by nearby flatted properties.

Response: The approved scheme (18/00845/PP) is three and a half storeys high which is higher than the existing building which is two and a half storeys. The proposed building would be four storeys, although it would only be approx. 0.7m higher than the approved. An assessment of the height of the proposed building and of the potential for overshadowing is included in the analysis section below.

2. The proposed building is not on the same footprint as the existing building. The proposed building is further forward than the existing building and this would negatively affect the levels of daylight received by nearby flatted properties.

Response: The proposed building has approximately the same footprint as the approved scheme (18/00845/PP) and there have been several approved Planning Permissions which do not occupy the same footprint as the existing building. The approved scheme fully assessed the siting and found that it was acceptable. The proposed development would not have a significant impact on the levels of daylight of nearby flats; see analysis.

3. The proposal would negatively affect the views from nearby flatted properties.

Response: Views from neighbouring properties are not a material Planning issue.

4. The proposal does not accord with the Largs Seafront Design Framework due to it not adhering to the established building lines.

Response: The proposed building has approximately the same footprint as the approved scheme (18/00845/PP). The Report of Handling for the previously approved scheme fully assessed the building lines as established by the Largs Seafront Design Framework. It was found that while the proposed building did not accord with the building lines as established by the Largs Seafront Design Framework, the building would be set further back than previously approved Planning Permissions (06/00921/PP and 10/00796/PP), and therefore the building line, prescribed within the brief, was considered to be of little weight. There have been no material changes since the previous permission to alter that assessment.

5. The proposals would adversely affect rental values of adjacent properties.

Response: Rental values of neighbouring properties are not a material Planning issue.

6. The bin store should not be located to the front of the building.

Response: The bin store would consist of an approx. 1.8m high stone wall and it is not considered that this would detract from the appearance of the area. The bin store has been located to the front of the building for ease of access and to protect the amenity of the neighbour to the rear.

Neutral

1. The demolition was already halfway complete when neighbour notifications arrived.

Response: Planning Permission is not required to demolish the existing building. Notwithstanding, there is an existing active Planning Permission which included the demolition of the existing building in its description (18/00845/PP).

2. Concerns that the construction of the proposed building will damage neighbouring buildings.

Response: This is not a material Planning issue.

Support

1. The proposed building looks attractive, is in a great location and would have great views.

Response: Noted.

Consultations:

North Ayrshire Council (NAC) Active Travel and Transportation: No objections subject to conditions.

Response: Noted.

3. Analysis

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that decisions by Planning Authorities shall be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The existing Planning Permission (18/00845/PP) and previous permissions established that the principle of demolishing the hotel and erecting a building containing fourteen flatted dwellinghouses was accepted.

The existing Planning Permission was assessed in terms of the previous Local Development Plan (adopted 2014) and since then a new Local Development Plan has been adopted in November 2019. There is no change in the policies of the new LDP which would affect the previous decision that the principle of the development is acceptable. As the proposed development is acceptable in principle under the Towns and Villages Objective of Strategic Policy 1, the application only requires to be assessed in terms of Strategic Policy 2: Placemaking, and Policy 29: Energy Infrastructure Development. The Coastal Design Guidance is also relevant, which aims to guide the design of new development to ensure that it will enhance and build upon existing good quality local character and contribute to the areas regeneration.

In terms of siting, the proposed building would be based upon the same footprint as the approved building. It would be located approx. 7m forwards of the front building line of the building to the north (Hutton Park care home) and 4.5m back from the front building line of the building to the south (Millennium Court residential flats). The Report of Handling for the approved scheme stated that due to previous Planning Permissions which broke the building line established by the Largs Seafront Development Brief, the building line carried little weight. It concluded that the position of the proposed building would act as a transition between the care home to the north and Millennium Court to the south, whilst ensuring the proposed building would be a sufficient distance from the residential properties to the rear. This report agrees with the previous assessment and the siting of the proposed scheme is considered to be acceptable in terms of the townscape of Largs seafront.

In terms of scale the approved scheme would have a ground floor area of approx. 395sqm whereas the proposed scheme would measure 400sqm. This marginal increase in area is not considered to have any noticeable effect on the overall scale of the building. The proposed scheme would be for a four-storey building whereas the approved was three and a half, resulting in an approx. 0.7m increase in height from the approved plans. The increased roof height would be offset in that the majority of the upper level would be set back from the eaves line of the first three levels. The ridge height of the proposed building would be equivalent to that of the care home to the north and would be lower than Millennium Court to the south. Millennium Court is also four storeys and the height of the proposed building is considered to be acceptable with regards to its context.

In terms of design, the applicant's Design Statement describes the inspiration for the design as being Art Deco, which is a common design style for buildings at seaside resorts, such as Largs. Most notably, Nardini's which is located nearby, is designed in an Art Deco style. The proposed design makes use of a higher level of glazing than the approved, particularly on the front seaward facing elevation, making the most of the views out to Cumbraes and beyond. The design treatment would be of the same quality on all four elevations, which would mean that the building would look attractive when viewed from any angle. It is proposed to finish the building in smooth silicone render with champagne/bronze anodised aluminium secondary detailing. These high-quality finishing materials are appropriately robust for the exposed seafront location. The roof would be finished in standing seam cladding as opposed to slate which was required by condition on the approved scheme. It is accepted that natural slate would not be the right choice for the modern design which is proposed and given that the proposed roof is significantly less in mass terms than the approved roof, standing seam cladding is considered an appropriate choice. Further finalised details of the roof cladding and wall finishes could be ensured via condition.

Given the above, it is considered that the design of the proposed flatted building is appropriate within its context and would indeed be an improvement on the consented scheme in terms of its suitability for a seafront location. The proposed design accords with the Coastal Design Guidance.

With regards to amenity, the proposal includes windows on all four elevations, including balconies on the first, second and third storeys of the front elevation. The windows on the front would have an outlook over the front curtilage of the site and towards Cumbraes and the Firth of Clyde and would not look on to any neighbouring properties. The windows to the north elevation face onto the side elevation of the adjacent care home at a distance of 3.8-5m. The majority of the windows on this elevation are angled bay windows, with the window panel facing the care home being obscure glazed, while the window panel facing the sea would be clear. The rear (east) facing windows would face onto the neighbouring property to the east at a distance of approx. 11m. These windows would allow for a degree of overlooking of the side facing windows of the neighbouring property to the east, however, they would not lead to a significant increase in overlooking when compared to the windows of the existing hotel building. The south facing windows would be located approx. 13.5m from Millennium Court to the south. As on the north elevation, the majority of the windows on this elevation are angled bay windows, with the window panel facing Millennium Court being obscure glazed, while the window panel facing the sea would be clear. The only windows on the south elevation where direct overlooking would be possible would be on the most western windows on the lower three floors. There is presently a degree of mutual overlooking between the side facing windows of the hotel and Millennium Court and it is not considered that the proposed building would lead to a significant increase in overlooking of Millennium Court. The balconies and roof terraces would be located on the front of the building and would have a primary outlook towards the sea. Where lateral views to the south would be possible these would be screened by vertical shading.

With regards to overshadowing, the proposed building has the same footprint as the consented design, and whilst being slightly higher, the upper level is largely set back, minimising any additional impact. There would be no overshadowing of the neighbouring flatted block to the south due to its southern position in relation to the proposed building. It is not considered that there would be a significant loss of light for these flats as they are located on the opposite side of Brisbane Street, approx. 13.5m from the proposed building. Any overshadowing to the rear would be contained within the application site.

Overshadowing to the north would be onto the side elevation of the care home and would not significantly impact more than the existing overshadowing caused by the hotel.

In terms of access, the proposed development has very similar arrangements to the approved, and it is therefore considered appropriate to attach a similar condition. In summary the issues to be covered by the access condition are:

- The aisle width of the parking area is to be a minimum of 6m;
- No surface water is to be issued from the site onto the public road;
- Vehicular access to the site is to be provided in the form of a minor commercial access footway crossing as detailed in sections 5.2 & 10.8 (and Fig 10.18) of the Roads Development Guidelines (single minor commercial access or car park up to 50 spaces footway crossing)
- Visibility splays of 2.5metres by 20 metres, in both directions, must be provided and maintained at the junction with the public road. No item with a height greater than 1.05 metre above adjacent carriageway level must be located within these sightline triangles.
- No pedestrian or vehicular access shall be taken onto the trunk road.

In addition, an informative could inform the applicant that a road opening permit may be required to stop up the existing access/exit.

The bin store being relocated to the front of the building will have a minor impact on the appearance of the seafront at Largs. The bin store is to be finished in stone which will improve its appearance. A condition could be used to ensure that the bin store and cycle store are provided prior to the first occupation of the flats. The applicant has provided a full landscape plan and a maintenance schedule. Soft landscaping would be kept to a minimum in the front curtilage to retain the open character and views of Largs seafront. Hard landscaping and boundary treatments would be of high quality and primarily finished in stone. A condition could ensure that the landscaping is carried out and maintained in accordance with the plans provided. The proposed development meets the qualities of successful places as highlighted above, and therefore it complies with Strategic Policy 2: Placemaking.

Policy 29: Energy Infrastructure Development, states that all proposals for new buildings will be required to demonstrate at least 10% of the current carbon emissions reductions set by Scottish Building Standards through the use of low or zero carbon generating technologies. The proposed development would meet these standards through improved air tightness, improved low-e glass with high thermal performance and improved insulation performance to external walls. The proposal accords with Policy 29.

There are no other material considerations. Given that the proposal is in accordance with the relevant policies of the LDP, it is considered that planning permission can be granted.

4. Full Recommendation

Approved subject to Conditions

Reasons for Decision

Condition

1. That prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, full details of the proposed finishing external materials shall be submitted for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority. The development shall then progress in accordance with such details as may be approved.

Reason

In order to ensure that the final appearance of the finishing materials would be acceptable, in order to protect the visual amenity of the area.

Condition

2. That prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, full details of the proposed access and parking layout shall be submitted for the written approval of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority. These details shall include confirmation that:

- i) The aisle width of the parking area is to be a minimum of 6m;
- ii) Visibility splays of 2.5metres by 20 metres, in both directions, are provided and maintained at the junction with the public road. No item with a height greater than 1.05 metre above adjacent carriageway level must be located within these sightline triangles;
- iii) No surface water is to be issued from the site onto the public road;
- iv) Vehicular access to the site to is be provided in the form of a minor commercial access footway crossing as detailed in sections 5.2 & 10.8 (and Fig 10.18) of the Roads Development Guidelines (single minor commercial access or car park up to 50 spaces footway crossing)

Thereafter, the proposed access and parking arrangements, which may be approved, shall be completed to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt there shall be no means of direct access from the site to the trunk road either pedestrian or vehicular.

Reason

In the interest of road safety.

Condition

3. That prior to the first occupation of the flatted dwellinghouses, hereby approved, the landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved landscaping plans. Thereafter, the landscaping shall be maintained in accordance with the Landscape Management Plan hereby approved to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

Reason

In order to ensure that the proposed landscaping scheme is carried out and maintained; in the interest of the amenity of the area.

Condition

4. That prior to the first occupation of the flatted dwellinghouses, hereby approved, the bin store and cycle store shall be provided in accordance with the approved plans to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council as Planning Authority.

Reason

In order to ensure that the bin and cycle store are erected prior the flats being occupied. In the interest of the amenity of the future residents.

Russell McCutcheon
Executive Director (Place)

For further information please contact Mr John Mack on 01294 324794.

Appendix 1 – Location Plan

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