

**Conversion of Upper Floors of the Dog Inn into 5 No
1 Bedroom Apartments Including Provision of
Parking Spaces, Removal of External Escape Stair
and Re-Opening Original Tap Room Door**

BY

NGJ Holdings Ltd

AT

The Dog Inn
Market Place
Longridge
PR3 3RR



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement is submitted in support of a proposal to ensure the long term future of a poplar inn which over the years has suffered mixed fortunes. It is now in private hands instead of being let by a brewery conglomerate. With significant investment proposed to re-invigorate this asset to Longridge the applicant (born locally and a long term resident of Longridge) has ambitions to make this a proud building again – removing modern signs and services that clutter the building and returning the pub to its former glory. This commitment is demonstrated by the extensive works already started to repair and maintain the building.
- 1.2 However, in order to be a viable proposition for the applicant the property was acquired without the adjoining original bowling green and car parking area. It is now a town centre business premises without customer parking; as The Bull and Royal, The Foresters and The Durham Ox.
- 1.3 Similarly, approximately half of the upper floor is currently given over to the former restaurant use whilst the remainder and all of the second floor is a huge 4-bedroom residence for the pub manager. Again, to assist in the viability, conversion of these underused areas benefits safeguarding a continuing business at ground floor.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This proposal therefore is to convert underused space at first and second floor of The Dog Inn into 5No 1 bedroom apartments with a shared access at ground floor.
- 2.2 It includes making provision in the rear garden for parking for the proposed residents and staff for the retained public house downstairs.
- 2.3 The scheme has been designed in such a way that it has minimal structural implication on the internal layout and it facilitates the removal of the unsightly external metal fire escape stair and later rear porch to the rear.
- 2.4 In addition, the applicant, who has friends who remember using the old tap room door, wants to re-open this significant architectural feature (archive photos suggest it was closed in the late 70s).

3. HERITAGE STATEMENT



Figure 1 Unightly fire escape and modern porch concealing the original stone surrounds to the former rear entrance

- 3.1 The Dog Inn is a 'Focal Building' as referenced in the Longridge Conservation Area commanding a 'notable long view' from Berry Lane. It was built in 1913 to replace the old pub (which was once adjacent at the end of the current end terrace house to the North East). The building is also referred to as having 'Townscape Merit'.
- 3.2 The building is of stone and render cladding and today; is substantially as-built with the exception of; a flat roofed gents wc annexe and an external staircase and porch to the rear. Stone setts are still in excellent condition at the front apart from the need for some minor repairs.
- 3.3 Whilst many features still exist it is notably the tap room door has been blocked up and the original 'gallows bracket' pub sign has been removed:
<http://townarchive.longridgestation.co.uk/archive/1218/>.
The stone support still exists for the sign and photos of the original sign exist at Longridge Town Archive. Unfortunately, the original

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- leaded light ground floor windows have also been lost to modern timber replacements.
- 3.4 To the rear there used to be steps from the pub down to the now non-existent bowling green. These are now gone and this neglected garden area is proposed for parking and landscaping.
- 3.5 The building is in a poor state of repair with slipped tiles, old leadwork and loose pointing. The building is currently undergoing substantial repair and maintenance.
- 3.6 Essentially this application is predominantly for internal alterations necessary for the proposed change of use on the upper floors. However externally the application does include re-opening the original 'Tap Room' door. Photos exist at Longridge Town Archive:
<http://townarchive.longridgestation.co.uk/archive/4702/>
indicating the style of the original door which this proposal hopes to replicate.
- 3.7 Also to the rear the current unsightly external escape stairs and later rear porch are to be removed and the original tall window and rear door surround reinstated as illustrated on the archive photos:
<http://townarchive.longridgestation.co.uk/archive/1801/>
- 3.8 The applicant also hopes to remove many of the redundant modern services, vent ducts and signs which litter the building.
- 3.9 Internally the building layout upstairs is little changed apart from later partitions to create additional spaces by the tall window referred to above and; a new opening to create a door into the rear kitchen created by the former Indian Sun Lounge Restaurant. Otherwise many original fireplaces are to be retained as part of this proposal and new partitions will be provided to create the rooms with minimal new structural openings created.
- 3.10 Interestingly rumour has suggested this building might have been steel framed. Investigations have proven that it is a traditional masonry construction but with many steel beams to support upper floor walls; including walls which also support the roof. In many instances the bottom of these beams are set at floor level restricting the formation of openings between rooms or into roof voids – this has resulted in steps in the layout to get over the beams. Whilst there are many new steel beams at ground floor all those on the upper floors appear to be as originally built.

3.11 The only additions created by this proposal is the essential smoke ventilation to the new internal staircase arrangement and; two windows over the proposed second floor kitchens. Therefore, 3No 'conservation type' flush fitting Velux windows. All existing window openings are to remain.

3.11 This heritage statement is proportionate to the extent of the works being carried out. The current repair and maintenance works make reference to Ribble Valley Borough Council's Conservation Area Guidance Notes. The limited works described above therefore should result in a vastly improved appearance/contribution to this notable building of townscape merit.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 3/2004/1093 Formation of new external disabled ramp to front elevation.

3/2012/0467 Fell three trees to the rear of car park

4.2 The limited applications above demonstrate that the pub has survived externally without significant extension or alteration.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Without making specific reference the many and various planning policies the fundamental issues here are:

- a) the impact on the Conservation Area
- b) the need for additional residential accommodation in Longridge
- c) The impact of the parking on the rear of the property and the landscape setting
- d) Any highway impacts

6. ASSESSMENT

6.1 Impact on Conservation Area

This proposal seeks to change the use of the upper floors with minimal impact on the external elevations other than the insertion of conservation type flush fitting windows; re-opening the tap room door and reinstating a historic tall window following removal of the unsightly external escape stair and rear porch.

This work along with the current repair and maintenance work all enhance the building by reinstating its former appearance.

6.2 Additional Housing

Ribble Valley Borough Council's Core Strategy promotes sustainable development and in particular within town centres. 1 Bedroom apartments meet one of the greater needs outlined in the Core Strategy and in particular in this 'windfall' situation.

6.3 Impact of the parking to the rear of the property

The parking is kept to a minimum to facilitate a significant area of perimeter soft landscaping. This includes proposed planting on applicant controlled land adjacent to the public footpath down the South West side of the existing stone garden wall. The terracing of the land naturally helps to screen the parking from limited views from the North West.

By removal of the escape stair a larger beer garden can also be provided with lots of opportunity for additional soft landscaping and wall climbers.

Whilst waiting for a tenant to take the pub and; their input in the design of this area, the applicant is happy for a soft landscaping scheme to form a condition of the approval.

6.4 Highway Impacts

This proposal seeks to provide parking for the proposed 1 bed apartments and for 3No staff for the continuing pub business. On the basis that the apartments are all above ground floor, and with the nature of the existing ground levels, it is presumed not to provide disabled parking. However secure cycle parking is provided. Refuse storage is provided to the rear of the kitchen access.

On the basis that there is no customer parking for this town centre business with bus stops within a few metres of the premises, the parking provision is adequate for the proposed use.

On the basis that vehicles entering and leaving the site is therefore significantly reduced the number catered for should have a lesser impact on this existing site entrance.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 On the basis that many public houses in Longridge are closing the proposed retention of the ground floor as a continuing business will be welcome by many. In order to facilitate the investment necessary to not only keep the business running but to provide the 5No apartments this proposal has had to maximise the potential for this premises. Modern regulations require significant thermal and sound proofing to provide flats above a public house. It's not just a case of blocking up a few openings and creating new ones with new carpets and a 'lick' of paint. Floors have to be overlaid with expensive sound proof systems, external walls have to be lined with insulation and ceilings lined with fire proofing. When a local business man is prepared to invest to this extent the support of all interested parties is essential.

This has been a carefully thought through proposal to ensure minimum impact on this building of townscape merit and how best to ensure a continued business use.

Whilst there are many complex planning policies to wade through the basic concepts of this proposal meet all of their requirements and we therefore believe this should be a straight forward application process with a positive outcome not only for the applicant but Longridge as a whole.