

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE : **PLANNING**

DATE : **3RD MARCH 2015**

ADDRESS/LOCATION : **'BUILDING P', GLOUCESTER QUAYS
OUTLET CENTRE**

APPLICATION NO. & WARD : **14/01398/COU
WESTGATE**

EXPIRY DATE : **27TH JANUARY 2015**

APPLICANT : **GLOUCESTER QUAYS LLP**

PROPOSAL : **CHANGE OF USE OF FIRST AND SECOND
FLOORS AND PART OF THE GROUND
FLOOR (FOR ACCESS ONLY) OF BUILDING
P (CURRENTLY OCCUPIED BY THE
GLOUCESTER ANTIQUES CENTRE) TO
OFFICES (USE CLASS B1)**

REPORT BY : **ADAM SMITH**

**NO. OF APPENDICES/
OBJECTIONS** : **SITE PLAN
7 REPRESENTATIONS**

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The application site is the upper two floors and part ground floor of the building known as Building P of the Outlet Centre scheme (the former Matthews furniture building), currently occupied by the Antiques Centre. This is the retained historic building facing Llanthony Road with TGI Friday at ground floor.
- 1.2 The proposal is to change the use to Use Class B1 offices.
- 1.3 The application is referred to Committee at the Development Control Manager's discretion given the issues involved and concerns raised in representations.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

02/00271/OUT

- 2.1 This was the application for Outline Planning Permission for the Gloucester Quays site. The application was for major mixed use development comprising new build and reuse of existing buildings to accommodate residential development (approx. 1000 units); food retail store (approximately 7,800 sq.

metres); retail factory outlet centre (approximately 20,000 sq. metres); new Gloscat education campus (approximately 19,000 sq. metres); employment development (approximately 9500 sq. metres); hotel (80 beds); leisure development (approximately 6000 sq. metres) and the provision of associated car parking, servicing and infrastructure including a new road link across canal. Outline Planning Permission was granted by the Secretary of State on 22nd June 2006. A renewal of the permission was agreed by Members at the January Committee meeting pending the completion of legal agreements.

07/00708/REM

- 2.2 This reserved matters application was for a mixed use scheme consisting of a Retail Factory Outlet Centre, 15 residential flats, leisure floorspace (including A3, A4 & A5 food & drink) together with associated multi-level car parking (1311 spaces), bus and taxi facilities and landscaping. Approval of reserved matters was given 4th September 2007.

07/00771/FUL & 10/00894/REP

- 2.3 This was the application for the conversion and refurbishment of Lock Warehouse with retail/restaurant use on ground floor, 26 no. residential units above and associated cycle and bin storage. It was granted subject to conditions on 4th February 2008 and renewed on 19th November 2010, and was associated with a unilateral undertaking that included a commitment to relocate the Antiques Centre to an alternative location within the Docks or nearby surrounding area to provide a continuing presence of the Antiques Centre without materially interrupting the continuity of trading.

08/01566/COU

- 2.4 This was an application for the change of use of the first and second floors and part of the ground floor of the former Matthews Furniture Warehouse (known as Building P of the Gloucester Quays development) for retail use by the Antiques Centre (when the Centre moved from Lock Warehouse). It was granted subject to conditions on 9th March 2009.

09/01281/COU

- 2.5 This application was for the change of use of part of the upper floor of Building E of the Gloucester Quays development from office, storage and service space to retail use for the Antiques Centre, with associated ground floor access, and alterations to and use of the connecting bridge over High Orchard Street for the Antiques Centre. It was granted subject to conditions on 9th February 2010 but not implemented.

14/01370/FUL

- 2.6 This was an application to change the use of part of the first floor and part of the ground floor (for access) of Block E (at east side of High Orchard Street) to offices (Use Class B1). It was granted subject to conditions on 5th February 2015.

3.0 PLANNING POLICIES

Central Government Guidance - National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1 This is the latest Government statement of planning policy and is a material consideration that should be given significant weight in determining this application.

Decision-making

The NPPF does not alter the requirement for applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In assessing and determining applications, Authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-making, this means:

- approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- where the development plan is absent, silent, or relevant policies are out of date, granting planning permission unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole; or
 - specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

Authorities should look for solutions rather than problems and decision-takers should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Core planning principles

Planning should:

- Be genuinely plan-led;
- Be a creative exercise in ways to enhance and improve places;
- Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs;
- Secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity;
- Take account of the different roles and character of different areas;
- Support the transition to a low carbon future, take account of flood risk and encourage the use of renewable resources;
- Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution;
- Encourage the effective use of land by reusing brownfield land;
- Promote mixed use developments;
- Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance;
- Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable;
- Take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

The NPPF is topic based on a similar basis to the previous PPGs and PPSs:

Building a strong, competitive economy and Ensuring the vitality of town centres

The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth.

The NPPF retains a recognition of town centres as the heart of communities and encourages the pursuit of policies to support their vitality and viability.

The sequential and impact tests are maintained for planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with an up to date Local Plan.

Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more the 'impact' factors, it should be refused.

Promoting sustainable transport

Seeks to ensure developments generating significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. Decisions should take account of whether;

- The opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up;
- Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people;
- Improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented on transport grounds whether the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

Requiring good design

Emphasis is retained on good design, seeking to ensure that development will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, establish a strong sense of place, optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, respond to local character and history while not discouraging innovation, ensure safe and accessible environments, and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities for improving areas.

Promoting healthy communities

Encourages the involvement of all sections of the community. Decisions should aim to achieve places which promote;

- Opportunities for meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact;
- Safe and accessible environments;
- Clear and legible routes, high quality public space that encourage use.

Decisions should also;

- Plan positively for shared space, community facilities and other local services;

- Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

The importance of access to high quality open spaces is also emphasised.

Planning obligations and conditions

Planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development: and
- Fairly and reasonable related in scale and kind to the development.

Planning conditions should only be imposed where they are

- Necessary;
- Relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted;
- Enforceable;
- Precise; and
- Reasonable in all other respects.

The National Planning Practice Guidance has also been published to accompany and in part expand on the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Development Plan

3.2 Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has established that - “The development plan is
(a) The regional spatial strategy for the region in which the area is situated, and

(b) The development plan documents (taken as a whole) which have been adopted or approved in relation to that area.

If to any extent a policy contained in a development plan for an area conflicts with another policy in the development plan, the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy that is contained in the last document to be adopted, approved or published (as the case may be). 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.”

Local Plan

3.3 The statutory development plan for Gloucester remains the City of Gloucester Local Plan (Adopted 1983 and partially saved until the Local Development Framework is adopted). Under the terms of the NPPF, weight can be given to these policies according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.

3.4 Relevant saved 1983 Local Plan policies are as follows:
T1f – Provision for pedestrians in the city centre outside the main shopping area.
T4a – Differential charging of short and long stay car parks to discourage inappropriate use.
T6 – Measures will be introduced to encourage cycling.

S1 – The sub-regional shopping status of Gloucester will be maintained and strengthened within the context of its position in the pattern of shopping facilities in Gloucestershire. All comparison shopping facilities will be concentrated within the city centre other than where expressly stated to the contrary.

- 3.5 Subsequent to the 1983 plan there has also been the City of Gloucester (Pre-1991 Boundary Extension) Interim Adoption Copy October 1996), and City of Gloucester First Stage Deposit Local Plan (June 2001).
- 3.6 Regard must also be had to the 2002 Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan. This has been subjected to two comprehensive periods of public and stakeholder consultation and adopted by the Council for development control purposes. This cannot be saved as it is not a formally adopted plan, however with it being adopted for development control purposes it is still judged to be a material consideration. Appeal reference APP/U1620/A/07/2046996 dated 18th March 2008 confirms the degree of weight that may be afforded to the 2002 Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan. It is considered that particular weight may be afforded to those policies that attracted a limited number of, or no objections during the consultation stages. In his decision the Inspector stated the following;

“Although the local plan is not part of the development plan it has been adopted for development control purposes and I give considerable weight to it having regard to the amount of public consultation that it underwent...”

The following policies are of relevance:

Western Waterfront mixed use allocation

BE.4 – Criteria for the layout, circulation and landscape of new development

BE.6 – Access for all

BE.21 – Safeguarding of amenity

TR.9 – Parking standards

TR.11 – Provision of parking for people with disabilities

TR.12 – Cycle parking standards

TR.31 – Road safety

E.1 – Mixed use allocations (MU.2 Western Waterfront)

S.2a – Bakers Quay (factory outlet centre)

Emerging Plan

- 3.7 In terms of the emerging local plan, the Council has prepared a Joint Core Strategy with Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Councils which was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 20th November 2014. Policies in the Submission Joint Core Strategy have been prepared in the context of the NPPF and are a material consideration. The weight to be attached to them is limited by the fact that the Plan has not yet been the subject of independent scrutiny and does not have development plan status. In addition to the Joint Core Strategy, the Council is preparing its local City Plan which is taking forward the policy framework contained within the City Council's Local Development Framework Documents which reached Preferred Options stage in 2006.

On adoption, the Joint Core Strategy and City Plan will provide a revised planning policy framework for the Council. In the interim period, weight can be attached to relevant policies in the emerging plans according to

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies; and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework

The following policies of the Submission JCS Document are of relevance:

SD1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

SD2 – Employment

SD5 – Design requirements

SD15 – Health and environmental quality

INF1 – Access to the transport network

INF2 – Safety and efficiency of the transport network

- 3.8 All policies can be viewed at the relevant website address:- Gloucester Local Plan policies – www.gloucester.gov.uk/planning; Gloucestershire Structure Plan policies – www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2112 and Department of Community and Local Government planning policies - www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/.

4.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 The Highway Authority raises no objection.
- 4.2 The Planning Policy Department has not commented.

5.0 PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 41 neighbouring premises were notified of the application, and a site notice was also published. 7 representations have been received.
- 5.2 The issues raised may be summarised as follows:
- The Antiques Centre is a major and longstanding tourist attraction bringing thousands of people to the City every year
 - Along with the Docks it is second only to the Cathedral as Gloucester's main tourist attraction
 - The current building is sympathetically designed, has easy access and is in a central prime location
 - The centre employs 21 people, 5 fully employed, and there are over 90 dealers
 - There is a specific nature to the offer – long browsing times, insight into our heritage
 - The street level entrance is essential to the Antiques Centre and the current layout works well
 - Reliance on passing trade

- The new location is anonymous
- The move would have a detrimental effect on the Antiques Centre
- Traders would review their positions
- Traders have built up custom that helps towards the general well-being of the Quays
- It could well kill off the Antiques Centre in the next couple of years
- This would be a great loss for the City
- In terms of the fragility of the business, despite promises to spend money on marketing there has been no such undertaking by Peel Holdings to do so, and the dealers have not been approached by Peel Holdings to discuss financial concerns and viability – had it done so suggestions may have been forthcoming
- Discussions should be had about improving profitability before any resolution on the planning application
- Turning it into a bland office block, of which there are many in the area, is a betrayal of the original vision for the Docks
- Putting offices in the middle of a shopping centre is detrimental
- Prime sites should be reserved for the use and enjoyment of people
- Would it not make sense to keep the Antiques Centre where it is and put the office at the upper deck
- The applicant's larger profit would be at the expense of people's enjoyment of the city
- Councillors should protect the City and its population from the might of a Corporation who have different needs and aims
- The offices may create 50 new jobs but if the Antiques Centre fails there would be no actual gain

I also circulated to the objectors the supplementary material recently received from the applicant regarding the relocation proposals, signage and marketing, proposed layout and servicing, with a deadline of 27th February to comment. Some further comments have already been made.

5.3 The full content of all correspondence on this application can be inspected at Herbert Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester, prior to the Committee meeting.

6.0 **OFFICER OPINION**

6.1 It is considered that the main issues with regard to this application are as follows:

- Economic considerations
- Traffic and transport
- Residential amenity

Economic considerations

Principle of the office use – sequential and impact tests

6.2 Offices are a main town centre use in terms of the NPPF. This site is considered to be within the city centre for this (non-retail) main town centre use. As such it is not considered that the sequential test is necessary – it is compliant with this part of the NPPF and similarly this is the case for the

impact test. I understand that the applicant wishes to create an office 'hub' in this area.

Loss of the antiques centre use

- 6.3 The applicant accepts that the continuity of trading of the antiques centre is a key issue. In the previous 'relocation' application – the conversion of the Lock Warehouse to flats – a unilateral undertaking was submitted to give a commitment to relocate the Antiques Centre to an alternative location within the Docks or nearby surrounding area to provide a continuing presence without materially interrupting the continuity of trading.
- 6.4 I understand that the applicant is the owner of the Gloucester Antiques Centre and believes that it is no longer the significant tourist attraction that it once was. Neither the applicant nor traders have figures to demonstrate this. The applicant also notes that the Centre is fragile and without relocation the continued future trading of the Centre is very uncertain.
- 6.5 In this instance we are one step on from where we were with the Lock Warehouse application, in that the applicant has already identified a new location at which to site the Antiques Centre – the upper deck within the outlet centre. An application to utilise that area is also on this Committee agenda.
- 6.6 It is evident from the representations that although the applicant believes the new location would be appropriate, several traders have their doubts and indicate that such a move could ultimately lead to the demise of the Antiques Centre entirely. In terms of this application that is relevant to the proposed loss of the Antiques Centre use from the premises.
- 6.7 This 'dispute' over the appropriateness of the upper deck for the Antiques Centre and the apparent desire of traders to stay in the existing building seem to be at the heart of representations on this application. The Authority must be careful to judge the proposal on material planning considerations and not just aspirations for the most advantageous arrangement for this business. The economic planning issues of locating offices here are acceptable.
- 6.8 In this instance the planning application involves the potential loss of a tourist attraction and this was considered important by Members in assessing the proposal to convert the Lock Warehouse and lose the previous home of the Antiques Centre. I have asked the applicants for an undertaking to facilitate the relocation of the Antiques Centre prior to the implementation of the development to ensure no material break in trading – which would reflect the approach taken with that previous relocation application. However the applicant has confirmed that it will not enter into such an obligation and believes that there is no planning need for it, advising that it will simply shut the business if this causes a problem.
- 6.9 The applicant states that it is committed to trying to provide a viable future for the Antiques Centre, and evidences its actions in re-opening the centre when it closed in 2013. The applicant also states that it will put into place actions to seek to facilitate a successful move to the upper deck, including a signage

and marketing strategy, and an indicative layout showing how the upper deck might accommodate the centre with display areas for 50 dealers along with associated reception/office/storage/etc has been produced. Servicing arrangements for the upper deck have also been set out.

- 6.10 Ultimately, the applicant could evict the Antiques Centre at any time (subject to contractual arrangements) and traders would be forced to consider finding new premises themselves if they wanted to continue trading in the same manner.
- 6.11 The resultant situation I believe is that there appears to be genuine momentum towards facilitating the move to the upper deck and the applicant claims to be committed to the centre's future. Nevertheless in the absence of an undertaking to commit to this, there is no greater level of certainty than that – the applicant could implement the office conversion and not the upper deck proposals which would make the Antiques Centre homeless. However, given the applicant's claim that their staying put is not an option and with the threat of closing the business otherwise if the Council holds out for a legal undertaking, it seems that, from the perspective of seeking to ensure continuity of this tourist attraction, there is little option than to allow the conversion on face value and hope that the relocation takes place and is successful.

Office floorspace within the shopping centre

- 6.12 I do not consider that the presence of this amount of office floorspace would dominate or water down the retail scheme to cause any detriment in planning terms, and the resultant mix of uses would comply with the mixed use proposal envisaged in the 2002 plan and granted within the wider Gloucester Quays scheme.

Other economic implications

- 6.13 The proposal would create employment opportunities (the applicant claims in excess of 50 jobs, and that there is an occupier lined up) and would bring in businesses that would contribute to supporting other local facilities.

Economic conclusions

- 6.14 While the situation is somewhat unfortunate and relies on the stated intentions of a developer rather than a legal undertaking, I do not see that raising an objection to this proposal in terms of economic planning considerations is appropriate.

Traffic and Transport

- 6.15 The total level of traffic resulting from the B1 office use is not expected to be higher than the existing use – vehicle movements are anticipated to be broadly similar although the office movements are likely to be concentrated at either end of the working day. Approximately 19 two-way movements in the AM peak and 17 in the PM peak are expected with the offices – not considering the movements associated with the existing use.

- 6.16 Any increase would be felt at the St Ann Way junction and it would not have any significant impact here. Other matters such as the proposed limit on parking permits and location of bus stops locally indicate that the impact may be less still. Any additional car parking could be accommodated in the local public car parks.
- 6.17 Overall no objection is raised in highways terms.

Residential amenity

- 6.18 There are residential flats in the Barge Arm complex across Llanthony Road from the application site. I do not consider that the office use would cause any significant disturbance to residents, but a condition is necessary to control times of works during the conversion phase to preserve reasonable living conditions.

Human Rights

- 6.19 In compiling this recommendation we have given full consideration to all aspects of the Human Rights Act 1998 in relation to the applicant and/or the occupiers of any affected properties. In particular, regard has been had to Article 8 of the ECHR (Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence) and the requirement to ensure that any interference with the right in this Article is both in accordance with the law and proportionate. A balance needs to be drawn between the right to develop land in accordance with planning permission and the rights under Article 8 of adjacent occupiers. On assessing the issues raised by the application no particular matters, other than those referred to in this report, warrant any different action to that recommended.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that where 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.
- 7.2 No objections are raised in terms of highways – there would be no severe residual impact resulting from the proposal. The principle of office use in this location is considered acceptable and would assist in creating a mixed use development that would deliver employment uses in a central area and would support other local facilities. The theoretical loss of the Antiques Centre could be ameliorated by the proposed relocation to the upper deck taking place. While there is evidently some considerable concern about the suitability of the new premises, in my view the concerns could not amount to a reason to refuse the application – the ability to deliver the continuity of a tourist attraction would exist, although it would be down to the applicant to deliver the scheme. Ultimately if the applicant acted on the threat to close the business this would clearly be more detrimental to the future of the Antiques Centre. Under these circumstances I recommend that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER

8.1 That planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

Condition

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

Reason

To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Condition

The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the plans referenced

CTM-ANTQ-20-00-001-01 – Proposed Level 00 Floor Plan

CTM-ANTQ-20-00-002-01 – Proposed Level 01 Floor Plan

CTM-ANTQ-20-00-003-01 – Proposed Level 02 Floor Plan

received by the Local Planning Authority on 1st December 2014.

Reason

To ensure the works are carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

Condition

During the conversion/building works phase no machinery shall be operated, no process shall be carried out and no deliveries taken at or despatched from the site outside the following times: Monday to Friday 0800hours to 1800hours, and Saturdays 0800hours to 1300hours. For the avoidance of doubt no works shall take place at any time on Sundays, bank or public holidays.

Reason

To safeguard the amenities of the area in accordance with Policies FRP.9, FRP.10, FRP.11 and BE.21 of the 2002 City of Gloucester Second Deposit Local Plan, Policy SD15 of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy Submission Version November 2014 and Paragraphs 17, 109, 120 and 123 of the NPPF.

Decision:

Notes:

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Person to contact: Adam Smith
(Tel: 396702)

14/01398/COU

**Antiques Centre
Gloucester Quays Designer Outlet
St Ann Way
Gloucester
GL1 5SH**

Planning Committee 03.03.2015



Development

29 DEC 2014

Control

17/12/14

Dear Mr. Adams,

I would like to object to the change of use of Gloucester Antique Centre, Llanthony Road, Gloucester Quays Gloucester GL2 5RQ refno. 14/01398/cou from an antique Centre to offices.

The entrance to Gloucester Antiques Centre is on street level and can be seen from most parts of the docks. This is important as the Antique Centre is a major and long standing tourist attraction which brings many thousands of people to Gloucester every year. If the Antique Centre moves to the upper floor of the shopping centre this is lost. Although the Gloucester Antique Centre is attached to the Quays development it does not necessarily attract the same type of customers. I feel the move would not affect the Quays outlet but would have a detrimental affect on the Antique Centre.

The Antique Centre was moved from Severn Road to Llanthony Road which lost us customers. Last year the centre closed for a few weeks and again this lost us reputation and customers. Another move into the shopping centre and upstairs out of view of people

visiting the docks could well kill off the Antique Centre in the next couple of years. This would be a great loss for Gloucester.

Yours faithfully,



This application can be considered alongside another application changing the use of the quays upper deck and an obvious enforced move of the antiques centre from its current location. As a trader in GACL it would seem a real retrograde step to change a perfectly good retail area to office accommodation. The loss of a 'shop window' and off-street access is pretty fundamental for a 'shop' that relies significantly on passing trade. The amount of sales to people who just happened to be walking by is vital and a move into the depths of a shopping complex, and upstairs to boot, just has to be a step in the wrong direction. It is detrimental to be putting offices in the middle of a shopping centre. Customers expect shops, not offices - and once customers are put off it's difficult to get them back. For myself, and the other traders, the loss of a 'shop window' and off-street access is pretty fundamental for a 'shop' that relies significantly on passing trade. The amount of sales to people who just happened to be walking by is vital and a move into the depths of a shopping complex, and upstairs to boot, has to be a step in the wrong direction and brings into question the viability of the antiques centre itself. I and others would be reviewing our positions and the complete loss of the antique centre is a possibility. You may not be aware that many traders have spent considerable time and effort in building up trade which helps towards the general well-being of the Quays. I trust the committee will choose to support the traders of Gloucester and turn down this ill-advised application that is not for the benefit of Gloucester.

Mr Stewart Blencowe

APPLICATION NO 14/01398/COU

ANTIQUE CENTRE GLOUCESTER QUAYS

CHANGE OF USE

PENDING CONSIDERATION

CASE OFFICER ADAM SMITH

7TH JANUARY/2015

The dock area is a pleasure to see and visit. It provides a diverse, multitude of experiences for the visitor to enjoy.

The building that houses the antique centre is sympathetically designed, has easy access in a most central prime location.

The centre employs 21 people, 5 are fully employed the rest come as arranged or needed. On three floors the building, with a lift, houses the wares of 90+ dealers, all with varying interests, setting alcoves and cabinets for display purposes. A few dealers are full time, as a job and a few part time, others use it as a hobby, pocket money etc.

The antique centre is the 2nd most visited place in Gloucester (no 1 being the cathedral) therefore creating a spin off to the whole of the dock area and outlets. The many coaches disembark outside the antique centre, the visitors and residents come in to view, enjoy, undisturbed, the items on display, purchase if wanted. This provides an

insight to our heritage and history some stay the day. The cafe on the 3rd floor is very popular giving views of the dock area. The visitors often remark on the extent, diversity and beauty of the items displayed and how much they have enjoyed their time in the antique centre.

The antique centre closed for awhile last summer the visitors and residents were upset and delighted when it reopened.

A lot of the dealers are sceptical that the proposed new location for the antique centre will be a successful

venture. It's feared that many dealers will give notice to leave as the prospect of a move, so difficult with so much stock and only to close its doors due to failure after a few months, will tip the balance and end the venture.

Should consent be given to the current application 14/01398/COU access to this beautiful building will be denied to residents and visitors alike and cause a real danger of losing the 2nd most visited place in Gloucester THE GLOUCESTER QUAYS ANTIQUE CENTRE.

YOURS SINCERELY



JOSEPHINE M. HARRISON.

Planning Application Ref : 14/01398/COU

Change of use GAC Antiques Premises, current Location.

We submit the following objections related to the above detailed Change of Use application.

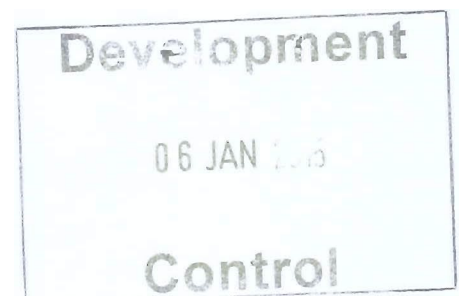
- 1 GAC Antiques is a prime tourist attraction for the City, hence it is significant in the wealth creation of Gloucester City Council's economy.
- 2 The current location, with its street level entrance and large window frontage is vital to the success of a retail business. Passing trade is the key to the survival of the Centre. Without such an important visual attraction the Centre is doomed to failure.
- 3 To turn the building into a bland office block, of which there are many in the area, is a betrayal of the original vision for the docks. Prime sites should be reserved for the use and enjoyment of the people of Gloucestershire and further afield.
- 4 Clearly if this Change of Use Application is approved then the highly successful Peel Group will make a much larger profit. This would be at the expense of people's enjoyment of the City of Gloucester.
- 5 There is clearly a conflict of interests in this Planning Application, it is a David and Goliath scenario. The might of a large Corporation using its economic power to produce higher profits against a small group of passionate individuals who wish to see the Antique Centre as an enjoyable cultural and educational centre of the great city and its magnificent Cathedral.
- 6 The proposed relocation of the Antique Centre has many vital disadvantages. Having no window display area will have a significant effect on the potential customer footfall. The responsibility of the elected councillors is to protect the City and its population from the might of a Corporation who have different needs and aims from the people. Hence its desire to generate higher and higher versus the people of Gloucester's love and pride in their beautiful city.

In view of the above detailed drawbacks to this Application we would ask you to reject this proposal



P & M Tasker

01.01.15



I am a dealer at Gloucester Quays Antiques Centre, one of many who operate successfully from what I consider to be an iconic building within the Gloucester Quays location. This centre is probably one of the best of it's type in the UK, it is in a prestigious location, it is as well laid out in what could be a purpose built building for this type of business, it is a well known visitor attraction probably second only to the Cathedral and it would be a terrible shame if it were to be re-located in an out of the way location away from the main pedestrian run. If this were to happen then I believe that the Antiques Centre would see a vast reduction in visitor numbers and would eventually cease to be a viable business. I therefore ask that the planning committee seriously consider if they wish to see a successful Antiques Centre remain as a prominent visitor attraction within the Gloucester Quays area.

Mr Richard Brown

Since its inception over 30 years ago the Antique Centre has been an important landmark at Gloucester Docks and along with The Docks is only second to the Cathedral as Gloucester's main Tourist Attraction, as such The Centre has been responsible for many thousands of visitors benefitting the City over the years. As a longstanding Dealer with a Unit in The Centre I am well aware that one undoubted reason for this is the continued prominent and highly visible presence of the Antique Centre within The Docks, this is essential for the continued success of The Centre, therefore to grant change of use to the building, thus removing this important presence by relocating The Centre to the anonymous 'Upper Deck', at any time could spell disaster but given the current and foreseeable economic climate would almost certainly lead to it's decline and the eventual demise of an iconic part of Gloucester's recent history. Hopefully, as responsible custodians of the City's future you will not let this happen.

Mr Peter Gamble

Dear Sir / Madam Having read the document written by Sarah Hawkins dated 10th February which supports the Application I would like to make the following comments:- 1. If the area occupied by the Antiques Centre is approximately the same as the site it is proposed to move it to then would it not make sense to keep the Antiques Centre where it is and instead locate the proposed office development in the Upper Deck area. The current location of the Antiques Centre benefits from being on a public thoroughfare, used mainly by people actually looking to do some shopping, there is a good sized window display area to the building which would be of no benefit at all to offices, also many people who come to Gloucester Quays are aware of where the Antiques Centre is and if it is replaced by offices then many people may just believe that the Antiques Centre has gone out of business. 2. With regards to the claim that the Antiques Centre is in a fragile state as a business model I can only say that despite promises to spend money on marketing the Antiques Centre following the re-possession of of the business from it's previous tennant there appears to have been no such undertaking by Peel Holdings to do so. How often do I hear on local radio the advertising of Gloucester Quays as a marvellous retail location with all facilities mentioned except the fact that there is also a superb 3-storey Antiques Centre. Also - at no time have the 50 or so dealers at the Centre been approached by Peel Holdings to discuss the financial concerns and ongoing viability of the Centre. If it had done so then I dare say that a forthright discussion may have yielded a few suggestions as to how to improve profitability. To my mind this avenue should at least be explored before any resolution to this Planning Application is reached, after all I imagine that most if not all of the objections to this Application have come from dealers at the Centre. If they are all on-board one way or the other then the best solution for all will be reached. 3. It is possible that 50 new jobs may be created by the development of these new offices but if the Antiques Centre ultimately fails because of this proposed move then the same number of dealers plus a number of full time jobs will be lost so there will be no actual gain.

Mr Richard Brown