

FTAO Amanda Baker

Re: The Lord Nelson, Oakamoor Case Reference APP/B3438/W/16/3157636

Having made comment at the hearing of the original application, I have been informed that I am able to make further written comment on this appeal.

I believe the decision of the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council's Planning Committee was the correct one and fully in accord with both the Core Strategy and the Churnet Valley Masterplan.

The appellant's Statement of Case, in section 6.1, summarises "that the main issues to be considered in the determination of this appeal is:

- Whether or not sufficient marketing has been undertaken to demonstrate that the property is no longer desirable for and [sic] alternative business or commercial use.
- Whether the proposal involves the loss of a community facility, but [sic] there is an alternative facility of the same type that is available and can be provided in an accessible location in the same locality".

Whilst I agree with this summary, I would like to make further comment on both of these points.

Firstly, in respect of the marketing of the premises, the original application and now the appeal makes great use of information presented by the selling agent, Mr Whiteley of James A Baker. Unfortunately, some of this information is either an incorrect appraisal of the facts or an intentional attempt to mislead. In the letter supporting this appeal, Mr Whiteley states that "It is our understanding that once marketing of the property commenced, and perhaps even prior, the public house had ceased trading, opening only sporadically". This is not true and it is believed that the previous owners were encouraged by the selling agent to keep the premises trading. They did this until the weekend before the present owners moved in. A farewell party was held on the evening of 19th March and the property was open on the lunchtime of the 20th March. It has not opened since.

In the same document, Mr Whiteley also states that "Oakamoor village has a population of circa 593 (2011 Census) and the fact that there are 3 licensed premises within the locality suggests that there is an oversupply of such properties". The fact that he goes on to refer to one of the licensed premises by the wrong name aside, this statement is contrary to the marketing proposal presented which claimed that the Lord Nelson offered "an exciting opportunity to develop a food led public house" (see Appendix 1). Also, in a statement to the Leek Post and Times, James A Baker stated "The Lord Nelson offers considerable scope for local public house operators and has potential for a B&B focused offer" (see Appendix 2). The potential for a food led or B&B focused business is an important consideration in this appeal because the other licensed premises in the village do not have this potential and are not, therefore, acceptable alternative facilities.

Whilst, I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of Mr Whiteley's account in respect of the interest shown in the property, the James A Baker website announcement of the sale claimed that "There was a significant amount of interest in the property and following a best bids scenario we achieved in excess of the guide price of £195,000" (see Appendix 3). From other information on this webpage, such as details of trading area sizes, it is also apparent that the property was sold as a public house and contradicts the previous assertions that it was no longer a viable business. The guide price of


£195,000 does, I believe reflect this. However, it could also be true that the real value of the premises, as a public house, was below that at which it was offered. It is believed that refurbishment is required at the Lord Nelson, which would of course reduce the price anyone was willing to pay and a quick internet search reveals that there are many freehold public houses for sale at prices considerably below that at which the Lord Nelson was offered. Given that successful marketing requires a price to match the product on offer, it would be right to question whether this property had been suitably marketed as a public house or had achieving the highest selling price been the main consideration.

In summary, I do not accept that there are alternative facilities in the area, as these are not comparable with the potential offer the Lord Nelson could provide, and I do not believe the property was suitably marketed as a public house, as the asking price was too high.


Yours faithfully,

Antony Loynes

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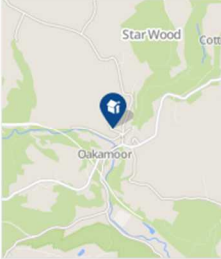
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Description Floorplan Map & Street View

Key features

- Prominent position overlooking the centre of the village
- Exciting opportunity to develop a food-led public house
- Alternate use opportunity, subject to obtaining the necessary permissions
- Four distinct internal, and two outdoor trading areas
- Good size plot extending to circa 0.4 acres




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James A Baker – Leek Post and Times

pitched tiled roof.

Solar panels are currently fixed over the two storey section of the building.

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The premises are furnished in a traditional style throughout, there are four distinct trading areas comprising a lounge and bar area sharing the same servery, a dedicated dining area currently arranged for 30 [covers](#), and a snug area leading to an external trade courtyard.

A press release issued to the Post & Times from the property agents said: "The Lord Nelson offers considerable scope for local public [house](#) operators and has potential for a B&B focused offer. The property has potential for a range of uses, subject to the granting of relevant permissions and is likely to be of interest to local developers and builders.

"Ancillary trade areas comprise a good sized commercial kitchen with cold stores, basement cellarage, [customer](#) WC's and further storage areas.

"Private accommodation is located on the first floor, comprising three double en-suite bedrooms, a double bedroom, a single bedroom, living room, kitchen and bathroom.

"Externally and to the rear of the premises there is a trade courtyard with a covered smoking solution and barbecue area.

"An open sided former hay barn of brick construction which sits under a pitched tiled roof is also to the rear.

"To the front of the property there is a lawned trade garden which gives a view through to the centre of the village, while a car park to the side can accommodate up to 15 vehicles."

The ground floor area is approximately 2,111 square feet, and the pub sits on a plot of circa 0.4 acres.

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Birmingham

18-Apr-2016

Done Deal – The Lord Nelson, School Drive, Oakamoor, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire

The Birmingham office of James A Baker are pleased to announce the recent sale of The Lord Nelson in Oakamoor, Staffordshire.

Oakamoor is an affluent village in the Churnet Valley located in some of North Staffordshire's most picturesque countryside and property benefits from occupying a prominent position in the centre of village.

The Lord Nelson is a traditional public house with four distinct trading areas comprising a lounge and bar area sharing the same servery, a dedicated dining area and a snug area leading to an external trade courtyard. The pub sits on a good sized plot of 0.4 acres.

"There was a significant amount of interest in the property and following a best bids scenario we achieved in excess of the guide price of £195,000" says Matt Whiteley of the James A Baker Birmingham office who negotiated the sale. "I would like to thank the purchaser for moving so quickly once the deal was agreed".

For further information, contact Matt Whitley on 0121 2272308, or email Matt@jamesabaker.co.uk

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