

Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director – Place

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	25 February 2020
Subject:	Visitor Economy Greater Lincolnshire Pubs – Sites & Premises Study

Summary:

There is a shortage of accommodation in Greater Lincolnshire and following on from the 2017 Hotel Study, research was commissioned into the pub accommodation sector. A pub accommodation audit has been produced and this has been followed by a Development Guide that provides advice to those thinking of adding accommodation to their pub and two workshops that will provide further help.

Actions Required:

Members of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee are requested to review the work that has been undertaken to date and agree to receive a further update following the consultation workshops with pubs, as these may direct the need for further work.

1. Background

In 2017 through the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) we commissioned research into the possibility of further hotel development in the county. This gave us an invaluable base for knowing what investors and developers needed and has helped us in a variety of discussions to provide the correct tailored information. A report on the Hotel Study was presented to this committee and it was felt that in a rural county like Lincolnshire the amount of accommodation and the potential for further development of pubs should be explored.

The first phase of this work was delivered just before Christmas, the Greater Lincolnshire Pub Accommodation Audit. Pub accommodation can refer to guest rooms above a pub or provided in an adjoining or adjacent building, including a bedroom extension, converted outbuildings and pub lodges; caravan and camping sites; self-catering holiday cottages and lodges; cabins, pods and glamping units; or static caravans for hire.

The key findings of the audit are as follows:

- All parts of Greater Lincolnshire have some provision in terms of pub accommodation.
- Pub accommodation is limited in and around Lincoln, including the neighbouring parts of North Kesteven and West Lindsey.
- South Kesteven has a high-quality pub accommodation offer, including 10 boutique inns that offer good food and contemporary luxury bedrooms.
- The supply of boutique inns is more limited elsewhere in the county.
- A number of pubs in East Lindsey offer various types of non-serviced accommodation.
- The pub accommodation offer in North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire, Boston and South Holland is primarily low-priced accommodation that focuses on the contractor and visiting friends and relatives markets.
- Customer satisfaction with the current pub accommodation offer is generally high.
- Current provision appears to be of a good, but not exceptional quality: there is little evidence of excellence, other than in South Kesteven.
- Room rates are generally fairly low. Boutique inns are able to command high prices however.
- The vast majority of pub accommodation businesses are small and independently operated either as free-houses or tenanted pubs.
- National pub accommodation operators are only represented in the main towns.

These key findings suggest that the priorities for public sector intervention to support the development of the Greater Lincolnshire pub accommodation sector are as follows:

- a) Supporting the improvement and development of existing pub accommodation businesses in terms of:
- Upgrading the pub, bedrooms and bathrooms;
 - Upping food quality;
 - Improving standards of service;
 - Better marketing.

Interventions could be in terms of management and marketing training, business support and mentoring for pub accommodation business owners and managers; staff training programmes; quality awards and kite-marking; and financial assistance, if funding sources can be identified and secured.

- b) PR and social media activity to support the promotion of the best that Greater Lincolnshire has to offer in terms of pub accommodation. Making more of this accommodation to attract visitors, enhance Greater Lincolnshire's image as a quality destination, and support and promote excellence in the county's pub accommodation sector.
- c) Encouraging and supporting the opening of further good quality pub accommodation businesses and boutique inns in and around Lincoln. As an area that currently has relatively little provision in terms of high-quality pub

accommodation, and a location where there is more likely to be a market that can support a high quality/higher-priced pub food offer and boutique/luxury pub accommodation.

- d) Encouraging and supporting the provision of non-serviced accommodation at pubs in the Lincolnshire Wolds, alongside some additional serviced pub rooms. Because of their more remote location and rurality, the Lincolnshire Wolds may not have a strong enough market to support a high-quality pub food offer and boutique/luxury pub accommodation product. Encouraging a wider range of accommodation at pubs would seem to be a more sensible strategy here.
- e) Focusing any activity to attract national pub accommodation operators on key towns. It is felt that the more rural parts of Greater Lincolnshire do not have the size population to attract interest from national operators.

2. Conclusion

We have asked the consultants to produce a Development Guide and this was completed mid January. This free practical guide for pub landlords and tenants and freehold owners and developers who are considering adding accommodation to their pub provides advice on planning and the development planning process, and also a pub accommodation business plan toolkit. It also includes information on the market for pub accommodation in Lincolnshire, accommodation quality and design considerations, information on achievable occupancies and room rates, likely income, costs and profits, marketing tips and sources of funding.

We have also asked the consultants to hold two workshops for pub landlords, tenants and developers to utilise and build on the material included in the Pub Accommodation Development Guide. These will give us an indication of interest and direct our next area of work.

3. Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

N/A

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/A

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Mary Powell, Tourism Commissioning Manager, who can be contacted on 01522 550612 or Mary.Powell@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

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