

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION Nos : S6/2014/142/MA & S6/2014/143/LB

SITE ADDRESS: ESSENDON COUNTRY CLUB, BEDWELL PARK

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT:

‘Erection of single storey extension within internal courtyard and formation of door openings within existing window frames and formation of 2 terrace areas to listed building’

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

1. SITE AND APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:

The application site comprises of a golf club and its clubhouse set within 450 acres of land.

The proposal relates to works in connection with the existing clubhouse which is located at the end of a long gated driveway. In front of the clubhouse is a car park for visitors and the main entrance to the building is accessed from this direction.

The application building is listed by virtue of the current building being created from a series of listed barns following a planning application in 1990. There are also new buildings which have been attached to these original listed buildings to create the present accommodation for the user’s of the golf club. The resultant building which was created following the approval of the 1990 applications has a central open courtyard area. The largest of the original listed barns is located on the northern side of this group of attached buildings and is of a substantial size. It is finished in horizontal feather edged black timber boarding under a plain tile gable ended pitch roof. A further original barn is attached to this and forms the east side of the building and is finished in similar external material.

The remainder of the building is mainly later additions, built mostly in red brickwork under a plain tile and slate roofs.

The application is seeking planning permission and listed building consent for

1. Single storey courtyard extension to form a larger restaurant/bar area
2. The erection of two raised terraces on the North and East Elevation
3. The replacement of existing concrete inter-locking tiles on part of the clubhouse with slate
4. The painting of the existing blue weather boarding within the courtyard in black
5. Alterations to existing windows to the barn to provide doors onto the courtyard and terrace

2. SITE DESIGNATION: The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and Landscape Character Area as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005. The application building is a Grade II Listed.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

S6/2013/2264/PA – Proposed Extensions and Alterations – advice given 6/1/14

S6/2003/1010/FP - Extension to existing car park – granted 18/08/03

S6/2001/1379/FP - Temporary change of use from residential to offices within the farm house – granted 10/12/01

S6/1999/1154/FP - Variation of condition 6 of planning permission S6/0692/90/FP - to allow use of part of clubhouse for weddings and independent functions – granted 31/01/00

S6/1996/0484/FP - Erection of single storey extension to provide new laundry facility – granted 2/8/96

S6/1996/483/LB- Erection of single storey extension to provide new laundry, together with alterations to the existing laundry and enlarged ladies locker room, involving removal of vent from west elevation – granted 2/8/96

S6/1995/539/LB - Erection of a conservatory – granted 17/8/95

S6/1995/414/FP - Erection of a conservatory – granted 17/8/94

S6/1993/709/FP - Erection of single storey extension to golf clubhouse – granted 6/12/93

S6/1993/710/LB - Erection of single storey extension to golf clubhouse – granted 6/12/93

S6/1990/0692/FP - Extensions and alterations to farm buildings to form golf clubhouse, including partial demolition, and relocation of listed granary to golf course to provide public rainshelter – Granted 09/04/91

S6/1990/0693/FP - Extensions and alterations to farm buildings to form golf clubhouse including partial demolition, and relocation of listed granary to golf course to provide public rainshelter – Granted 09/04/91

4. CONSULTATIONS:

None

5. NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS:

No representations have been received from the public.

Welwyn Hatfield Access Group have commented that there is no mention of catering for customer needs for persons with reduced mobility.

6. TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS

No representations have been received from the town/parish council.

7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES AND RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES:

The main planning issues are considered to be as follows:

- 1. Whether the proposal would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt, the impact on the openness, character and appearance of the Green Belt, and whether any other considerations exist that would clearly outweigh any harm identified (NPPF).**
- 2. The impact on the heritage asset of the Grade II Listed Building (NPPF), the quality of the design and impact on the character of the area (Local Plan Policy D1 (Quality of Design), D2 (Character and Context) and RA10 (Landscape Regions and Character Areas).**

3. Other Material Considerations:

Access - D9 (Access and Design for People with Disabilities)

The proposals for discussion will be numbered for ease of reference:

1. Single storey courtyard extension to form a larger restaurant/bar area
2. The erection of two raised terraces on the North and East Elevation and
3. The replacement of existing concrete inter-locking tiles on part of the clubhouse with slate
4. The painting of the existing blue weather boarding within the courtyard in black
5. Alterations to existing windows to the barn to provide doors onto the courtyard and terrace

The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) makes clear that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, with a small number of exceptions. One of these is the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

The original building is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:

'A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally'.

This application site comprises of a Golf Club Clubhouse which was created from existing listed barns, with also new built elements, following planning permission and listed building consent which was granted in 1991 by applications S6/1990/692/FP & S6/1990/693/LB.

The current building and use therefore originates from these earlier permissions.

Whilst Annex 2 of the NPPF provides a definition of 'original', the current building may be considered to have originated from these planning permissions in 1991.

Taking the specific circumstances of this case into consideration it would seem appropriate to accept the site and buildings started a new planning chapter when the change of use and buildings were created to form a golf clubhouse. This view is based on the fact the original use of the barns were agricultural and that the new use is a golf clubhouse. This change of use of the land and previous buildings is a determining issue in reaching this viewpoint and taking into account the specific planning history for this site. Furthermore, it is also necessary to judge each case on its own merits.

As such the 'original building' for the purposes of Green Belt policy is that of the resultant buildings which was granted and built following planning permission by application S6/1990/692/FP.

Since that time there have been a number of extensions to the building which have been granted and implemented which include applications S6/1995/414/FP (conservatory) & S6/1996/484/FP (single storey extensions for laundry).

PROPOSAL 1 - Single storey courtyard extension to form a larger restaurant/bar area

Assessing proportionality is primarily an objective test based on size. Floor area is often referred to in such tests, but for this proposal it is readily apparent just from a visual assessment of the drawings and the building on the site that in terms of the height, bulk and massing that would result from the changes sought that this proposal would not result in a disproportional addition compared to the original building which has been defined above.

Whilst these previously implemented approvals have extended the 'original' building, the cumulative increase from this current proposal would still not result in a disproportional addition. The single storey proposal would therefore not represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

OPENNESS, CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

The location of the extension would be in an existing courtyard area. Whilst there would be some loss of openness to the Green Belt, this would not be materially significant taking into account the relationship of the extension with the main building in terms of its size and location which would be within an existing enclosed courtyard.

The design of the extension has the potential to be in keeping with character of the existing building and so it is likely there will be no harm to the Green Belt from this part of the design proposal.

Overall this proposal is considered to be compliant with Green Belt Policy.

PROPOSAL 2 – The erection of two raised terraces on the North and East Elevation

These raised terraces are open at the top and to the underneath, but would still add some limited bulk and massing to the original building. However, even if this was combined with Proposal 1, this extensions would not result in a disproportional extension to that of the ' original' building.

OPENNESS, CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

There would also be no harm to the openness and character and appearance of the Green Belt, as these would be lightweight structures with limited mass and with glazed sides to the balcony edges.

The proposal would therefore not represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

PROPOSAL 3 - The replacement of existing concrete inter-locking tiles on part of the clubhouse with slate

These would have no material impact on the openness of the Green Belt and would not harm the character and appearance of the Green Belt.

PROPOSAL 4 - The painting of the existing blue weather boarding within the courtyard in black

These extensions would not result in a disproportional extension to that of the ' original' building.

OPENNESS, CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

These would have no material impact on the openness of the Green Belt and would not harm the character and appearance of the Green Belt.

PROPOSAL 5 - Alterations to existing windows to the barn to provide doors onto the courtyard and terrace

These changes would not result in a disproportional extension to that of the ' original' building.

OPENNESS, CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

These changes would have no material impact on the openness of the Green Belt and would not harm the character and appearance of the Green Belt.

SUMMARY

These proposed extensions and alterations are considered to comply with the exceptions allowed by the NPPF for extensions in the Green Belt.

In terms of openness and impact on the character and appearance of the Green Belt, these designs are considered not to harm these countryside qualities.

2. The impact on the heritage asset of the Grade II Listed Building (NPPF), the quality of the design and impact on the character of the area (Local Plan Policy D1 (Quality of Design), D2 (Character and Context) and RA10 (Landscape Regions and Character Areas).

Local Plan Policy R25 (Works to Listed Buildings) is not a 'saved' policy and so the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) takes precedence.

PROPOSAL 1 - Single storey courtyard extension to form a larger restaurant/bar area

The application building is Grade II Listed and is formed from a long 12-bay north barn and 3-bay east barn, forming an L-shape and associated other former farm buildings. The principal of a proposed single storey addition within the enclosed courtyard area, with the fish pool nearby, is considered to be acceptable and this was the advice given in the pre-application advice.

This new single storey extension is to have a separate ridged roof (set within a flat roof area), aligning with the projecting corner of the barn opposite. This would result in leaving an open outside gap of approximately 5.3m from the glazed wall of the projecting bay that projects from the main barn to the new external wall of the extension. This remaining space is considered to be sufficient to maintain a balance between the open outside area and also to allow the setting of the main barn to be appreciated from the open courtyard area.

Close attention to the proposed materials and detailing is necessary with the external walls of the new extension needing to be timber shiplap weather boarding to match the existing main barn, and with roof tiles to also match the existing ones. Windows/glazed doors of the new extension which will look out onto the courtyard need to be timber framed.

The new glazing shown on Elevation D will also be an improvement compared to the existing and so this is acceptable. No objection was given at the pre-application stage to this new revised glazed screen in the existing main barn which would look out onto the new raised external terrace.

Samples of the materials to be used will be necessary and it would be reasonable to impose this requirement as a planning condition.

PROPOSAL 2 – The erection of two raised terraces on the North and East Elevation

The design of these new raised terraces needs to be of a high quality, and a more contemporary approach in terms of materials would not be inappropriate, where a lightweight metal frame could distinguish between the new and old elements of the building. The design of these terraces is however still only at small scale in the submitted design drawings, but the overall concept approach is acceptable subject to a planning condition requiring that more detailed large drawings are submitted along with material samples.

PROPOSAL 3 - The replacement of existing concrete inter-locking tiles on part of the clubhouse with slate

This roof slope shown on 'Proposed Elevation B' on drawing No. 412913/2 is out of character with the other roofs of the building and so there would be no objection to the new roofing material, subject to the approval of this by way of a planning condition.

PROPOSAL 4 - The painting of the existing blue weather boarding within the courtyard in black

This change was recommended at the site visit during the pre-application stage as it was considered important to match the colour of the other walls of the main barn section. This colour change is acceptable and it is clear what the works are so no further details are required.

PROPOSAL 5 - Alterations to existing windows to the barn to provide doors onto the courtyard and terrace

It was suggested at the pre-application stage that visual improvements could also be made to the existing glazing of the main building directly behind the proposed new raised terraces which will be seen as a backdrop to these new structures. The reason for these existing glazings is not attractive and could be better replaced with the same style external timber boarding which exists on the current building. It was recommended that the first floor glazing could also be replaced with a much lighter form of glazing, with the reduction as much as possible of the timber framing between the glazing to give a more open view between the inside and outside of the building. The infilling of the ground part of this existing glazing (underneath the new terrace area) was also considered at the pre-application stage to be a positive change.

The current design drawings are considered to reflect the advice given to the applicant at the pre-application stage. It will be necessary however for samples of the new glazing and timber cladding to be submitted as a requirement of a planning condition for approval.

Summary

The proposed design reflects the advice given at the pre-application stage and so the principle of these changes is considered to be acceptable. It will be necessary however for the application to submit material samples for all the external finishes

and in the case of the new raised terraces larger scale drawings of the detailing of this structure.

Subject to these requirements the proposal will comply with the design requirements of the local plan policies as a requirement of the full planning application and will also meet the necessary design standard expected under listed building consent as required by the NPPF.

3. Other Material Considerations

D9 (Access and Design for People with Disabilities)

Reference has been made about accessibility by WHAG of the new works for persons with reduced mobility. These matters relate probably to thresholds and so it would be reasonable to attach an informative bring this to the applicant's attention as the use of ramps where possible or reduced thresholds could be considered at the detailed design stage.

8. CONCLUSION:

9. CONDITIONS:

1. C.2.1 Time limit for commencement of development
2. C.13.1 Development in accordance with approved plans/details
Xx received and dated xx

Material

Desing of terraces

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be inspected at these offices).

INFORMATIVES: - add notes – WHAG

Signature of author..... Date.....