

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PLANNING, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND GOVERNANCE**

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2017/2746/LB
Location: Comet Hotel St Albans Road West Hatfield AL10 9RH
Proposal: Extension and refurbishment of the Grade II listed building (Use Class C1) following demolition of existing rear and side extensions. Erection of student accommodation (Sui Generis) with landscaping and associated works.
Officer: Mrs June Pagdin

Recommendation: Granted

6/2017/2746/LB

Context	
Site and Application description	<p>The application site is a triangular-shaped parcel of land facing onto the roundabout junction of Comet Way and St Albans Road West in Hatfield. It contains the original Comet Road House which is shaped in a geometric representation of an aircraft and faces onto the roundabout. It is a Grade II Listed, two-storey, brick clad, flat-roofed building with a strong horizontal emphasis, designed by E B Musman and built in the 1930's. It is listed for its Art Deco architectural merit and its historic association with Hatfield New Town and the De Havilland factory and airfield. Additions and alterations to the interior and exterior (including loss of the glass roof lantern) have detracted from the building but the original geometric form remains.</p> <p>The hotel was extended to the rear with a brick addition and again in the 1990's with a part-two/part-three storey rear extension clad in pale grey panels with a flat roof. In total the hotel had around 128 bedrooms. The grey extension is currently being demolished as part of the approved scheme (Ref No's 6/2016/1739/MAJ and 6/2016/1740/LB).</p> <p>The street frontage of the site is currently surrounded by hoardings while demolition and redevelopment take place, but will be open. The forecourt is tarmac and will be used for parking. In the centre of the front car park is the 1930's carved pillar showing symbols of Hatfield's historic origins and supporting the model aircraft, which his being protected and retained on the site . A narrow strip of grass highway verge separates the site from the public footways, bus stop and pedestrian crossings. There is a further parking area on the south east part of the site which is inter-planted with trees. There are approximately 163 car parking spaces on the site.</p> <p><u>Proposal</u></p> <p>Listed Building Consent is sought for refurbishment and extension of the Comet Hotel Listed Building. This application proposes amendments to the scheme to that was approved on 13th October 2016 under reference number 6/2016/1740/LB. The amendments involve alterations to internal layout and arrangement of uses in the Listed Building alterations to the link building and the hotel extension following securing a hotel operator:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student indoor amenities located in the link and ground floor of the extension (lounge, two karaoke rooms, a gym, laundry and study rooms), access doors in each side of the link increased separation between student functions and hotel; • Hotel reception for guests from east side; access for staff from west side; also access to student office from west side leading through to student link building; • First floor of listed building to be used for bedrooms except for a hotel clients' meeting room in the front viewing room; • Access to hotel link is via two external doors to the hotel extension block (with lift and stair access); • Hotel Extension to be 150mm lower than the approved scheme (resulting in being 300mm higher than the listed building instead of 450mm) • Aparthotel rooms to be replaced by bedrooms with en-suites (no kitchen facilities) - number of bedrooms in hotel increases from 56 to 65; • 3m wide access through the site and turning head to the electricity substation on the south western boundary. <p>An NMA application to the Full planning permission (6/2016/1739/MAJ) has also been submitted for these changes.</p> <p>The hotel refurbishment and extension will be on land that has already been excavated.</p>
<p>Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)</p>	<p>LBC - LISTED BUILDING Hotel. 1933. By EB Musman. Red brick - Distance: 0 – application property.</p> <p>LBC - NULL Milepost to West of St. Albans Road West Roundabout - Distance: 33.77m (on north side of St Albans Rd West)</p> <p>PAR - PARISH (HATFIELD) - Distance: 0</p> <p>Wards - Hatfield Villages - Distance: 0</p> <p>A4HD - Article 4 HMO Direction - Distance: 0</p>
<p>Relevant planning history</p>	<p>6/2017/2763/COND - Submission of Details Pursuant to Conditions: 2 (Material Samples), 8 (Tree Protection/Removal), 11 (Cycle Parking), 15 (External Lighting and CCTV Cameras), 18 (Noise Protection Scheme) and 19 (Acoustic Report) on Planning Permission 6/2016/1739/MAJ dated 02/02/2017. Under consideration.</p> <p>6/2017/2154/COND - Submission of details pursuant to condition 6 (construction timetable), 12 (construction management plan) & 23 (contamination investigation) on planning permission 6/2016/1739/MAJ. Granted 10 November 2017.</p> <p>6/2017/2203/COND - Submission of details pursuant to condition 3 (Demolition and Construction Method Statement) on Planning application 6/2016/1740/LB. Granted 13 November 2017.</p> <p>6/2016/1740/LB) - extension and refurbishment of the grade II listed building (use class C1) following demolition of existing rear and side extensions. Granted 13 October 2016.</p> <p>6/2016/1739/MAJ_extension and refurbishment of the grade II listed building (use class C1) following demolition of existing rear and side extensions. Erection of 7,253.7sqm student accommodation (Sui Generis), landscaping and</p>

	<p>associated works. Granted 3 February 2017 subject to S106.</p> <p>6/2015/1998/LB2015/1997/MAJ and 6/2015/1998/LB - Extension and refurbishment of the Grade II listed hotel (Use Class C1) following demolition of existing rear and side extensions. Erection of 9,586sqm student accommodation (Sui Generis), landscaping and associated works. Listed building Consent granted 5.2.2016. Planning permission refused. Appeal withdrawn.</p> <p>S6/2105/0964/PA – Extension to hotel and construction of student accommodation. Subject of Planning Performance Agreement. Advice was given that the continued use of the listed building for hotel use was welcome and the principle of student accommodation was acceptable subject to the impacts on the listed building, character of the area and adjacent residential properties, quality of design, landscaping, a Transport Assessment and Green Travel Plan, sustainable drainage and planning obligations to mitigate the impacts on the locality.</p> <p>S6/2014/1895/FP – Change of use to car wash valeting (sui generis) on six car parking spaces and erection of canopy. Approved 12.11.2014.</p> <p>S6/2000/0861/FP and 0860/LB – Single storey extension to form linen room to new block. Approved 31.7.2000.</p> <p>S6/1998/0879/FP and 0880/LB – New entrance canopy and lobby. Withdrawn.</p> <p>S6/1998/0447/FP – Demolish staff accommodation block and erect two storey extension - 26 bedrooms and 26 car parking spaces. Approved 15.1.1999.</p> <p>S6/1992/0233/FP and 0252/LB – Alterations and extensions, new bedroom block, 51 bedrooms, 2 meeting rooms single storey extension for laundry, new lobby and refurbishment, additional car parking. Approved 6.8.1992.</p> <p>S6/1987/0465/FP- Erect new conference room and covered walkway. Approved 3.7.1987.</p>		
Consultations			
Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 1
Publicity	<p>Site Notice Display Date: 5 December 2017</p> <p>Site Notice Expiry Date: 26 December 2017</p> <p>Press Advert Display Date: 6 December 2017</p> <p>Press Advert Expiry Date: 20 December 2017</p>		
Summary of neighbour responses	<p>One response was received from the Hatfield Aeronautical Society supporting retention of the pillar as representative of local aeronautical history relating to the airfield.</p>		
Consultees and responses	<p>Conservation Advisor – overall, although there would be less than substantial harm due to the removal of partitions at first floor, that when considering the scheme as a whole, this would be outweighed by the heritage benefit of retaining the corridor widths at first floor, which were proposed to be lost as part of the former consent.</p> <p>Herts Historic Environment Advisor - notes that archaeological investigations to</p>		

the north of the proposed development at the former Hatfield Aerodrome uncovered an extensive Bronze Age landscape as well as finds from the Palaeolithic, Iron Age and Romano-British periods. Some of the proposed development is in a currently undeveloped part of the site and may have an impact on heritage assets with archaeological interest, we recommend conditions requiring investigation, and mitigation measures and provision for recording and depositing any finds with local archives.

Lead Local Flood Authority – we have reviewed the list of supporting documents and note that a surface water drainage strategy has not been included. As this planning application is for the Grade II listed building, therefore the LLFA we have no comment to make.

Thames Water – commented that more information needed to assess the proposal. Suggested a Grampian style condition for waste water and points of connection to the public sewer system, for both foul and surface water, as well as the anticipated flow (including flow calculation method) into any proposed connection point. If the drainage strategy is not acceptable Thames Water will request that an impact study be undertaken.

Hertfordshire Transport Programmes & Strategy - no further comments to make on the impacts of the development in respect of the Listing Building nature of the site. HCC comments relating to the impacts of the development are provided under separate comment - district reference 6/2016/1739/MAJ.

Cadent Gas Limited - there is apparatus in the vicinity of your enquiry which may be affected by the activities specified. Can you please inform Plant Protection, as soon as possible, the decision your authority is likely to make regarding this application. The contractor should contact Plant Protection before any works are carried out to ensure the apparatus is not affected by any of the proposed works.

Herts Fire & Rescue Service - planning obligations sought by the County Council towards fire hydrants to minimise the impact of development on Hertfordshire County Council Services for the local community. Based on the information provided to date we would seek the provision of fire hydrant(s), as set out within HCC's Planning Obligations Toolkit.

WHBC Parking Services – nothing further to add to previous comments

WHBC Building Control – no response

WHBC Client Services – no response

WHBC Public Health and Protection – no response

WHBC Community Partnerships Manager – no response

WHBC Landscapes – no response

Herts & Middlesex Bat Group – no response

Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust – no response

Environment Agency – no response

Affinity Water Ltd – no response

NHS – no response

Hatfield Town Council – no response

Joint Committee of the National Amenity Societies – no response

Relevant Policies	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NPPF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R27 Demolition of Listed buildings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R29 Archaeology	
Main Issues	
Impact on the character and setting of the listed building and adjoining listed buildings	<p>Section 16 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act states that the local planning authority shall have “<i>special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses</i>”. The specific historic environment policies within the NPPF are contained within paragraphs 126-141. Paragraph 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework (March, 2012) states, ‘<i>In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;</i> • <i>The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and</i> • <i>The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness’</i> <p>Paragraph 132 of the Framework outlines that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, ‘great weight’ should be given to the asset’s conservation and the more important the asset the greater the weight it should be given. Paragraph 133 states that where proposed development will lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, Local Planning Authorities should refuse consent unless it can be demonstrated that the harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm. Where the harm is considered less than substantial Paragraph 134 states that this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The NPPF, therefore, does allow for a degree of harm to a heritage asset in particular circumstances.</p> <p>The previous listed building consent involve alterations and reinstatements to the listed building on the site including demolition and removal of later additions, refurbishment/restoration of some original features and alterations to the internal layout as set out in the in the Schedule of Works that accompanied the Listed Building application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of the grey clad 1990’s rear extension • Removal of earlier brick extensions to the rear and the east elevation • Removal of internal partitions to enlarge kitchen and remove bar • Removal of some internal walls at first floor to enlarge bedrooms • Enlarge first floor function room and remove external spiral stair <p>Reinstatement works included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new reception area in the position of the original one • New link through the original coach-house block at the rear • Folding partition in ground floor function rooms • Reinstatement of a bar at ground floor • Replacement of non-original internal wall to the first floor function rooms, albeit in flexible form • Reinstatement of a roof lantern to replicate the original • They also included adding a glazed link at the rear and a three-storey hotel extension.

The current proposals involve minor changes to the link and extension building and rearrangement of the internal room functions and some room layouts. The plans show the following:

- The three storey extension would be slightly less wide (59m instead of 61m) and less high (150mm less);
- The student facilities would be in the link and extension, not in the first floor of the listed building;

Amendments to the proposal for the listed building include as shown on the plans and a revised Schedule of Works:

- The first floor would be used for bedrooms except for the front viewing room which would be a meeting room;
- The existing corridor widths would be retained;
- The spiral stair to the roof would be replaced;
- The ground floor reception area would be reshaped (not original fabric) to enable retention of the barrel run into the basement;
- Ground floor layout to be adjusted - lightweight partition walls to create bar store and housekeeping room;
- Nibs of original partition walls to be retained in restaurant area

The Heritage Advisor comments that the removal of surviving partition walls and the nibs of former partitions in the rear of the building where the garage and chauffeur quarters historically were would compromise the understanding of the historic plan form. It is recommended that nibs are retained as part of the scheme and exploration of this can be secured by condition.

The curved sitting room, which has access to the viewing terraces, on the first floor at the front of the building is one of the most important spaces in the listed building. A previous proposal to convert it to a bedroom with en-suite bathroom was not considered appropriate. Its retention as a public space makes a considerable contribution to its significance and is a positive element of the scheme.

The removal of corridor walls and storage rooms adjacent to this room is no longer proposed. The existing corridor configuration and width is to be retained and is considered to be a heritage benefit that would allow understanding and appreciation of the historic plan form. The retention of the barrel run as a functional feature is also considered to be a positive element of the scheme.

In addition, the proposed forecourt landscaping and reinstated roof lantern would enhance the appearance of the building.

When viewed in perspective from publically accessible points outside the site, and taking the proposed colours and materials into account, the overall effect would be that the red-brick Listed Building would stand out quite clearly in front of the paler materials of the extension and appear more prominent on the site.

The slight reduction in width and height of the hotel extension will make a minor improvement to the setting of the listed building over and above the previously approved scheme.

Overall the proposals would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building as a result of the removal of partition walls at

	<p>first floor level. However, subject to the retention of wall nibs in the scheme, when taken as a whole the scheme would provide a viable future use for the listed building. As a result the harm would be outweighed by the heritage benefits of retaining the corridor width, the barrel drop and other reinstatement works.</p> <p>The choice of materials and colours is a key factor in the success of the scheme as an enhancement of the listed building and it is recommended that sample boards of the materials are submitted for approval prior to commencement of the development as proposed in this application.</p> <p>In addition the details of making good, works to the listed fabric and internal finishes shall be secured through a condition as on the previous listed building consent (6/2016/1740/LB).</p>
Design (form, size, scale, siting) and Character (appearance within the streetscene)	<p>The changes from the previously approved scheme are minor when considered in terms of the external appearance of the building and the setting in the streets scene. However, the reduction in height of the hotel extension and link are welcomed as reduction in the impact on the listed building.</p> <p>The separation of functions between student communal facilities and the hotel is more effectively achieved through the current proposals than in the previously approved scheme.</p>
Any other considerations	<p>The matters relating to drainage, fire hydrants and are issues dealt with under the full planning permission (6/2016/1739/MAJ) and cannot be considered under this Listed Building Application.</p> <p>Previous conditions relating to noise attenuation to hotel rooms and fenestration are still relevant and it is recommended that they be applied to the current application.</p> <p>However, a Construction Management Plan has been agreed under application 6/2017/2203/COND and consequently condition 3 shall be changed to refer to the approved details.</p>
Conclusion	
<p>Overall the proposals would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building as a result of the removal of partition walls at first floor level. However, subject to the retention of wall nibs in the scheme, when taken as a whole the scheme would provide a viable future use for the listed building. As a result the harm would be outweighed by the heritage benefits of retaining the corridor width, the barrel drop and other reinstatement works.</p> <p>Conditions are recommended to ensure materials are submitted for approval, details of making good, works to the listed fabric and internal finishes, retention of wall nibs in the scheme, compliance with approved CMP and submission of noise details.</p>	

Conditions:

1. No development to the Listed Building (except the approved demolition works) shall take place until samples of the materials, including a sample brick panel, sample glazing panels, partial window frame, roof materials and coping tiles, to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby permitted, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented using the approved materials and subsequently, the approved materials shall not be changed.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

2. No development to the Listed Building shall take place other than in accordance with the approved Demolition and Construction Method Statement, which for the avoidance of doubt comprises:
Enabling Works Overview R3,
15088 Comet Schedule of Repairs and
SEQ10A plan of Works – separation cut (ISG 3.11.2017).

Where the existing fabric is disturbed in order to effect the approved removals and Schedule of Works, it shall be reinstated like for like or to the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that the special architectural and historic interest and character and appearance of the building are properly maintained, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and standard conservation good practice.

3. Following the carrying out or completion of the building operations or alterations for which consent is hereby granted, all making good of the existing building shall be carried out in materials and finishes which closely match, like for like, those historic materials and finishing details used in the existing building or structure.

REASON: To ensure that the special architectural and historic interest and character and appearance of the building are properly maintained, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and standard conservation good practice.

4. Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved drawings, no works to the Listed Building (excluding the approved demolition works) shall take place until the following listed building details have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - a) reinstatement of roof lantern (elevations at scale 1:20 and sections at 1:50);
 - b) retention of nibs to walls in the rear part of the listed building which were previously the chauffeur and garage quarters (floor plans at scale 1:50);
 - c) roof eaves and abutments with new hotel extension link building (details at scale 1:5);
 - d) proposed new door openings and frames (elevations at scale 1:20 and sections at 1:5);
 - e) proposed new window openings and frames (elevations at scale 1:20 and sections at 1:5);
 - f) details of the proposed internal folding or sliding partitions and walls (elevations at scale 1:20 and sections at 1:5);
 - g) new-build external walls (part elevations at scale 1:20 and sections at 1:5);
 - h) reinstated roof-lights to kitchen (details at scale 1:5);
 - i) new ceilings, counters and bars (sections at scale 1:20);
 - j) sound insulation and mechanical vents for hotel function rooms and bedrooms;
 - k) extractors for kitchen odours

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and, subsequently, shall not be changed.

REASON: To ensure that the special architectural and historic interest and character and appearance of the building are properly maintained, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and standard conservation good practice.

5. No development to the Listed Building shall take place (except the approved demolition works) until a survey has been undertaken of the roof and a statement on the scope of works to and the protection of the roof and roof windows has been submitted to and approved by the LPA.

REASON: To ensure that the special architectural and historic interest and character and appearance of the building are properly maintained, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and standard conservation good practice.

6. No demolition works to the listed fabric shall take place until details have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority of the means of protecting the fabric and securing the building while the small eastern side extension and reception are being removed. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure that the special architectural and historic interest and character and appearance of the building are properly maintained, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and standard conservation good practice.

7. Prior to installation of any internal floor finishes, wall coverings and lighting the following details shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
 - a) samples and
 - b) brochure illustration and
 - c) statement for fixing.

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure that the special architectural and historic interest and character and appearance of the building are properly maintained, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and standard conservation good practice.

8. No development to the Listed Building (except the approved demolition works) shall take place until representative samples of the existing mortars of the original listed building have been analysed. The mortars to be analysed shall be agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to analysis. The subsequent mortar shall be based on the agreed representative sample and shall not be changed.

REASON: To ensure that the special architectural and historic interest and character and appearance of the building are properly maintained, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and standard conservation good practice.

DRAWING NUMBERS

9. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
02010		Proposed Elevations context Sheet 1	24 November 2017
01010		Proposed Site Roof Plan	24 November 2017
02011		Proposed Student Accommodation Contextual Elevation Sheet 2	24 November 2017
02014		Proposed Bay Elevations Comet Extension	24 November 2017
D1001	P45	Demolition Listed Building Floor Plans	1 February 2018
09001		Proposed Site Plan	24 November 2017
02007		Proposed Elevations Comet Extension	24 November 2017
03001		Proposed Comet And Extension Section	24 November 2017
01000		Proposed Student Residential Ground Floor Plan	24 November 2017
0200	B	Location Plan	24 November 2017
DR-A-ZZZZ-01100	P45	Proposed Ground and First Floor Comet and Extension	30 January 2018
DR-A-ZZZZ-01101	P45	Proposed Second and Basement Comet and Extension	30 January 2018
DR-A-XXXX-02006	P45	Comet Hotel LB - Proposed Elevations	30 January 2018
		180119 Revised Schedule of Works	30 January 2018

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

1. POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

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 viewed on the Council's website or inspected at these offices).

Informatives:

1. Any additional plant or machinery (e.g. extractor flues) may need Listed Building Consent. You are advised to contact the Local Planning Authority for advice on this matter.
2. You are advised that the internal finishes, new partitions, doors, bars and counters are to be informed by the photographs of the original building when first completed.

3. This decision notice should be read in conjunction with planning permission reference number 6/2016/1739/MAJ.

Determined By:

Mr Mark Peacock
15 February 2018