

GREAT NAST HYDE HOUSE
HATFIELD AL10 9RB
UNDERGROUND SWIMMING POOL

**HERITAGE ASSET ASSESSMENT
AND DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**
NOVEMBER 2015

INTRODUCTION

Application is made to allow the construction of a new underground Swimming Pool in the garden of Great Nast Hyde House. The proposals fix onto a garden wall within the curtilage of a Listed Building, therefore a combined Listed Building and Planning application is made. This application is identical in all respects with proposals that were approved in 2011 [17th Feb 2011, S6/2010/3108/FP]. The same drawings are resubmitted here however this accompanying statement has been updated to make sense of the later date and change of ownership.

APPLICATION

The application comprises: -

- The application form together with the ownership certificate.
- Previously approved drawings resubmitted:
 - 6173/10 – Location Plan
 - 6173/101 – Existing site plan
 - 6173/ 102 – Existing section & elevation
 - 6173/103 – Proposed site plan
 - 6173/104 – Proposed section & elevations
 - 6173/ 200 – Proposed plans
 - 6173/201 – Proposed cross sections
 - 6173/202 – Proposed long sections
 - 6173/203 – Proposed detailed section
- This Design Statement and appended images.
- The appropriate fee.

PLANNING BACKGROUND

Great Nast Hyde House is Listed Grade II. A number of applications have been made to Welwyn Hatfield to meet the needs and aspirations of the previous owners, and may be summarised as: -

- New North and South Gates and Piers - completed.
- Internal alterations – completed
- Investigative works to the Entrance Porch – completed.
- Facsimile Porch in Bath Stone – completed.
- New Pedestrian Gates into the Front Garden – completed.
- New Outer North Gates and Associated Walls – completed.
- New Garages – completed.
- New Underground Swimming Pool – never implemented.

All applications including this present one have been guided by the Historical Analysis prepared by Russell Taylor Architects dated 2007 (2nd draft) Copies have been previously submitted to Welwyn Hatfield and being a rather long document it has not been resubmitted, it is believed all involved

with the applications are familiar with the details of the Analysis but further copies could be sent if required.

In previous discussions with Welwyn Hatfield planners it was stated that a structure containing a pool would not gain Planning Permission because the site is within the Green Belt. An open-air pool is not possible because it is needed to be used all year round. The pool must therefore be underground.

THE DESIGN

The site chosen is not an area in which any of the many earlier buildings were built, (as may be seen in the Historical Analysis). It is however conveniently close to the House. The wall, which encloses the site, was constructed in sometime after 1961. The land is now an overgrown yew plantation with densely spaced yew trees some 5-6m tall. It is supposed the yews were planted as a nursery planting for ornamental use elsewhere in grounds when the House was owned by DeHavilland.

Constructing the underground pool will of course necessitate the removal of the yew trees. This is a good thing the plantation has absolutely no landscape value, it is a planting accident, an area of neglect which the pool will rectify.

Although it will be underground the pool must have some presence above ground level to give access for those using the pool, for emergency escape and to allow ventilation, air in and out. These structures have been designed to be as small as possible taking on the form of traditional garden structures and making the area into a formal garden (all as shown on the drawings). The roof of the pool will be a "green roof" and planted as a formal lawn the limits of which will be defined by the garden structures and a sunken area, similar to a traditional ha – ha. The sunken area will allow natural light into the pool.

Beyond the formal area defined by the underground pool the planting will be less formal with most of the existing trees retained and some additional planting to re-enforce the density of plant growth.

From the outside of the walled enclosure the appearance will be unchanged except for the loss of the tops of some trees seen above the wall (see photographs and drawings). The walls will remain unchanged.

Inside the enclosure a useless and unused piece of land will be given two uses: a swimming pool and a formal garden.

The materials for the garden structures will be the same as those used in the enclosing walls and on the House: red brick and cast Bath stone.

HERITAGE ASSET ASSESSMENT

The elements of the proposed works are assessed below for their impact on the Heritage Asset (the Listed Buildings and their setting). The assessments fall into one of three broad categories: Beneficial, Neutral or Detrimental with reasons given for placing them there: -

- Removal of Yew trees.
Beneficial: The plantation is a dense out-of-control undergrowth of no historic or landscape value. It is believed the planting dates from after 1961.
- Affect on the setting of the Listed Building.
Beneficial: The setting of the Listed Building, Great Nast Hyde House will remain unaltered from all existing viewpoints. In historic building terms the proposals make a piece of wasteland worthy of the House.
- Affect on the Existing Walls.
Neutral: The walls which enclose the site are modern (constructed after 1961) and of no historical value. Other than being satisfactory garden walls they have no aesthetic value. Even so they will remain unaltered on the sides facing the House.
- Affect on potential Archaeological Finds.
Neutral: The Historical Analysis has guided these proposals. The area in which the Swimming Pool is to be built does not contain the remains of any previous structures.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

As built Great Nast Hyde House had no provision for disabled access and such access could not be created without radical alteration to the fabric. Given its Listed status such alteration is inappropriate and the house must remain without disabled access.

If the house is without disabled access it seems reasonable not to provide it for the proposed Swimming Pool and therefore none will be provided. Also it should be noted to provide disabled access and emergency escape would require far larger structures at ground level (for lifts, etc.) an unwelcome result when the design intent is to make everything above ground as small as possible.

APPENDIX – PHOTOGRAPHS



View of existing gate to be retained leading to proposed site.



Site of newly completed garages outside of wall enclosing proposed site.



Site of underground swimming pool.



Site of underground swimming pool.



View of existing wall (2m high) from outside proposed site.



View of existing wall (2m high) from inside proposed site looking back towards main house.