

DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION NUMBER	S6/2004/0873/FP and S6/2004/0849/LB
LOCATION	The Accommodation Block, Astwick Manor, Coopers Green Lane, Hatfield
PROPOSAL	Conversion of building into one 1 bedroom and five 2 bedroom apartments with 12 parking spaces

THE SITE

Astwick Manor is a Grade II Listed building set in extensive grounds (2.6 Hectares) and which was used in the past as an aeronautical training establishment. The accommodation block was constructed in the 1950s to provide additional on-site residential accommodation for students and is a three-storey building, with the third storey being provided within a mansard roof. At ground floor level it has an open plan former dormitory or teaching space and at first and second floors the building is divided up into bedroom spaces.

Planning permission was granted in 2003 for the conversion of the accommodation block (together with a separate hangar) to 24 residential units (Ref S6/2003/380/FP). To date this permission has not been implemented. The hangar is currently the subject of a separate planning application (Ref S6/2004/1143/FP) for its conversion into 26 residential units. This application has yet to be determined.

THE PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission for works to the exterior of the accommodation block comprising the following:

- Removal of end sections of mansard roof and erection of gable constructions to first, second floor and roof at either sides of both the north (front) and south (rear) elevations. Fascias and bargeboards are to be painted plain softwood.
- Replacement of existing windows with painted and softwood-framed casement windows. Some windows to be enlarged and some existing window openings are to be blocked up as indicated on drawing no 24903/100 B.
- Insertion of four dormer windows in the front roofslope, five dormer windows in the rear roofslope and two dormer windows on each side roofslope. Dormer windows are to have lead cladding to cheeks and roofs.
- Erection of entrance porch on front elevation with pitched roof and erection of lean-to roof canopy to rear entrance door.
- Existing brickwork is to be retained at first floor to north and south elevations. Painted sand/cement render is to be applied to gables and at ground floor level to all elevations.

- Internal layout modified from that approved by S6/2003/380/FP (NB no additional residential units proposed)
- Parking for 12 cars to be as indicated on drawing 24903/101

Following discussions with the applicant and Russ Craig (BEAMS) on 23 June 2004, the scheme was revised and an amended drawing 24903/100B was received including changes as follows:

1. A single entry door proposed rather than twin entry. Porch reduced in size.
2. Gable windows now shown as narrow single casement windows
3. Rainwater pipes now indicated
4. Windows are shown as softwood casement windows
5. All other types of materials proposed have been omitted from the drawing to enable them to be specified by a condition on the consent.

NB: The planning application is accompanied by an application for Listed building consent. This is required because the accommodation block is physically joined to the Grade II listed Manor at ground floor level.

PLANNING HISTORY

S6/2002/1320/FP	Demolition of outbuildings, aircraft hangar and residential block, conversion of listed building to six residential units and construction of 15 dwellinghouses and 8 apartments. <i>Application Withdrawn</i>
S6/2002/1325/LB	Conversion and refurbishment of listed building to form six residential units and demolition of accommodation block. <i>Granted listed building consent</i>
S6/2003/0308/FP	Conversion of listed manor into six residential units and provision of car parking. <i>Granted</i>
S6/2003/0380/FP	Conversion of accommodation block and hangar into 24 residential units <i>Granted</i>
S6/2003/1116/FP	Demolition of hostel wing and 3 outbuildings and erection of building containing 4 x two bedroom flats and folly building containing 1 residential unit. <i>Not determined</i>

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG2): Green Belts

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15): Planning and the Historic Environment

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991- 2011:

Policy 5: Green Belts

Policy 38: Critical Capital and Other Environmental Assets

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Alterations 2001- 2016 (Deposit Draft Feb 2003):

Policy 5: Green Belts
Policy 38: Critical Capital and Other Environmental Assets
Design and Quality of Development (new policy)

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No 1, 1998:

GB1 – Metropolitan Green Belt
BEV15 – listed buildings
BEV 16 – Alternative uses for listed buildings
CR11 – Reuse of buildings in the countryside

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Deposit Draft, June 2002:

GBSP1 – Definition of Green Belt
D1 – Quality of Design
D2 – Character and Context
RA1 – Development in the Green Belt
RA19 – Reuse of rural buildings
R13 – Protection of Species
R23 – Works to Listed Buildings
R27 - Archaeology
Supplementary Design Guidance
Supplementary Planning Guidance – Parking Standards (Adopted January 2004)

REPRESENTATIONS

Neighbouring occupiers:

The applications were advertised by neighbour notification letter and by the display of a site notice. No responses from third parties have been received.

Parish Council:

No comments have been received from Hatfield Town Council.

Environmental Health:

In light of the previous use of this site for training BAE Engineers I would recommend that we place our standard contaminated land condition on any permission. I've also attached a copy of our guidance leaflet, which the developers may find useful.

BEAMS (Built Environment Advisory and Management Service):

Confirm that have no arguments with the proposals as shown on s4903/100/B. These appear to comply with the points agreed at our recent meeting. You will recall that there was some discussion about the roof covering over the existing (adapted) mansard roof. We were concerned about the use of concrete tiles. Note that item 5 refers to "other types of materials which have been omitted from the drawing will be dealt with by condition". Very much hope that good quality clay tiles or natural slate (if the roof dictates other than clay tiles) will be used. Apart from this, I would be pleased to recommend approval.

DISCUSSION

The main issues relate to the acceptability of the design proposed external changes to the accommodation block in terms of their impact on the appearance of the existing building, and impact on the Grade II Listed Building. The potential impact of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt is also part of the assessment of

these applications. However, given that approval was given for the conversion of the accommodation block into six residential units (S6/2003/380/FP), the principle of residential use of this building has already been established. The internal layout of the accommodation block is to be modified but the number of apartments proposed will remain at six.

The accommodation block is attached at ground floor level to the Manor, which is a Grade II listed building. Policy BEV15 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No 1, 1998 and Policy R23 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Deposit Draft, June 2002, state that permission will be refused for any proposal which would adversely affect the historic character or architectural quality of a Listed Building or its setting. Listed Building consent will not be granted for any extension or external or internal alterations to buildings of special architectural or historic importance unless all the following criteria are satisfied:

- (i) New works respect the character, appearance and setting of the building in terms of design, scale and materials;
- (ii) Architectural or historic features which are important to the character and appearance of the building (including internal features) are retained unaltered;
- (iii) The historic form and structural integrity of the building are retained; and
- (iv) Full detailed drawings of the proposed works are submitted with the application.

As outlined in the CPEHO's report to Planning Control Committee (ref S6/2003/380/FP), the setting and character of the Manor were compromised to some extent when the hostel building was erected. The architectural style of the hostel building is certainly 'at odds' with that of the main house and cannot be considered to be a sympathetic addition to it.

The architectural style, gable roof form, windows and detailing proposed will, subject to the use of appropriate materials, significantly enhance the accommodation block and will detract less from the historic character and architectural quality the adjoining listed Manor.

Other issues

Green Belt - It is considered that the changes to the external appearance of the accommodation block will not result in a structure that would be more harmful to the character of the surrounding Green Belt than has already been permitted. This application does not represent an intensification of the residential use over and above that approved by S6/2003/380/FP.

Traffic, Highways and Parking - the application seeks approval of 12 car parking spaces to be located in new parking areas. Condition 6 imposed on S6/2003/380/FP required a scheme for a less formalised approach to parking to be submitted to and approved by the LPA. The parking arrangement proposed for the accommodation block (drawing no 24903/101) is considered acceptable. This scheme will not represent a change to the previously approved access arrangements but will not supersede the requirement for improvement works to be carried out to the junction between the access road to the site and Coopers Green Lane. For the purposes of consistency and to prevent implementation of a consent without the necessary road junction improvements, Condition 3 of S6/2003/380/FP is to be imposed here.

Archaeology – Condition 8 of S6/2003/380/FP required details of a scheme of recording of historical interest of buildings to be agreed and then carried out. It is considered that for consistency this condition should also be imposed here given that the accommodation block represents an example of a modern type of building that may be of some historical interest. The potential interest in the design of the structure is emphasised because the accommodation block is attached to a listed building.

Trees & Protected Species – As was the case with the previous approved conversion scheme (S6/2003/380/FP) the proposal involves the removal of some trees on the site to allow the creation of a car parking area and to allow a better living environment in the converted accommodation block. Again, these works are not so significant that this proposal should be resisted on this basis. There are no Tree Preservation Orders on any trees on the site.

Comments from the Herts Biological Record Centre on a separate planning application (S6/2004/1134/FP) for the conversion of the hangar into residential accommodation are considered relevant here. HBRC have a record of bat flight along Coopers Green Lane and given that a large number of mature trees on and around the proposed site it is possible that bats are roosting in these trees.

To be consistent with the previous consent (S6/2003/380/FP) a condition shall be imposed to secure details of mitigation and other measures that will be implemented to ensure that the accommodation block (and area) remains a suitable habitat for bats both during construction works and thereafter.

Potential Land contamination and drainage – The creation of new parking areas will be the only disturbance to land. Environmental Health advises the imposition of a standard contamination condition because the previous aeronautical use of the site was potentially contaminative.

Again, to be consistent with the previous approval, a condition is to be imposed to agree details of foul and surface water drainage from the site. Such details shall then be implemented prior to the occupation of the development.

CONCLUSION

It is considered that the proposal is acceptable, subject to conditions outlined above, and represents good design in terms of the external appearance of the accommodation block and would lessen the detrimental impact this structure has on the adjoining Grade II listed building. The proposal would not represent intensification of the residential use already approved nor would it be detrimental to the open character of this area of the rural Green Belt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That planning application S6/2004/873/FP be **APPROVED**

CONDITIONS:

1. SC01 – Standard Time Limit Full Permission

2. This permission does not extend to approval of the type, colour and finish of materials to be used for the external surfaces and roofing of the development as described on the application form and/or annotated on the drawings which are the subject of this permission. Samples of materials to be used on all external surfaces shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced on site. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details so approved.

REASON

To ensure that the finished appearance of the building is satisfactory. To comply . To comply with Supplementary Design Guidance of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Revised Deposit Version June 2002.

3. The parking spaces shown on the plan hereby approved shall be provided and marked out prior to the occupation of any buildings on the site, and shall be retained and kept available for those purposes thereafter.

REASON

To ensure that adequate parking facilities are available within the site and that there is no detriment to the safety of the adjoining highways. To comply with with GEN 4 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No1, 1998.

4. Prior to the commencement of the development there shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority details of the improvement works to be carried out to the junction between the access road to the site and the Coopers Green Lane. Those works, shall be implemented as agreed (or as subsequently agreed to be amended) prior to the commencement of the development involving the conversion of the existing buildings on the site.

REASON

In the interests of highway safety. To comply with GEN 4 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No1, 1998

5. Prior to the commencement of the development there shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority details of mitigation and other measures that will be implemented to ensure that the accommodation block (and area) remains a suitable habitat for bats both during construction works and thereafter. Once agreed, the measures shall be implemented as such.

REASON

To ensure that the habitat for the protected bat species is not harmed and is retained in the longer term. To comply with Policy R13 of Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Deposit Draft, June 2002.

6. Prior to the commencement of the development there shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, details of a scheme of recording of the historical interest of the building proposed to be converted, including the details of the production of the record of that recording. Once agreed, the scheme shall be implemented and the record produced as agreed.

REASON

In order to ensure that any historical interest in the buildings that may be lost as a result of the conversion works, is recorded. To comply with Policy R27 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Revised Deposit Version June 2002.

7. Before the development is commenced an investigation of the site shall be carried out in accordance with BS 10175:2001 British Standards Institution Code of Practice, "The Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites" to identify possible contamination, and to assess the degree and nature of any contamination present. If a hazard or hazards are identified on the site from any form of contamination the results of the investigation shall be utilised to carry out a site specific risk assessment to consider risks to future users of the site, water resources, surrounding land and property, wildlife, cultivated trees and plants, building materials, and any other persons who may be affected. If the risk assessment identifies unacceptable risk or risks, a detailed remediation strategy containing measures necessary to remove, neutralise or isolate the contamination shall be provided. Details of such investigation, assessment and remediation measures shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before development commences and the development shall thereafter proceed and be completed in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation of any of the dwellings unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The presence of any significant unsuspected contamination that becomes evident during the development of the site shall be brought to the attention of the Local Planning Authority as soon as it is discovered.
8. REASON: To ensure that any site contamination is dealt with safely in the interests of preventing pollution of the environment, the health and safety of the public and users of the development. To comply with Policy R2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Revised Deposit Version June 2002
9. Prior to the commencement of development there shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority details of the means of foul and surface water drainage from the site. Once agreed those details shall be implemented as such and be made available for use prior to the occupation of the development.

REASON

In order to avoid pollution to the water environment and in the interests of public health. To comply with Policy R9 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Revised Deposit Version, June 2002.

SUMMARY OF THE REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION

The proposal is acceptable and satisfies all relevant policies of the Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991- 2011, Hertfordshire Structure Plan Alterations 2001-2016 (Deposit Draft Feb 2003) together with the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No 1 and emerging policies in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Revised Deposit Version June 2002 and Supplementary Design Guidance.

That application S6/2004/849/LB for Listed Building consent be **GRANTED**

CONDITIONS:

1. SC02 –Time Limit Full Permission – Listed Buildings
2. This permission does not extend to approval of the type, colour and finish of materials to be used for the external surfaces and roofing of the development as described on the application form and/or annotated on the drawings which are the subject of this permission. Samples of materials to be used on all external surfaces shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced on site. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details so approved.

REASON

To ensure that the special architectural or historic interest of the Grade II Listed Manor is safeguarded. To comply with Policy R23 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Revised Deposit Version, June 2002.

SUMMARY OF THE REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

The proposal is acceptable and is considered not to detract from the appearance or setting of the adjoining Listed Building and satisfies all relevant policies of the Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991- 2011, Hertfordshire Structure Plan Alterations 2001- 2016 (Deposit Draft Feb 2003) together with the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No 1 and emerging policies in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review Revised Deposit Version, June 2002.

DRAWING NUMBERS

24903/100 B (WHDC dated 01.07.04)
24903/101 (WHDC dated 07.06.04)

Signature of report writer.....

Date.....