

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

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2017/0351/FULL
Location: Oshwal Centre Coopers Lane Road Northaw Potters Bar EN6 4DG
Proposal: Erection of single storey front extension (pronaos) to the temple to include 8 new columns and 3 domes.
Officer: Mr M Peacock

Recommendation: Granted

6/2017/0351/FULL

Context	
Site and Application description	<p>The Oshwal Centre is a community and religious centre used by the Jain Community. The Oshwal Association of the UK (OAUk) purchased the property known as Hook House in Coopers Lane Road in 1980. Renamed Oshwal House, it is a Tuscan Style villa dating from 1839 and Grade II listed (listed in 1952), set in some 80 acres (about 32 hectares). Following on from this, the OAUk have subsequently constructed Community Halls whilst Oshwal House today forms the administrative headquarters of the organisation as well as hosting visitors and community activities. At the heart of the estate is the <i>Derasar</i> (temple) which was commenced in 1997 and completed in 2005. It was constructed using stone carved in India and was constructed along traditional lines and using traditional methods. It now forms the largest traditional Jain temple in Europe and is consequently an important holy place for all practicing Jains, whether members of the Oshwal Community or not.</p> <p>The OAUk has reviewed the <i>Derasar</i> in light of the growing numbers of visitors to the site. Following this review it has been recognised that the temple, whose traditional design originates from India, does not fully account for the English climate. As such, an extension is required to accommodate and protect the growing number of visitors and their clothing from the natural elements when preparing to enter the building.</p> <p>Planning permission is sought for the extension and construction of the pronaos (inner area at the front of the temple), to include 8 new columns and 3 domes, for the purposes of applying adaptations to the entrance to both enable a greater capacity and protect visitors and their shoes from the weather conditions when they prepare to enter the building.</p>
Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)	<p>GB - Greenbelt LCA - Landscape Character Area (Northaw Common Parkland) PAR - PARISH (NORTHAW AND CUFFLEY) Wards - Northaw & Cuffley</p>
Relevant planning history	<p>Application Number: S6/1992/0681/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 17 December 1992 Proposal: Erection of Temple. (Application made under Section 73 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act</p>

	<p>Application Number: S6/1995/0226/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 11 May 1995 Proposal: Erection of Temple. (Renewal of consent S6/0681/92/FP)</p> <p>Application Number: S6/1998/0662/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 10 December 1999 Proposal: Erection of temple. (Revision to planning permission S6/0226/95/FP to incorporate 11.5m2 of additional floor area and revised elevations)</p> <p>Application Number: S6/2003/1587/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 12 May 2004 Proposal: Erection of temple (revision to previous planning permission S6/1998/662/FP) together with ancillary building and new car parking</p>		
Consultations			
Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 0
Publicity	Site Notice Display Date: 29 March 2017 Site Notice Expiry Date: 19 April 2017 Press Advert Display Date: 5 April 2017 Press Advert Expiry Date: 19 April 2017		
Summary of neighbour responses	None		
Consultees and responses	Landscapes Department – No objection Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council – No objection Councillor Bernard Sarson – No response Councillor George Michaelides – No response Councillor Irene Dean – No response		
Relevant Policies			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NPPF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GBSP1 <input type="checkbox"/> GBSP2 <input type="checkbox"/> M14 Others			
Main Issues			
Is the development within a conservation area?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Would the significance of the designated heritage asset be conserved or enhanced?			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Comment (if applicable):			
Would the development reflect the character of the area?			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Comment (if applicable):			
<p>Planning permission is sought for the extension and construction of the pronaos (inner area at the front of the temple), to include 8 new columns and 3 domes, for the purposes of applying adaptations to the entrance to both enable a greater capacity and protect visitors and their shoes from the weather conditions when they prepare to enter the building. In short, all visitors to the Derasar are required to pause at its entrance to remove their shoes – and of course to retrieve them on leaving. The traditional design as presently exists provides no protection from the elements whilst removing or replacing shoes and no facility to ensure that shoes are not subject to the weather whilst the</p>			

devotee is within the Derasar. Importantly, the alterations also bring the present disabled access within the glazed area protected from inclement weather.

The proposal has been designed to avoid the need to remove the existing central dome at the entrance, whilst allowing for a flat roof extension which would include the provision of three new domes of identical size and character to the existing in addition to the provision of a small lantern. The proposal also seeks the provision of reflective glass between the new columns. In addition to this, a glazed entranced door is proposed on the front elevation in front of the staircase. These additions will ensure that both the visitors preparing to enter the Derasar and also the fabric of the temple itself are protected from adverse weather conditions. Notwithstanding this, the scheme proposes to match the existing fabric of the Derasar through the mirroring of the ornamental features, architectural typology and materials which will be identical to the existing. This will therefore give a uniform and coherent outlook to the enlarged building. Reflective of the existing building, the proposed extension is of entirely traditional form save for the practical addition of glazing, and would be constructed in the same materials from the same source as the original building. Subject to a condition requiring materials to match existing, the proposal would not be contrary to NPPF in relation to quality of design and impact on the character of the area and no objection is made in this regard.

Would the development reflect the character of the dwelling?

Yes No N/A

Comment (if applicable):

Would the development maintain the amenity of adjoining occupiers? (e.g. privacy, outlook, light etc.)

Yes No N/A

Comment (if applicable):

Would the development provide / retain sufficient parking?

Yes No N/A

Comment (if applicable):

Any other issues

Whether the proposal is inappropriate development within the Green Belt and the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt

The NPPF indicates that one of the essential characteristics of Green Belts is their openness and that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It indicates that within Green Belts inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The NPPF indicates that within the Green Belt the construction of new buildings is normally inappropriate development; however in Paragraph 89 it identifies a range of developments which may not be inappropriate. These include the extension or alteration of a building; provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of original building.

The application building does not appear to have been extended previously, therefore, the building as it currently exists is considered "the original building". The proposal would extend the length of the building from 22.3m up to 28.85m. In terms of floor area, this would increase by 59.42sqm (from 232.21sqm up to 291.63sqm), which equates to an overall increase of 20%. Whilst the proposal would add to the floor area and volume to the building, the additions would appear relatively modest in scale and clearly subservient to the original building. The bulk of the building would increase, to a limited degree, by additional built development which would inevitably have some effect on the openness of the Green Belt. However in isolation, the loss of openness would be minimal. On balance, it is considered that the proposal would not be a disproportionate addition to the original building. The effect on openness would be limited and would not cause material harm to the Green Belt. Furthermore, the extension would not be contrary to any of the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. On this basis, the proposal is consistent with the NPPF.

Conclusion

Subject to the suggested planning conditions, the proposal is in accordance with the purposes and intent of Policies GBSP1, D1 and D2 of The Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, 2005 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conditions:

1. The external decorations of the approved extension/alterations must match the existing building in relation to colour and texture.

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.

DRAWING NUMBERS

2. 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
6842-02-P0		Existing & Proposed Elevations	23 February 2017
6842-03a-P0		Existing Front Elevation	23 February 2017
6842-03b-P0		Proposed Front Elevation	23 February 2017
6842-04-P0		Existing & Proposed Elevations	23 February 2017
6842-00-P0		Site Location Plan	23 February 2017
6842-01-P0		Proposed & Existing Roof and Floor Plan	23 February 2017
6842-05-P0		Block Plan	3 March 2017

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).

Determined By:

Mr A Mangham
27 April 2017