

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

Application No : 12/01533/FULL1

Ward:
Biggin Hill

Address : 18 Main Road Biggin Hill TN16 3EG

OS Grid Ref: E: 540983 N: 160612

Applicant : Mr B.S Sandhu

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Single storey side and rear extension to enlarge ballroom, demolition of detached garage block to allow creation of 9 parking spaces, and formation of 14 parking spaces on existing tennis court

Key designations:

Conservation Area: RAF Biggin Hill

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area

Green Belt

London City Airport Safeguarding

London City Airport Safeguarding Birds

London Distributor Roads

Tree Preservation Order

Proposal

- The current application seeks permission for a single storey side and rear extension to enlarge the existing ballroom, along with the demolition of the existing detached garage block to allow the creation of 9 parking spaces, and the formation of 14 parking spaces on the existing tennis court.
- The proposed demolition of the garage block would remove 107m² of floor space, and the provision of the extension to the ballroom will provide an additional floor area of 118m².
- The proposed extension will be located on the end of the existing ballroom, with the two existing flat roof levels being carried through to match on the extension. The materials used for the extension will also match the existing building, and the fenestration in the rear elevation will match the existing windows.
- An existing bank of mature laurels will shield the extension along the southern boundary, and a new close-boarded fence will be erected along the eastern boundary.
- The new parking areas will be surfaced in the same materials that will be adopted in the previously approved scheme, with the areas adjacent will be included within the main planting scheme.

- The agent has provided additional information, received 31st July 2012, referring to very special circumstances in an attempt to justify the application. This information is as follows:
 - the net increase in proposed floor area will be approximately 0.5% and as such will not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the open character of the land;
 - by locating additional car parking on one of the two existing tennis courts, the minimal increase in hardstanding should not harm the openness of the site;
 - the extension will be of permanent construction;
 - the form, bulk and design of the building will be in keeping with it's surroundings;
 - the proposed use will not entail external storage of materials, plant or machinery;
 - the proposed use will have no adverse effect on the recreational enjoyment or appearance of the countryside; and
 - the scale, siting, materials and design of the extension will not be visually detrimental to the Green Belt.

Location

The application site is located on the western side of Main Road, Biggin Hill, within the RAF Biggin Hill Conservation Area and designated Green Belt land. The site hosts a statutory Grade II Listed Building, and the site has protected trees on site.

Comments from Local Residents

Nearby residents were notified of the application. A number of similar responses from local residents were received which can be summarised as follows:

- disturbance during building work;
- property still being used as residential – the plans show sufficient recreational areas for a property of its size and use;
- loss of privacy resulting in loss of enjoyment of neighbouring properties;
- noise pollution from anticipated use of building for large functions;
- property is located in a quiet residential area, as well as safeguarded Green Belt and conservation area;
- additional parking will lead to increased traffic to property with access being a cause of highway safety in a hotspot accident area along the main road, situated on a significant bend;
- light pollution from headlights;
- hope steps will be taken by Committee to preserve the appearance and enjoyment of the local vicinity.

Further responses were received which can be summarised as follows:

- no objection if proposal is for the residential purposes for which it is used at present;

- if this is a step towards changing the use of the property to something of a commercial nature, strongly object;
- the road would not cope with increased traffic from a commercial enterprise;
- the local area, in particular the airport, is already becoming over-developed;
- quality of life for residents is deteriorating due to increased noise levels – any change to commercial use would make this worse;
- an objection on grounds of nuisance/disturbance seems to be a little harsh;
- businesses that can successfully integrate, in all sense, into the local community deserve to succeed;
- would suggest that a visual and sound barrier is introduced along the border line at the expense of the applicant;
- planting mature tall shrubs or semi-mature trees (more than exists at present) would provide the necessary screening;
- expansion of the existing ballroom associated with the approved hotel use on the site will mean evening functions – noise could then become an issue if not careful;
- summer evenings in nearby gardens could be ruined by excessive noise of functions;
- the Council have successfully controlled the summer functions at Highams Hill Farm to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned – ask that the same regulatory process be employed for the future hotel at 18 Main Road.

Full copies of the comments received can be seen on the file.

Comments from Consultees

No objection was raised by the Advisory Panel for Conservation Areas (APCA).

It is considered that no significant trees would be affected by this proposal.

Planning Considerations

In terms of the impact of the proposal upon the conservation area and listed building, it is considered that the location and scale of this proposed extension would have little impact on the Listed Building. No raised objection to the demolition of the garages or the extra car parking.

Unitary Development Plan Policies

BE1 Design of New Development
 BE8 Statutory Listed Buildings
 BE11 Conservation Areas
 G1 Green Belt

London Plan Policies

7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology
 7.16 Green Belt

Recently, Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance notes were replaced by the adopted National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This is also a material consideration for the determination of the application.

Planning History

There is a varied planning history at the site, the most recent and relevant can be summarised as follows:

99/01992/LBC – Listed Building Consent granted for the change of use to 31 bedroom hotel with single storey infill extension, external alterations to building, increased parking provision and alterations to existing accesses.

03/02636/RENEW – Permission granted for the change of use to 31 bedroom hotel with single storey infill extension, external alterations, increased parking provision and alterations to existing accesses (Former Officers' Mess) (RENEWAL OF PERMISSION 99/01990)

03/02672/LBC – Listed Building Consent granted for change of use to 31 bedroom hotel with single storey infill extension, external alterations, increased parking provision and alterations to existing accesses (Former Officers' Mess).

08/03423/LBC – Listed Building Consent granted for change of use to 31 bedroom hotel with single storey infill extension, external alterations, increased parking provision and alterations to existing access (Former Officers' Mess).

08/03443/FULL1 – Permission granted for the change of use to 31 bedroom hotel with single storey infill extension, external alterations, increased parking provision and alterations to existing access at Former Officer's Mess (Renewal of Permission DC/03/02636). Conditions relating to this planning approval were discharged therefore this approval has been implemented and remains extant.

12/00983/LBC – Listed Building Consent granted for the installation of secondary glazing to all windows of listed building.

Conclusions

Members may consider that the main issues relating to the application are the effect that the proposal would have on the character of the area; the effect of the proposal upon the host listed building – in particular whether its character would be preserved or whether there would be harm to the setting; whether the character/appearance of the conservation area is preserved or enhanced; the impact that the proposal would have on the amenities of the occupants of surrounding residential properties; whether the proposal is appropriate in the Green Belt location; and whether the proposal would comply with Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies relating to hotel development.

The agent has submitted information to support the application in the form of providing very special circumstances to justify the application, and on this basis, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable, in principle, on Green Belt grounds.

Concerns have been raised by nearby residents that the resulting extended building and additional parking spaces will lead to a commercial use of the site, however Members will be aware that there is an extant permission for use of the site for a hotel (ref. 08/03443), with activities associated with such a use likely to be implemented as part of this approval. Whilst functions associated with a hotel use are likely to lead to an increase in the number of visitors to the site at various times, it is considered that with effective management of the site this should prevent undue harm to the amenities of the neighbouring properties. However this aspect has already been considered under previous applications and granted permission so should not form a reason for concern amongst Members in this instance.

As the proposed extension will be located away from the main entrance to the site, close to where the existing garage is to be demolished and where there is existing screening adjacent to the location of the development, Members may consider that there will be no harm to the character of the area or harm to the local amenity/local properties when compared to the existing situation on this part of the site, and the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the RAF Biggin Hill CA as the proposed development will not be visible from the roadside. As such the proposal can be seen to accord with Policies BE1 and BE11 of the UDP. The proposed extension to the ballroom will match the design, roof profile and materials of the host building, therefore will not have any impact upon the special interest of the statutory listed building, which accords with the criteria of Policy BE8.

In terms of the impact of the proposal upon the Green Belt location, Members may consider that the scheme accords with Green Belt Policy G1. The proposed extension will not have a materially greater impact than the present building, the scheme will involve the removal of approximately 107m² floor area of the existing garage building and the new extension will involve the creation of 118m² of new floor area to the ballroom, which on balance almost cancels each other out reducing any likely impact of additional floor area. The new parking area to be located where the existing garage building is will not be materially different to continued use of the existing garage building especially if Members consider the floor area of the existing garage block ultimately has the same coverage as the proposed area for the 9 new parking spaces. Additionally, the parking area in the position of the existing tennis court will not lead to harm to the openness of the site. As such, Members will consider that the proposal as a whole will not harm the open character of the land or conflict with the purposes of including the land within the Green Belt.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on files refs. 99/01990, 03/02636, 08/03443 and 12/01533, excluding exempt information.

as amended by documents received on 04.07.2012 31.07.2012

RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION

Subject to the following conditions:

- | | | |
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| 1 | ACA01 | Commencement of development within 3 yrs |
| | ACA01R | A01 Reason 3 years |
| 2 | ACA04 | Landscaping Scheme - full app no details |
| | ACA04R | Reason A04 |
| 3 | ACB02 | Trees - protective fencing |
| | ACB02R | Reason B02 |
| 4 | ACB03 | Trees - no bonfires |
| | ACB03R | Reason B03 |
| 5 | ACB04 | Trees - no trenches, pipelines or drains |
| | ACB04R | Reason B04 |
| 6 | ACC01 | Satisfactory materials (ext'nl surfaces) |
| | ACC01R | Reason C01 |
| 7 | ACC03 | Details of windows |
| | ACC03R | Reason C03 |
| 8 | ACK01 | Compliance with submitted plan |

Reason: In order to protect the character and openness of the RAF Biggin Hill Conservation Area and Green Belt location, and to comply with Policies BE1, BE11 and G1 of the Unitary Development Plan.

Reasons for granting permission:

In granting permission the Local Planning Authority had regard to the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan:

- BE1 Design of New Development
- BE8 Statutory Listed Buildings
- BE11 Conservation Areas
- G1 Green Belt

and the London Plan:

- 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology
- 7.16 Green Belt

National Planning Policy Framework

The development is considered to be satisfactory in relation to the following:

- (a) the appearance of the development in the street scene;
- (b) the Green Belt policies of the development plan;
- (c) the Conservation Area policy of the development plan;
- (d) the Statutory Listed Building policy of the development plan;
- (e) the Transport policies of the development plan;
- (f) the character of the development in the surrounding areas;
- (g) the impact on the amenities of the occupiers of adjacent and nearby properties;

and having regard to all other matters raised.

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