

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

Application No : 14/04249/FULL1

Ward:
Plaistow And Sundridge

Address : 67 Plaistow Lane Bromley BR1 3JF

OS Grid Ref: E: 540916 N: 170215

Applicant :

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Demolition of existing Gate House and erection of a two storey 2 bedroom dwelling with detached garage, gates and Pillars to Willoughby Lane and alterations to vehicular and pedestrian access.

Key designations:

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area
Green Chain
London City Airport Safeguarding
London City Airport Safeguarding Birds
Local Distributor Roads
Metropolitan Open Land
Open Space Deficiency

Proposal

Joint Report with application 14/04252

This application seeks permission for redevelopment of the Gate House Willoughby Lane Bromley. The Sundridge Park estate is set within Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), which extends to include the Gate House site. It is also within the designated Grade II Sundridge Park Historic Park and Garden, which also includes the two Golf Courses. The Gate House is located within the setting of the Grade I Mansion House.

It is considered that the lodge is listed by being within the curtilage of Sundridge Mansion.

This is a joint application with an associated application 14/04252 for a Listed Building Consent.

Location

The property is an existing gate house for the Sundridge Park Mansion located on the Northern side of Plaistow Lane. Plaistow Lane bends sharply to the West.

Consultations

Comments from Local Residents

Nearby properties were notified and representations were received which can be summarised as follows:

In opposition:

The building has been allowed to fall into disrepair.
The building should be kept as a place to appreciate.
Few Listed in Bromley
Gate House was part of Sundridge Park Estate
Historic asset loss unacceptable

In support:

The gate house is of indifferent architectural quality and has sadly fallen into a derelict condition.

In favour of the replacement.

Environmental Health - no objections in principle. However, a contamination assessment on the adjacent site 2003-2005 found elevated concentrations of lead, zinc, arsenic across the site. A condition is recommended.

Revised plans for the access to the site have been submitted as part of this application. Highway Planning is of the view that the area shown in red on drawing number 5200/35/TCI drawn by TCI belongs to LBB and would be subject to Sec 278.

The applicant has now submitted two more drawings. Drawing No 14.60 - 001 is for proposed junction improvement and drawing No W860 - 001 is for refuse vehicle swept path analysis. They are satisfied with the above mentioned drawings as they are an improvement to the junction, however, would also like to see drainage details for adjustment of any gullies if and when the application is accepted.

English Heritage:

English Heritage advise that The Gate House is located at the junction between Plaistow Lane and the historic carriageway to the Mansion which is now known as

Willoughby Lane. It forms part of a Humphry Repton designed landscape which is listed at Grade II in English Heritage's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, and is specifically mentioned in the list entry.

The building is also listed within the curtilage of Grade I Sundridge Park Mansion which was built in late 18th century to a design by John Nash and Samuel Wyatt. As identified in the submitted Design and Access Statement, the Gate House is likely to be contemporary with the Mansion (p10) and although the architect remains unknown, the building bears architectural similarities to a number of gatehouses by both Nash and Wyatt. The building has suffered from undesirable later extensions and alterations, and now possesses a somewhat plain and dilapidated character. Nonetheless, it is considered by English Heritage to be a designated heritage asset of both architectural and historic interest.

Impact.

The proposals seek to demolish the existing Gate House and erect a two storey replacement gate lodge and garage. It is also proposed to reconstruct the removed gate piers using salvaged and new material. The design of the proposed new building traditional building materials. Improvements to the pavement along Plaistow Lane would be secured by the pulling back of the new build from the roadside.

Policy

In considering these proposals, Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) places a duty on your Authority to consider the impact of development proposal upon listed buildings. It states that the determining authority 'shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies for decision making on development proposals. At the heart of the framework is a presumption in favour of 'sustainable development'. Conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance forms one of the 12 core principles that define sustainable development.

Specific policies relevant to this case include Paragraphs:

- o 128 which refers to the need of fully understanding the heritage significance of a site when making decisions
- o 130 which indicates that where there is evidence of deliberate neglect or damage to a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the asset should not be taken into account in any decision
- o 131 which advises local authorities to take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
- o 132 which states that any harm to a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification

o 134 which states that when a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

English Heritage's Position:

The total demolition of the Gate House would cause a significant amount of harm which in our view has not been justified or supported in terms of national planning policy. As identified in this advice letter, we consider the Gate House to be of architectural significance and of much historic significance. It contributes to the significance of both the Grade I listed Mansion, and the Grade II Registered Park.

Although the submitted Design and Access Statement argues the acceptability of the proposed work, it does acknowledge that the building is likely to be contemporary with the Mansion and bears architectural similarity to similar lodges by both Nash and Wyatt. The submitted information stresses that the building is in a poor condition and does not provide sufficient accommodation to support refurbishment for sale on the open market. We understand the building has been in the same ownership for some time, and if so, the dilapidated state of the structure cannot be used as justification for the work (Para 130, NPPF). Furthermore, without market testing, or the submission of a full condition survey, we do not consider that clear and convincing justification for the demolition has been provided (Para 132, NPPF). We recognise that there would be some public benefit in improving the pavement around the lodge as expressed in Dermot McCaffery letter of 18th July. However, we do not consider that this public benefit is sufficient to offset the harm caused by the total loss of the original Gate House (Para 134, NPPF).

Recommendation

We are therefore currently unable to support these proposals and we would encourage revisions to be explored to retain the existing structure. The submitted documentation stresses the limitations of the existing accommodation and therefore English Heritage can accept an extension to the rear to meet these desires. Historic research has already been carried out by the applicant on similar lodges of the period, and this information could be used to inform the design of such an extension. For example, the East Lodge (Palmer's Lodge) at Holkham Hall bears a striking similarity to the Gate House at Sundridge Park. However, unlike the Gate House, East Lodge features pedimented entrances, and a generous range to the rear. The removal of the modern accretions, reinstatement of gate piers, and an appropriate extension based on scholarly research could present a real opportunity to enhance the significance of both the curtilage listed building and the Registered Park (Para 131, NPPF).

In addition, EH have commented on the Building Survey for Sundridge Park Gate House prepared by Kempton Carr Croft Property Consultants.

English Heritage's position is as we indicated, we consider the Gate House to be a designated heritage asset by virtue of its age and location within the curtilage of the Grade I listed Sundridge Park Mansion, as well as being a key feature within the Grade II Registered Park. As such, we do not consider that the current proposals to demolish the building comply with national planning policy. The submitted Report provides some additional justification for the proposals which we have now reviewed.

We note from the Report that the survey was subjected to limited visual inspections only and specialist tests have not been applied. Therefore the overall opinion in the Report that substantial rebuilding and underpinning is required has not been fully demonstrated in our view. Our Surveyor has indicated that whilst the building is in need of urgent attention, its condition appears typical to that of a building which has been left unoccupied for a significant period and subjected to theft of its roofing materials. The various repairs and improvements listed on page 3 of the Report are the usual works to be expected following such deterioration and each has a practicable solution, whether involving repair or local rebuilding. It is also considered that any need for underpinning or for chimney rebuilding could easily be achieved, and although the concrete flooring may have exacerbated the structural problems, there are several acceptable proprietary methods of upgrading solid masonry structures to the levels of insulation to acceptable standards. Regarding the concerns about insurance, there are countless examples of historic buildings throughout the country which have suffered severe structural deformations, often through settlement, and that have been subsequently very satisfactorily repaired for residential use utilising a range of professional advices available in the market place. In light of the Report and our on-site inspection, our Surveyor has stressed the need for secure access to the building to make it safe from illegal entry, and also for protective treatments to make the building wind and watertight including the fitting of a protective roof supported by scaffolding over the top of the building. Some monitoring of the building would also be required.

We therefore rest on the comments in the attached letter and would strongly recommend that options are explored to retain the existing structure.

From a Listed Building point of view:

EH deem its loss to cause "less than substantial harm" to the listed building and therefore paragraph 134 of NPPF applies. There is no public benefit proposed that would in my view justify its loss. Furthermore EH are of the view that it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the building cannot be repaired. On this basis I recommend we strongly resist

Planning Considerations

Policies within the Bromley Unitary Development Plan including

BE1
BE8
G2

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The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies for decision making on development proposals. At the heart of the framework is a presumption in favour of 'sustainable development'. Conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance forms one of the core principles that define sustainable development.

In strategic terms the most relevant London Plan policies are:

- 2.8 Outer London: Transport
- 3.3 Increasing Housing Supply
- 3.4 Optimising Housing Potential
- 3.5 Quality And Design Of Housing Developments
- 5.3 Sustainable Design And Construction

Conclusions

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The main issues to be considered are:

- the loss of Listed Building
- the quality of the replacement housing proposed
- the acceptability of residential development within the MOL
- the impact on the setting and character of the Statutory Listed Building
- the impact on the amenities of neighbouring residential properties
- the impact on highway safety and parking

Density and quality of housing

The replacement house in itself may be acceptable were it not for the fact the existing gate house building in within the grounds of Statutory Listed building and therefore Listed itself. The loss of which is unacceptable.

London Plan Policy 3.3 sets out minimum space standards and the unit would all provide a suitable internal layout in this regard.

Impact on the Metropolitan Open Land

The site lies within MOL, new buildings are inappropriate unless very special circumstances are demonstrated. It is noted that this would replace an existing building but with a similar footprint.

Impact on the Statutory Listed Building

The proposal remove the statutory Listed Building this would seem unacceptable following on from English Heritage advice.

Impact on the amenities of neighbouring residential properties

The proposed development is considered to have a limited impact on the amenities of neighbouring residential properties in terms of prospect, sunlight and daylighting, other properties are a considerable distance away.

Impact on highways and car parking

In terms of the revised access layout the development appears to be acceptable.

Summary

Having regard to the above it is considered that the proposal is unacceptable in terms of the loss of the Listed Gate house

It is therefore recommended that Members refuse planning permission.

Background papers referred to during the production of this report comprise all correspondence on file ref: 14/04252 and 14/4252, excluding exempt information.

In terms of the Listed Building Consent application the proposal seeks to demolish and replace building with a new lodge building. The building is at present in need of renovation The application for Listed Building Consent is, however, accompanied by a full planning application This corresponding planning application is considered unacceptable and therefore it is considered premature to grant Listed Building Consent without a suitable corresponding planning permission.

Having had regard to the above is recommended that Members refuse Listed Building Consent.

RECOMMENDATION: APPLICATION BE REFUSED

The reasons for refusal are:

01 The proposal would result in the unacceptable loss of the existing Statutory Listed Building, thereby contrary to Policies BE1 and BE8 of the Unitary Development Plan.