

Agenda Item A8	Committee Date 20 April 2009	Application Number 09/00105/FUL
Application Site Greaves Park Bowerham Road Lancaster Lancashire	Proposal Erection of a two storey rear extension to form 11 bedrooms and internal alterations to form an additional 11 bedrooms in upper floors of existing building, alterations to car park layout and erection of retaining wall to the rear	
Name of Applicant Whitbread Group PLC	Name of Agent Cliff Walsingham And Company	
Decision Target Date 8 May 2009	Reason For Delay None	
Case Officer	Mr Martin Culbert	
Departure	No	
Summary of Recommendation	Approve with conditions	

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

- 1.1 The site is a large stone built former house located within the Greaves Park just to the south of Bowerham Road and the Pointer Roundabout. The building is a Listed Grade II structure dating from the 1840's, in the Jacobean Revival style and forms a large suburban villa of considerable presence, character and appearance. It is surrounded on all sides by wooded parkland with open boundaries and used as public amenity space. The site set well back off the surrounding roads, accessed from Bowerham Road via a long curving drive and is bounded on its northern side by a large car park. There are no immediate residential properties on the West Side of Greaves Road. The site is less than half a mile from the City Centre and has good public transport links.
- 1.2 The site is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order 242 (1996). The Listed Building is located within the Greaves Conservation Area and is within an area of Urban Greenspace and an Area of Key Urban Landscape.

2.0 The Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal is a full application to demolish a more recent single storey rear extension and to erect a two storey extension essentially within the service yard to the rear of the building to contain a hotel entrance and 11 en-suite bedrooms. This would be surrounded to the east and south by a new retaining wall to stabilise the adjacent bank and retained trees. The new extension would form a T-shape across the end of the older rear two storey extension, thus connecting into the upper floors of the main building, the rooms of which would be converted to form a further 11 en-suite bedrooms.
- 2.2 The internal alterations to the Listed Building would be kept to the minimum, with virtually all of the original features retained.

2.3 The proposed extension has been designed to be subservient to the original building but in a style complementary to it. It would be faced in Ashlar stone under slate roofs to match the main building. The proposal would also be accompanied by minor alterations to the car park layout to address the hotel entrance, which reduces the capacity by two spaces to 74.

3.0 Site History

3.1 The site has a long past residential history of education and commercial uses culminating in its present use as a public house/restaurant. The original villa has had two previous major extensions, one in the 1890's and one in the early 20th century and a small number of subsequent minor additions. However, whilst there have been a number of advertisement applications for the building in recent times, there are no previous applications which affect the consideration of the current proposal.

4.0 Consultation Responses

4.1 The following responses have been received from statutory consultees:

Statutory Consultee	Response
County Highways	No objections – Cycle parking condition requested.
English Heritage	No objections.
Environmental Health	No objections - Condition regarding any unexpected contamination requested
County Archaeologist	No objection - Condition regarding recording the building requested
Lancaster Civic Society	No objection in principle but concerns about the detailed design of the extension
Tree Protection Officer	No objection to the proposals including the removal of the six trees proposed - various conditions to protect the retained trees requested.

5.0 Neighbour Representations

5.1 One letter has been received objecting to the proposal on the grounds of potential high visibility signage, poor design, inappropriate construction, unsustainable based use, inappropriate budget use in high profile site, increased late night noise and disturbance, increased congestion and danger to children playing next to access.

6.0 Principal Development Plan Policies

6.1 Saved Lancaster District Local Plan Policies E29 (Green Spaces), E1 (Open Land of Key Townscape Importance), E35 (Conservation Areas and their Surroundings), E36 (Change of Use), E33 and E39 (Alterations and Extensions) and E24 (Listed Buildings at Risk) are of particular relevance to the consideration of this application. The general thrust of these policies is to preserve and enhance the quality of both the built and natural environment and to encourage the re-use of Listed Building where possible to secure their continued preservation.

7.0 Comment and Analysis

7.1 The site is sustainably located and also benefits from adequate car parking, good public transport and pedestrian links and has no immediate residential neighbours. The parkland setting is ideal for a hotel and will further encourage much-needed tourism in the area. The hotel use itself is unlikely to have any significant impact on visual or residential amenity.

7.2 The upper floors of the building are currently seriously under used and deteriorating in condition at a considerable rate. It is considered therefore that a viable use must soon be found for this floorspace if the future of the building is to be secured. Therefore the proposals, which are considered to represent a viable hotel proposal, both in scale and form, would seem to be an ideal solution.

- 7.3 Six trees are proposed for removal to accommodate the development; namely specimens 1444; 1442; 1443; 1435; 1434; 1432. None of these trees are dominant, or are significant landscape trees. Their proposed removal would not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the site or on local amenity value. However their removal would require a planned replacement planting scheme to be submitted and agreed in writing. The proposed development is an opportunity to further enhance the age range and species of trees within the site, ensuring the continuation of tree cover in this area long into the future. Currently, the dominant age class is that of mature trees, with little evidence of new planting undertaken in the past decade.
- 7.4 All other tree work proposals will be considered as a separate matter and any further proposed works must be detailed and submitted on a Tree Works Application/Notification Form, with written consent obtained from the local planning authority prior to undertaking any works.
- 7.5 There are, at present, issues with the hipped roof form of this building. Revised proposals complete with parapetted gables (to reflect the design of the main building and address the concerns of the Civic Society) have been requested and are anticipated in time for committee. There are also some detailed issues surrounding the provision of plumbing services to/from some rooms but it is anticipated that these too will be addressed in the revisions prior to the meeting.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 Subject to the receipt of satisfactory amended proposals as described above, it is suggested that this proposal would conform in principle to all of the specific policy requirements outlined above and would provide a very useful accommodation facility to complement the present use of the building, in a very convenient and picturesque setting close to the city centre. On this basis the proposal can be supported.

Recommendation

That subject to the receipt of satisfactory amended plans, Planning Permission **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard Full Permission
2. Amended Plans
3. Development in accordance with approved plans
4. Samples of stone and slate to be agreed
5. Details of the stonework coursing, painting, heads, sills, jambs, quoins, retaining wall and copings to be agreed.
6. Details of the roof eaves, verges, ridges, flashings and rainwater goods to be agreed.
7. Details of the windows and doors including external reveals and finishes to be agreed.
8. Full details of all works to the interior and exterior of the Listed Building including a written schedule of works to be agreed.
9. Archaeological record of the existing building to be agreed.
10. Details of cycle parking to be agreed.
11. Detailed method statement for all works in proximity of trees to be agreed
12. Protective barrier fencing to be provided
13. No site fires
14. No cement wash out areas within 15 m of trees
15. Details of landscaping, including replanting schedule, to be agreed
16. Unexpected contamination to be reported, investigated and remediated.

Human Rights Act

This recommendation has been reached after consideration of the provisions of The Human Rights Act. Unless otherwise stated in this report, the issues arising do not appear to be of such magnitude to override the responsibility of the City Council to regulate land use for the benefit of the community as a whole, in accordance with national law.

Background Papers

1. None