

RECOMMENDATION FOR PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MINDED TO APPROVE

DATE: 5 March 2009

REF: JM/CMS

CHECKED BY:

APPLICATION NO: 3/2008/0548/P

(GRID REF: SD 364554 429938)

PROPOSED EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO CREATE 38 ADDITIONAL BEDROOMS, HEALTH SPA/LEISURE FACILITIES, NEW BRASSERIE, REVISED ACCESS, PARKING AREA, ANCILLARY BUILDING AND LANDSCAPING AT STANLEY HOUSE, FURTHER LANE, MELLOR

PARISH COUNCIL:

Raise no objection to this application. Members were mindful of the size of the significant development and trusted that planners will take into full account amongst other issues, the increase in vehicle usage on an already difficult road junction, concerns for neighbouring properties, listed building regulation observance and a compliance of the finally submitted scheme.

ENGLISH HERITAGE:

Summary

Stanley House is a Grade II* listed building and represents a significant element of Mellor's local historic environment. A long background of working closely with English Heritage during the initial renovation of the listed building precedes this application. More recently having identified a business need for additional hotel build, the owners have engaged once more with English Heritage to find an acceptable solution to the site. This has now culminated in the submission of the proposal.

Over the course of pre-application discussion with English Heritage, the scheme proposed for Stanley House has evolved to one that meets the ongoing and future business needs of the hotel whilst minimising any detrimental effect on the historic building and its setting.

Whilst it is understood that further development on the site is necessarily in line with current local policy, it has been demonstrated that the site in its current form is not viable. One phase of major refurbishment has already been undertaken in order to allow the reuse of the listed building in a hotel context.

This was sympathetically carried out, however a further phase for alterations for change of use could be potentially damaging to the surviving integrity of this structure. The listed building can therefore best be protected by ensuring, as far as practical, the viable future of its current business use. This scheme aims to provide that.

Recommendation

English Heritage is able to add its support to the proposed scheme on the ground that the proposed development will secure the continuation of the viable and sympathetic re-use of Stanley House.

Following the approval of LBC they raise concern that if permission is not granted to allow the extensions and funds were not available for future maintenance the building could deteriorate to the detriment of the Grade II* building. They conclude that the scheme is a solution to a business problem but would also be an effective and lasting solution to a potential historic building problem.

ADJACENT LPA

Blackburn with Darwen BC ask the proposal to be considered against local and national guidelines and assess the impact on the Green belt and the Listed Building. Hoped that there would no loss of mature trees. Proposal is not likely to have an impact on the aspirations of BwD and therefore no objections.

LCC COUNTY PLANNING STRATEGIC COMMENTS

Consider that the proposed development is contrary to guidance in PPG2 and strategic planning policy. ??? it should be noted that at the time of initial consultation the Structure Plan was the relevant document but this has now been superseded by the Regional Spatial Strategy. The strategic comments refer to the relevant plan at the time of this consultation which would have been Policy 5 of the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan. Consider that the development is located in the Green Belt and would represent a significant increase in floor space compared to existing development. Within PPG 2 there is a general presumption against inappropriate development within Green Belt and developments should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Under para 3.4 of PPG2 the construction of new buildings inside the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it is for essential facilities or for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt which do not compete with the purposes of including land within it.

Consider that the development would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt which would result in loss of openness contrary to the National Green Belt Policy.

LCC PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

Transport – A contribution for sustainable transport measures would be appropriate if the District Council are minded to approve this application. Comments received in the County Council that money should be used to update bus stops on the A67 to quality bus standards to include new bus shelters, raised footways to assist boarding and alighting. Also monies could extend the footway at the junction of the A67 and further lane to the entrance of Stanley House.

LCC COUNTY ECOLOGY

No objections but recommended that the Council should seek ecological advice in reviewing any information provided by the applicants before determining the application.

In determining this application the requirements of the North West Regional Planning Guidance, Regional Spatial Strategy Policy ER5 need to be considered in conjunction with relevant legislation. Ecological concerns of the development include possible impact on bats, great crested newts and nesting birds. Recommend that the development be required to make further ecological assessment to determine the potential impact and to provide details of mitigation conversation measures if damage impact is likely.

In the summary, prior to the determination of the application, any trees proposed for felling must be assessed for bat roosting and a survey for greater crested newts must be undertaken. If subsequently the Council are minded to grant permission then a condition should be attached to mitigate/compensate for the potential loss of bat roosts. Also a condition to protect breeding birds and to require submission of a habitat creation and management plan.

**LANCASHIRE COUNTY
COUNCIL (HIGHWAYS):**

No objections in principle to this Application on highways safety grounds.

As a result of previous Applications at this site highway improvements have been introduced at the junction of Further Lane and A677 Preston Road, and improvements made to the Stanley House access from Further Lane. These works are now complete and provide a safe means of access to the development site from the adopted highway network.

The Transport Statement, May 2008 indicates a level of additional traffic generated by the increased hotel and associated facilities that is comfortably within the design capacity of the improved junction facilities at Further Lane and A677 Preston Road.

The parking provisions shown are also consistent with the adopted Lancashire County Council standards, including suitable provisions for visitors and staff with impaired mobility.

I would anticipate requests for Section 106 funds in relation to the provision of additional or improved public transport facilities.

The Transport Statement makes reference to a "Travel Plan" in Section 5 and includes several elements that will be of benefit in encouraging modal shift. However, notwithstanding the submitted details, within three months of the date of a decision notice, a travel plan with measurable objectives, which are capable of being monitored, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority.

LCC ARCHAEOLOGICAL

No observations necessary.

4 NORTH WEST

Not regionally significant so no comments. Advise that greenbelts should be considered at a local level.

**STATUTORY
ADVERTISEMENT/ADDITIONAL
REPRESENTATIONS:**

No representations.

Proposal

This proposal seeks planning permission for a range of extensions and alterations to the existing building located within the grounds of Stanley House. The proposal involves significant new build as well as landscaping and an alteration to the existing access. The proposed access would be re-routed further to the west to create a track for the development of a new building away from Stanley House.

The proposal also incorporates the erection of a bedroom wing to the east and south of Stanley House which would create a walled garden fronting the house. There are various links between the various buildings which utilize glass as the main material for construction and offering either a flat roof or shallow pitch roof so as to be subservient to the main complex.

The proposal incorporates various elements of single and two storey buildings which are detached from the main buildings.

Stanley House itself is retained as a bedroom accommodation with the lower ground floors being used as a reception area. Externally there are no changes to the historic fabric of the building.

In relation to the existing barns, these retain their current use with some minor alterations including entrance porches.

The main hotel entrance would be altered with the creation of a two-storey entrance building on the south east corner of the barn. This extends across the current access road and as such the access will be realigned over the existing car park. The building would accommodate a new entrance foyer, reception and associated seating areas. It also incorporates a first floor balcony.

The buildings within the site will have various links to both Stanley House and to the new courtyard wing. The link between the new entrance and Stanley House is formed along the gable walls of the barns and utilizes the existing single storey building known as The Lodge. From the new entrance to The Lodge the link takes form of a conservatory built in the position of the existing arched window to the barn.

From The Lodge to Stanley House the link is designed as a lean-to against the gable of the barn continuing against the new brick wall which will reflect the original wall of the walled garden.

The link between the Courtyard wing and Stanley House is again formed as a new wall representing the original wall of the garden. There is a glazed section on the northern side of this link.

One of the main elements of new build is the courtyard wing which is a two storey and part single storey building proposed to the south and east of Stanley House which would in essence create a walled garden fronting the house itself. The west elevation reflects the principle of the original wall of the walled garden with modern fenestration to the east of the building. The proposal is for 21 bedrooms. The courtyard wing is an 'L' shaped design and would be constructed in a modern approach with large overhanging eaves, a mixture of walling materials incorporating timber glazing and stone. It measures approximately 17m x 5m with a gable extension and maximum height of 10m.

A further new build element is the woodland garden wing which is proposed to the west of Stanley House. It is located approximately 6m away and linked with glazed structures. The building is one and a half storey high with bedrooms in the roof space incorporate flat roofed dormer windows to the north. it measures approximately 15m x 5m with two projecting wings of approximately 7m. It has a maximum height of approximately 9.5m.

The proposal is for 21 bedrooms and this building is also utilized of a range of materials incorporating significant glazing areas, natural stone, brickwork and timber weather boarding.

The proposal also includes a spa and leisure building within the site. The leisure building includes spa treatment facilities, swimming pool and gymnasium. The building has been designed with a number of smaller scale buildings arranged in a traditional format linked by flat roof buildings in certain instances. The centre block of the building measures approximately 12m x 12m with various projecting additional buildings. The maximum height is approximately 9m.

The main spa building is a two-storey building and has a relatively simple elevation with little glazing. The swimming pool is at the westerly side of the development and is of single storey construction with extensive glazing to most elevations. It is to be constructed of slate roof.

The gymnasium building is of two storey construction but is generally enclosed by the swimming pool building. As such there are no windows in this building but it relies on continuous roof glazing to provide top light to the roofs.

The proposal also incorporates a new brassiere building which has a twin pitched roof and is of a two-storey building attached to the existing barn and also linked to the gymnasium building via a flat roof link. It is to be constructed of a blue slate roof again with a mixture of brick and timber weather boarding and has been designed with two individual gables which are significantly glazed.

In order to accommodate the additional accommodation and leisure facilities there is to be a new service yard to the west of the existing kitchen entrance. This is to be closed by a 3m high wall. Within the yard is a new service building to include facilities such as staff canteen and storage facilities. The building is of a single storey with a twin pitched roof and is constructed of blue slate and natural stone. The internal access road is to be altered so as to wrap around the new elements of the building. The road starts at the junction of the access road and historic access track and diverts to the west before extending around the southern end of the existing car parks. There would be a tree line drive to the new entrance building with views of Stanley House.

The proposal also provides for additional car parking around the complex. The main section of the existing car parks will continue to serve the function and conference uses of the barn.

Motor and cycle parking provision is provided at the site with 26 cycle parking stands and 13 motorcycle spaces. There will be parking areas for coaches and mini buses on the site.

The proposal also details a landscape strategy as part of this application. The scheme incorporates additional tree planting copses on each side of the access road and the existing stock fencing will be removed from the edge of the driveway and replaced with a steel hurdle fencing or stone walling.

On the approach to the main hotel and to the adjacent junction of the access road the existing copse of trees will be reinforced with additional planting. The proposal is also for additional planting round a proposed access way. Internally there is a herb garden which will be created off the west side of Stanley House.

Site Location

Stanley House is a grade II* listed building located off the A677 and situated within the greenbelt. It occupies an elevated position on the outskirts of Mellor. It is accessed from Further Lane.

Relevant History

3/2002/0492/P – Alterations and extensions to existing building to form restaurant, functions rooms and bedrooms. Approved,

3/2002/0493/P – Alterations and extensions to existing building to form restaurant, functions rooms and bedrooms. (Listed Building Consent) Approved,

3/2005/0889/P – Alterations to external lighting. Approved

3/2007/1022/P – two garden shelters. Approved.

3/2008/0547/LBC – Extensions and alterations to create 38 bedrooms, health and spa facility, new brassiere, resized access/parking areas, ancillary building and landscaping. Approved

Relevant Policies

Planning Policy Guidance 15 "Planning and the Historic Environment"
Regional Spatial Strategy Policy DP3 Promote Sustainable Economic Development
Regional Spatial Strategy Policy RDF2 Rural Areas
Regional Spatial Strategy Policy RDF2 Green Belts
Regional Spatial Strategy, Policy EM1(C) Historic Environment
Regional Spatial Strategy Policy W6 Tourism and the Visitor Economy
Regional Spatial Strategy Policy W7 Principles for Tourism Development
Policy G1 - Development Control.
Policy ENV19 - Listed Buildings.
Policy ENV20 - Proposals Involving Partial Demolition of Listed Buildings.
PPG2 Greenbelts
PPG4 Industrial Commercial Developments and Small Firms
PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Development-consultation document
PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment

Environmental, AONB, Human Rights and Other Issues

It is important to emphasise that this application can be determined on its own merits and separate from the listed building application 3/2008/0547 which was approved by Planning and Development Committee in October 2008. The main considerations in dealing with this application relates to the impact on the Green Belt, highway implications of the proposals, effect on the listed building and general visual impact, landscaping and ecology issues and any residential amenity issues. In assessing all these factors it is also correct to have regard to any positive regeneration issues and benefits the development may have to the tourism and local economy.

Listed building implications

It is evident that given the fact that Listed Building Consent has been issued that it has been concluded that there is no significant impact to the Listed building and its setting.

The proposal has been the subject of extensive pre-application discussion with both English Heritage and the Council and the resultant scheme reflects the advice of both parties.

It is evident that given the amount of alterations proposed, the development would have a visual impact on the setting of a listed building and its grounds as well as a direct impact on the listed building due to various link buildings. The proposal involves a total floorspace of approximately 7500m² which includes a new bedroom block, spa, and health complex and new brassiere located throughout the site. These buildings are often separate from the main Stanley House, they are seen within the overall landscape context and in many incidences there are link buildings to the main building.

I recognise that development is significant. However the design of the building and the use of appropriate materials has resulted in a scheme that compliments the new building without competing with it. The alterations and extensions are sited in locations to allow relatively uninterrupted views of Stanley House and also utilise the land levels to maximise the size of the development and minimise the visual impact.

A case has been put forward that there may be a danger that if approval was not granted the building could over the passage of time deteriorate to the detriment of the building and the local environment, I am aware of this scenario but do not consider this point alone to be sufficient to allow development that may not normally be granted.

However, in relation to the impact on the listed building I am satisfied that the proposal does not adversely affect the character of the listed building.

Visual impact

I am of the opinion that the proposal has been designed to minimise both the impact the development would have on the listed building and the local environment. As already indicated the alterations and extensions are sited in areas that have limited views and a topography that helps screen the bulk of the buildings.

Residential amenity

In terms of residential amenity there are no properties in the near vicinity and as such there is no direct impact resulting from overlooking issues. Due to the likely increase in vehicular movements there may be some additional disturbance caused by traffic generation but I do not consider this would cause any significant harm.

Highway matters

It is evident from the consultation response of the County Surveyor that he is satisfied that subject to appropriate conditions that the development would not lead to any harm on highway safety.

Green Belt Issues

It is evident from the development that the proposal does involve a significant increase in Floorspace and as the site is within the Green Belt careful regard must be given to its impact and whether or not there are exceptional circumstances to justify the scheme. It is clear from the strategic comment from County Planning that they consider there is no such case and consider that the development is inappropriate and would result in the loss of openness and be contrary to national advice and in particular PPG2.

I accept that the scheme will impinge on the openness of the Green Belt but a balance needs to be made against other material considerations which in this instance I consider make the scheme acceptable.

Other material considerations

The applicant in a supporting statement believes that special justification exists as an exception to Green belt policy by virtue of the Listed Building issues and the regional tourism and economic development objectives that would be met from the development.

The importance in relation to the Listed building element has been endorsed by English Heritage and this could be seen as permitting an exception to normal Green belt policy. In many respects this argument of enabling should have been made during the initial development on the basis of restoring Stanley House rather than now arguing that the new proposal would allow the future maintenance of the building.

In assessing the economic objectives and the safeguarding of rural employment these are important issues that could be seen as factors that may allow the development to be seen as an exception. The applicant has indicated that currently the enterprise employs 40 permanent staff with 40 temporary staff occasionally used and that this scheme would add an additional 60 permanent staff with a possible 50 temporary staff.

I am of the opinion that approval of such a scheme would introduce a tourism facility that would be of a high quality and potentially be of a regional significance. This view is endorsed by Lancashire and Blackpool tourist board.

Conclusion

I note the strategic comments of Lancashire County Council regard the importance of the Green Belt however this needs to be balanced with other objectives. It is clear that the Forward Planning Manager considers there are overriding issues which have been referred to in the report. I am satisfied that this is the case and no doubt when the application is advertised as a departure both issues will be examined by GONW.

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR APPROVAL

The proposal has no significant detrimental impact on nearby residential amenity nor would it have an adverse visual impact.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Director of Development be minded to Approve the proposal subject to formal advertisement as a departure and referral to the Government Office North

West in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Greenbelt) Direction 2005 and subject to the following condition(s):

1. Precise specifications or samples of walling and roofing materials and details of any surface materials to be used including their colour and texture shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before their use in the proposed works.

REASON: In order that the Local Planning Authority may ensure that the materials to be used are appropriate to the locality in accordance with Policies G1 and ENV19 of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until details of the landscaping of the site, including wherever possible the retention of existing trees, have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall indicate, as appropriate, the types and numbers of trees and shrubs, their distribution on site, those areas to be seeded, turfed, paved or hard landscaped, including details of any changes of level or landform and the types and details of all fencing and screening.

The approved landscaping scheme shall be implemented in the first planting season following occupation or use of the development, whether in whole or part and shall be maintained thereafter for a period of not less than 5 years to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. This maintenance shall include the replacement of any tree or shrub which is removed, or dies, or is seriously damaged, or becomes seriously diseased, by a species of similar size to those originally planted.

REASON: In the interests of the amenity of the area and to comply with Policy G1 of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan.

3. Prior to commencement of development a scheme shall be submitted incorporating details of off site highway improvements to facilitate sustainable transport measures. This shall include details of any relevant financial contributions.

REASON: In the interest of highway safety and to encourage sustainable travel.

4. Notwithstanding the submitted Travel Plan a further travel plan which incorporates measurable objectives which are capable of being monitored shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the highway authority. This shall be submitted within 3 months of the date of the decision notice.

REASON: In the interest of highway safety and to encourage sustainable travel.