

Application No: 12/1361M

Location: Festival Hall, TALBOT ROAD, ALDERLEY EDGE, SK9 7HR

Proposal: Alterations & Extensions To Create Medical Practice (D1 Use) And Ancillary Facilities And New Entrance To The Hall

Applicant: Dr S Merchant

Expiry Date: 10-Jul-2012

DATE REPORT PREPARED

6TH August 2012

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION – Approve subject to conditions and a legal agreement

MAIN ISSUES

- The detailed design of the proposal – impact of height, mass, bulk, character and appearance of the area
- Justification for the partial loss of the Locally Listed Building in policy terms
- Impact on residential amenity
- Impact upon parking congestion and highway safety in locality
- Green Travel Planning
- Heads of Terms for a Legal Agreement pertaining to the Travel Plan

REASON FOR REPORT

The proposal has been referred to the Northern Planning Committee at the discretion of the Development Management and Building Control Manager under the terms of the Council's constitution.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The Festival Hall is a Locally Listed Building. The Hall was built in 1927 having been designed by Manchester Architects, Halliday and Agate for the Alderley Edge Music Festival.

The building has long served as the home to the music festival and various other community uses. The significance of the building, whilst having some limited architectural interest, lies

largely in the historical associations with the Music Festival and its long standing community function within Alderley Edge. The proposed development will result in the loss of the frontage of the Festival Hall, including the entrance foyer, existing toilet areas and upstairs offices whilst maintaining the majority of the hall behind a new building attached to the front.

The building sits at the end of Talbot Road and Stamford Road and is immediately adjoined by allotment gardens to the north, residential properties to the south and eastern boundaries. The general character of the wider area varies in nature from detached houses to semi detached villas and terraced properties, mainly in residential use. St Pius Catholic Church with car parking is opposite on Stamford Road. With the exception of the 'Talbots', a detached dwelling immediately to the south of the site, this corner of the Stamford Road/Talbot Road area is in use for community based purposes.

The Festival Hall presently contains a long term pay and display car park which can accommodate circa 50 vehicles for a maximum of 10 hours, with no overnight parking. This is presently operated under a 25 year lease by the Borough Council. The lease would need to be revoked to enable this proposal to be implemented. Alderley Edge Parish Council are the freehold owner of the Festival Hall site. The Parish Council issues a number of complimentary parking permits for use on the car park. There is a one way traffic system in operation with separate access and egress on to Talbot Road.

On street parking control measures are in operation upon the streets surrounding the site. Demarcated on street parking bays allow for pay and display parking.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

It is proposed to erect an extension to the frontage of the Festival Hall, following the partial demolition of the existing frontage of the Hall, the areas to be demolished comprise the foyer, w.c's and offices within the Hall. The extension will comprise ground and 2 upper stories comprising a medical centre with 19 consultation / treatment rooms for use by the Alderley Edge Medical Practise and additional medical specialism's such as physio and a skin lesion clinic. The Practise is also a teaching practise and provision is also made for trainee doctors within the scheme. The proposal also incorporates an ancillary pharmacy on the ground floor, back of house offices/ district nurses accommodation, patient lift, minor surgery rooms and ancillary facilities. The proposal incorporates an enlarged car park, which extends further into the rear, a one way system and relocated access adjoining the boundary of the site with the allotments.

The front extension for the medical centre will extend to the back of the pavement on Talbot Rd (floor area circa 28m width x 14m depth). The ground floor entrance portico columns will be sited on the pavement. The scheme has been amended , during the course of the applciation.

The amended scheme incorporates a part flat roof design and is 10m high at its closest point to the neighbouring residential property at the Talbots. The roof is centralised and has a central portico type feature which is inspired by a similar feature in the existing roof.

The opening hours of the GP practice are between 0800 to 1830

Mon to Fri with patient consultation times generally from 0815 to 1200 and 1430 to 1830 Mon to Fri. An ancillary pharmacy is also proposed which would be open at the same times as the medical practise. The pharmacy operator will be relocating from the village centre.

The facility will employ approx 40 full and part time members of staff, an increase in 5 staff members from the current George Street facility. The physiotherapy service to be located on the second floor is an NHS service. The physiotherapists are not employed by the practice, but they are currently delivering an NHS service to patients at other premises in the area. They are looking to re-locate to the proposed medical centre. The service is a full time service and will employ their own staff at the site who will not be part of the Alderley Edge Medical Practise. A skin lesion clinic will also utilise part of the second floor for consultations and minor surgery with associated waiting room and reception.

The proposal also incorporates a separate access point for the Festival Hall. This is a discreet extension to the side elevation, facing the allotments and will require the removal of a telecoms mast presently in situ. The entrance will replace the existing front entrance, which will be lost to the formation of the Medical Practise and will comprise ancillary facilities (toilets and entrance foyer) for the sole use of the Festival Hall.

The scheme has been amended since original submission and more information has been provided in the form of a rigorous Heritage Assessment, from a suitably qualified expert, of the heritage asset to be lost by the development have been received. A Business Case for the proposal and a Travel Plan have also been received. This scheme now proposes a reduced second storey element and the use of brick facing materials to match the existing building as opposed to the use of render.

RELEVANT HISTORY

97/0991P 15m Telecommunications tower, equipment cabin, antennae and dish - Prior Approval Not Required 02 July 1997

POLICIES

DP1- Spatial Principles, promoting sustainable development
DP2- Promote Sustainable Communities
DP4 (Make the Best Use of Existing Resources & Infrastructure)
DP5 (Manage Travel Demand, Reduce the Need to Travel & Increase Accessibility)
DP7 (Promote Environmental Quality)
DP9 (Reduce Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change)
RT2 (Managing Travel Demand)
L1 (Health, Sport and Community Provision)
EM18 – Decentralised Energy Supply

Macclesfield Borough Local Plan (2004)

BE1- Design Guidance
BE20 Locally Listed Buildings
H13- Protecting Residential Areas
T3 Pedestrians;
T4 Access for people with restricted mobility;

DC1 – New Build
DC3 – Amenity
DC6 – Circulation and Access
DC8 – Landscaping
DC36- Road Layouts and Circulation
DC37- Landscaping
DC38- Space Light and Privacy

Of the remaining saved Structure Plan policies, only policy T7: Parking is of relevance.

Cheshire Replacement Waste Local Plan (Adopted 2007)

Policy 11 (Development and waste recycling)

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

Supplementary Planning Document Local List Of Historic Buildings – adopted Oct 2010

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Strategic Highways Manager: No objection is raised to the proposals subject to the provision of a Green Travel Plan and its subsequent monitoring. The current use of the site is a long stay pay and display car park and this use will cease should this development be implemented, whilst the loss of the car is likely to increase demand for car parking in other locations the surrounding roads are all already controlled through parking restrictions and also there are other locations available for limited stay parking. As the GP practice is relocating to the proposed site some on street parking will become available at the previous location around George Street.

There would likely be a maximum of 31 staff at the medical facility at any one time and although there are 14 GP consulting rooms at ground and first floors(not all of these rooms will be used at once and therefore the number of patients will be reduced). The Transport statement considers there to be 31 staff members to be present on all floors when up to 40 visitors are present , given the available car parking on the site and the dual use nature of the site, the travel plan to be agreed when the development is occupied.

Environmental Health: No objection subject to condition regarding hours of construction/demolition work.

VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL

Alderley Edge Parish Council: Are the freeholders of the site and wish to make no comment upon the application

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Approximately 497 copies of the same generic letter have been submitted. This letter supports the proposal as originally submitted and was provided by the Surgery for signature of patients of the surgery. The letter states that the proposal will improve access and facilities/

range of services for patients including the provision of a lift and access suitable for wheelchair users and provide a modern, easily accessible pharmacy. Signatories of the letter in the main have addresses in Alderley Edge and Wilmslow although other addresses have been quoted. They also consider that the current facilities in George Street will not be able to meet the needs of the local population.

A total of 14 individually written letters/emails of support have been received. The general tone is the support for medical provision within the village.

The Edge Association support the proposal. They consider that the proposal will safeguard the future viability of the Festival Hall as a community facility whilst also providing a medical facility for the community within the village. They acknowledge the concerns that have been expressed about the scheme as originally submitted and would agree that the Committee should carefully weigh the issues up when reaching a view.

The Chairman of the Edge Association has written in support in a personal capacity. This letter considers that the impetus for the Festival Hall being put forward by the Edge Association for local listing was to safeguard the asset as a community asset, rather than as a building of exceptional architectural or historic merit. Also considers there to be little hope of the surgery finding any other site in the village and the revenue stream from the surgery rent to the Parish Council will provide the financial security to safeguard the future use of the Festival Hall as a community facility.

A total of 50 letters/emails of objection have been received. In general terms most respondents do not object, in principle, to the creation of additional medical facilities for the community on the site. However, they raise objection and concern about matters of detail pertaining to this proposal.

These are précised as being;

- the loss of the historic frontage/foyer to the Festival Hall (locally listed building)
- the medical practise should utilise the rear part of the site rather than the front
- design , scale , height and dominance of the front extension for the medical practise
- inappropriate use of materials
- impact upon residential neighbour at Talbot Cottage
- Non conformity to a building line on Trafford Road
- noise and disturbance
- traffic generation
- concern about parking congestion on the site and on the Adjoining Road
- increased commercialisation of the area
- concern about the use of the 2nd floor as commercial offices and the additional car parking it would generate
- Impact on trees to the rear of the site
- Entrance of the revamped Festival Hall to the less obvious side elevation, relegating the important public entrance to the less well lit side elevation. Some people question the future viability of the Hall on this basis
- The submission should incorporate plans for the future use of the Hall

In addition to these comments raised, additional comments have been received that are concerned with land adjacent to the site outside the red edge of this application, including the future intentions for the neighbouring allotments.

In respect of the neighbour re –consultation upon the revised proposals and further information provided, the following comments have been received :-

Six letters/emails of support for the revised proposal from members of the public. These generally consider there to be a need for better medical facilities in the Village. One of these letters considers the revisions have sought to address the community concerns and that the proposal will safeguard the future of the Festival Hall whilst providing for medical needs in the community.

Seven emails of support have been received from employees and doctors of the existing George Street premises. They consider the existing premises to be outdated and not up to modern standard and do not comply with DDA standards.

Ten letters/emails of objection to the revised scheme have been received which in the main, retain the same concerns as expressed originally;

- Too many consultation rooms and the rooms are too spacious
- Front extension is too big for site and the area
- Relocated Festival Hall entrance to side elevation will make the Hall a less desirable place to visit – and thus impact on Hall's viability as a community facility
- Pharmacy will be a retail facility in a residential area,
- Noise and disturbance and traffic generation as a result of the pharmacy when surgery not in use
- Highway safety concerns on existing road network will be exacerbated by additional traffic drawn to the Doctors surgery use.
- Increase in parking and loss of public car parking space as a result of the loss of the long stay car park at the site
- The submitted travel plan does not address existing or potential problems posed by traffic.
- None of the four uses of the second floor of the proposed building are justified by the Business Case. The top floor remains an essentially commercial proposal – not an integral part of the medical services needed for the population of Alderley Edge.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The following documents have been submitted in support of the application:

- Design and Access Statement
- Planning Statement
- Transport Statement
- Heritage Statement including Heritage Assessment of the Asset and proposal
- Business Case for the Surgery expansion
- Statement of Community Involvement

All of these documents are available in full on the planning file on the Council's website.

It is the Applicants essential case that -

The Festival Hall was purpose designed for the festival and was plain in character apart from the entrance facade which has been substantially altered. Originally the front elevation had a glazed canopy and at ridge level was a tall louvred vent with a pyramid roof. The loss of these features has affected its aesthetic character.

The proposal will be in a highly sustainable location close to a larger residential catchment than the current premises.

The practice will be open for patient consultation from 0800 – 1830 Mon Fri. Limited sessions may occur on Saturdays (seasonal flu clinic or stopping smoking groups) Site access is as the existing arrangement with a one-way system in operation around the building, the number of parking spaces is 43 including 3 disabled spaces. Access to the car park will be controlled to only allow patients to enter and other authorised vehicles.

There are 7700 patients on the practice list (March 2012). The age breakdown shows a high percentage of elderly people in-patient demographics. There is no proposal to expand the numbers of patients.

The on street parking in George Street/ South/West Street freed up by the vacation of the premises on George Street will be available for use to people visiting the village centre thus there will be a neutral impact to general parking facilities in the wider area.

The project also incorporates improved access for patients/staff who may be wheelchair bound and diversifying the range of services in house that can be offered to them, in accordance with current Governmental health directives. Access will be level and a lift will enable patients to access all floors.

The pharmacy will be ancillary to the function of a modern medical facility and will incorporate a consultation room patients to advise patients privately .

The existing public car park will cease operations. A Green Travel Plan for staff and visitors will encourage non-car borne travel, this will be a evolving document

The site is in a more sustainable part of the local catchment area to encourage patients to walk to the site, as opposed to the existing George Street premises.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Section 38 of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004 requires a plan led approach to decision making in that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this case the development plan consists of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West, the Cheshire Replacement Waste Local Plan and the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan.

Principle of Development

The National Planning Policy Framework requires consistency between Local Plan and those policies within the framework. Where Local Plan Policies are consistent with the Framework greater weight can be given to that Policy within the Local Plan.

In general terms within the NPPF there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF seeks to achieve sustainable forms of development in its Core Principles through, inter alia, proactively driving and supporting economic development to deliver homes, jobs, conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, seeking good design and a good standard of amenity, and also recognising the intrinsic beauty and character of the countryside and creating healthy communities

Paragraph 56 of the NPPF concerns the requirement for good design and its importance to achieving sustainable development. Paragraph 58 states that 'Policies and decisions should aim to achieve a number of design objectives: function and adding to quality of the area, establish a strong sense of place, optimise the site's potential, respond to local character/history, create safe and accessible environments, visually attractive through good architecture and landscaping'...

Paragraph 65 states that permission should not be refused for developments which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape and Paragraph 66 requires developers to work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs which take account of the views of the community.

The proposal would facilitate the expansion of the existing Village Doctors Surgery into a modern purpose built health care centre on a site that has a long established community focus. In land use terms therefore, the uses are compatible with the site and are within an accessible and sustainable location. With regard to the intensification of the use, it must be borne in mind that the present Non Residential Institutional use of the Festival Hall (Class D1) is low key use but one that could significantly intensify without requiring planning permission and the proposal would bring wider community benefits in the form of a modern up to date purpose built medical facility with ancillary pharmacy and would help to reduce present inequalities in health care service provision in this area which is an agenda promoted by RSS policy DP2.

Loss of Part of the Heritage Asset – Consideration and Justification

The Festival Hall is identified within the Council's SPG as a Locally Important Building which describes the building as;

'The Regal' as the building was originally known was constructed in 1928 for the Alderley Edge Musical Festival. Later, Festival Hall became the Regal Cinema and Dance Hall in 1938.

Policy BE20 of the Local Plan seeks to preserve Locally Important Buildings which are valuable due to their contribution of the local scene or their historical associations. The policy states that developments which would adversely effect architectural or historic character will only be allowed if the Borough Council is satisfied that the buildings is beyond reasonable repair.

The Locally Listed Buildings SPD makes it clear that Cheshire East Council is committed to protecting local heritage and as such will always favour the retention of a locally listed building where practicable. It states that redevelopment proposals for buildings on the Local List should consider how such buildings can be incorporated into the development rather than demolished. The SPD states that planning permission will not normally be granted for alterations, extensions or development which adversely affects the architectural or historic character of the building or its setting.

The building has long served as the home to the music festival and various other community uses. The significance of the building, whilst having some architectural interest, is considered to lie largely in the historical associations and community function that it serves within Alderley Edge.

The proposed development will result in the loss of the frontage (art deco front incorporating the foyer and toilets) of Festival Hall. The proposal will retain the dance-hall part of the Festival Hall behind the frontage, for the purpose it was originally intended. In addition, the new entrance to the side elevation for the sole use of the Hall will facilitate a level site access to the dancehall and will enable all members of the community access to the community facility.

When considering applications that affect locally designated Heritage Assets, Policies 128 and 129 of the NPPF require an assessment of the significance of any heritage assets affected by a development, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be appropriate to the assets' importance and no more than sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. Local planning authorities should take this assessment into account when the potential impact of proposed development to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

A Heritage Assessment has been submitted in support of this application. The building is strategically located at the terminus of Stamford Road, is an interesting visual feature of the area, being surrounded by largely domestic properties, this building stands out as having a different function. The building terminates the vista down Stamford Road.

The building is H-shaped on plan, with the single storey hall forming the large central section. The frontage block serves as an entrance foyer and cloakrooms on the ground floor, with the former Council Chamber, clerk's office and kitchen above. Within the rear block are green rooms, offices and toilets. The area below the stage has been adapted as a bar, store rooms and kitchen.

It is constructed of brick laid in a stretcher bond with a slate roof. The roofs to the front and rear blocks are steeply pitched, the former being set behind a tall parapet. The frontage block has five bays, of which the central three project slightly forward with a recessed entrance having a pair of fluted painted stone columns and a projecting canopy. The side elevations to the hall and the rear block are plain in character and appearance.

The assessment of the cultural significance of the Hall Undertaken by the Applicant is accepted. The Architectural and Historic Value of the Building is considered to be directly linked to the affluent development of Alderley Edge.

The Assessment states

..'Alderley Edge developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as an affluent suburb for wealthy Manchester businessmen and their families, many of whom were active supporters of music and the arts. The Festival Hall was originally built as a venue for the successful annual music festival which was commenced in 1911. The festival was instigated by the textile manufacturer Philip Godley, who was an amateur musician, and enthusiastic promoter of concerts. The hall was funded by public subscriptions, and opened in 1928...'

In terms of the Aesthetic Value,

..' The building is located at the end of Stamford Road, and terminates the vista from Trafford Road. It was purpose designed for the festival and was plain in character apart from the entrance facade which has been substantially altered. Originally the front elevation had a glazed canopy and at ridge level was a tall louvred vent with a pyramid roof. The loss of these features has affected its aesthetic character. The replacement of the small paned windows, and the cement render facing to the parapet have also harmed its aesthetic value. The interior of the building has been changed...'

In terms of the value Communal Value,

...'The building has served as a social and cultural focus for the local community since its construction, and has particular value for its association with the annual music festival...'

This proposal will not adversely effect the Music Festival, the majority of the Hall is retained and the music festival will still have an available venue. The side access will be fully accessible and whilst it is no longer on the front of the building, the access is not remote and a high quality scheme of hard landscaping would add to the communal areas to make them more welcoming than the presently uneven and potholed public car park. The improvements in access for all the community is a benefit of the proposal.

With respect the Setting of the Building, the Heritage Assessment opines:

..' The present condition of the building and the poor character of the site detract from the character of the immediate area, which is partly within the Alderley Edge Conservation Area. Opportunities exist for enhancement of its immediate setting..'...

Its architectural value relates mainly to its location, terminating the vista along Stamford Road. The proposed development will also terminate the vista on Stamford Road. The aesthetic appearance of the front elevation has been compromised by the alterations that have been carried out, and the building is otherwise considered unremarkable architecturally.

The principal aspects of significance of the Festival Hall as a Heritage Asset are therefore its historical associations, its community focus, both of which are retained by this proposal and its setting.

The justification for the partial loss of the building rests on three factors:

- The limited level of significance of the Festival Hall itself
- The poor condition of the building itself and its accessibility problems (a steep flight of stairs leads from the foyer to the hall)
- The public benefits offered by the proposal for the delivery of health related items for the community and the retention of the community focus for the existing building in future

This is considered to be a robust assessment of the importance of the Non Designated Heritage Asset and forms a satisfactory justification for the loss of the frontage of the Festival Hall.

In the light of the above, the proposal is considered to comply with Local Plan policy BE20, and other material considerations in the form of the NPPF with respect to non designated Heritage Assets and Cheshire East Locally Listed Buildings SPD.

Design and Street Scene Impact upon Character and Appearance of the Area

Local Plan policies BE1, H13, DC1 and DC2 address matters of design and appearance. Policy BE1 states that the Council will promote high standards of design and new development should reflect local character, use appropriate materials and respect form, layout, siting, scale and design of surrounding buildings and their setting.

Policy DC1 states that the overall scale, density, height, mass and materials of new development must normally be sympathetic to the character of the local environment, street scene, adjoining buildings and the site itself.

Paragraph 56 of the NPPF concerns the requirement for good design and its importance to achieving sustainable development. Paragraph 58 goes on to state that decisions should aim to achieve a number of design objectives by adding to quality of the area, establish a strong sense of place, optimise the site's potential, respond to local character/history, create safe and accessible environments, visually attractive through good architecture and landscaping.

This proposal has been amended since it was originally submitted. The proposal effectively concerns two extensions for two different purposes. The single storey side facing extension which will form the new side entrance for the Festival Hall is a minor part of this proposal which is discreetly located on the side elevation overlooking the allotments. The extension will incorporate brick facings and will provide a level threshold. It is considered to be design neutral and to have no material impact upon the character and appearance of the locality.

The larger extension to the frontage of the Festival Hall however, is a significantly larger extension which will impact upon the character and appearance of this locality and be of greater significance and impact within the street scene than the current Festival Hall.

The current building has a spacious setting, albeit poorly maintained and of poor quality in terms of car park/ frontage surface treatment. The spaciousness of the site is a positive feature. Given the scale of the proposed extension, an element of the spacious setting will be lost as a result of the proposed new frontage, which extends the frontage of the Hall to the back of pavement by circa 8 m from its current position, the building will come forward of the neighbouring dwelling, which is sited circa 2m from the pavement. The width of the extension is 10 m greater than the current frontage, leaving approx 10m of site frontage not incorporating the building. The Applicant has amended the design to reduce the impact of the height and width of the extension, by creating a part flat roof to the second floor.

The existing Festival Hall building is the largest building in the area and forms a vista within the termination point in the street scene, when looking down Stamford Road towards Talbot Road. The open allotments to the immediate northern boundary are unaffected by this proposal. The allotments assist in the maintenance of a degree of spaciousness within the vista in the long view

Undoubtedly the streetscene will change, and the adjoining single dwelling will be of lesser domestic scale. However, this medical extension will help to create its own civic identity through its architectural style and elevation treatment. This new identity and increased prominence will, in part, be shared by the Festival Hall.

It is considered that given the spacious setting is being reduced by an increased footprint and height of building to the site frontage, that hard and soft landscaping will need to be substantial and be of high quality to compensate for the impact upon the spacious setting of the site. Likewise materials should be of very high quality. All these matters could be controlled by condition.

Highways and parking

Since this application was first submitted, the car parking layout has been amended to provide 43 car parking spaces, 3 allocated spaces for the sole use of drivers with disabilities. 6 of the spaces are tandem spaces for the use of long term parkers (staff – presumed to be the Doctors and medical professionals e.g. the physiotherapists/pharmacist of the medical premises).

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF states that decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport choices can be maximised.

It should be borne in mind that the existing medical premises in George Street contains no off street car parking spaces, so it is reasonable to assume that patients when visiting the current practice either walk, use public transport or park on a public car park in the village. This proposal, however, includes off street car parking for use of users and visitors of the site. This will be controlled via a barrier system to which patients will be given a daily code to exit

Whilst a general rule would set a parking requirement of 3 car parking spaces per consulting room, the NPPF does not set fixed car parking standards and advocates a flexible approach in seeking to encourage sustainable development. Issues such as, accessibility, type and mix of development, availability and flexibility of public transport and the need to reduce emissions are considered to be key issues.

It is considered that walking is the most important mode of travel at the local level and has the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly under 2km. The site is close to the public transport network, in a very sustainable location being close to the village centre and closer to a significant part of the residential area within the village than the existing medical practise in George Street. A part of any Green Travel Plan that is fit for purpose is to place the onus of the Operator to encourage visitors to utilise a choice of means of transport.

The Highways Engineer raises no objection to the proposal subject to Travel Plan initiatives being undertaken. He does, however, consider that the numbers of consulting rooms, treatment rooms and additional accommodation within the 2nd floor for other users such as the physiotherapist and skin lesion clinic should be limited to such users specifically unless and until work is done on the travel plan to critically assess this floor of medical accommodation. The Applicant is happy to accept a condition that would limit the use of the consulting rooms on the second floor to the skin lesion clinic and the physiotherapy service. The skin lesion clinic, it is understood, is currently only proposing to operate on Thursday afternoons initially and it is on this basis that the information within the application has been assessed.

Additionally, it must be recognised that given the aging nature of the population and the Medical Practise has a higher proportion of elderly patients than other groups within its catchment. Accordingly those in need of medical treatment may be less mobile than many in the community, and are therefore more likely to travel to the site by car either driving themselves or being driven to the site, there are up to 34 car parking spaces proposed for use by patients/ users of the Hall during the day.

The Applicant advises that the car park will, during the daytime, be primarily for the use of the Medical Practice and the low key users of the Festival Hall (they have very few daytime bookings). The intention is to have a one way flow system around the building with a barrier exit which will have a daily key code which will be given to patients and other users of the Hall by the receptionists at the Medical Practice to raise the barrier. The entrance will have a one way ramp/flap operation to ensure that the one way system is observed. This will prevent use of the car park by non bona fide visitors.

It should also be borne in mind that the Festival Hall as a public meeting place, is rarely utilised for activities that would generate significant traffic movements during the hours of operation of the medical centre. The medical user of the site will be open to patients from 8 am to 6.30pm on weekdays. These are times when the Festival Hall itself is rarely in use, however, it should be borne in mind that the improved accessibility to the Festival Hall would enable greater use should the Parish Council choose to offer its facilities out to the community in a more intensive way. A travel plan which is responsive to such changes in circumstance would assist in negating conflict in this regard.

The Transport Statement submitted in support of the application applies the car park standard for staff and visitors generated within every room and reaches the conclusion that not all treatment rooms/consultations rooms will be in use concurrently and that on average (based of TRICS database) there will be 24 staff members and 19 patients in situ at any one time throughout the consultation period and that 32% of visitors to the surgery will make their via non car methods

A framework travel plan has been submitted during the course of the application. A travel plan will incorporate green travel measures that should not be solely directed at staff but also at patients. All these measures are considered to be sustainability benefits which weigh in favour of the development.

Overall, the practises that are likely to be adopted as a direct consequence of this scheme are considered to be in accordance with the objectives of policies DC6 of the local plan.

Amenity

The siting of the 3 storey front extension is circa 2m closer to the side boundary with the adjoining dwelling and is a somewhat taller and deeper structure than the current Festival Hall frontage. The extension at this point has been amended to contain a flat roof to minimise the impact upon the neighbour. This enables the Applicant to retain the medical accommodation and expansion space on the 2nd floor whilst seeking to minimise the impact upon the neighbour.

The Talbots side elevation is screened by mature trees and foliage, however, the occupier of this dwelling will be able to see the scale of the extension from their property and oblique views will be apparent from rear facing windows from within the Talbots of the rear portion of the front extension. This will be most apparent during the winter months.

There are no principal room windows directly affected by the development. The proposed extension is sited 12m from the 2 storey end gable of the Talbots does not compromise the amenity/ outlook or privacy enjoyed by the residential occupier from within the dwelling.

Undoubtedly, the front/side extension will be very visible from within the garden/outside amenity space of the 'Talbots', and the outlook enjoyed will be diminished however, the garden is sizeable and given its north-east orientation, the daylight/sunlight enjoyed within this garden area would not be materially altered.

The rear and side facing windows within the medical extension can be conditioned to be obscurely glazed and non opening, other than for limited ventilation to safeguard the privacy and sense of being overlooked for the adjoining resident.

On balance, whilst there will be an impact upon the neighbouring residential property by virtue of the height and proximity of the extension, conditions can be imposed that will mitigate that impact. The resulting impact would not cause significant injury to the amenity enjoyed within the garden space of that dwelling. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policy DC3 of the Local plan.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

The proposal will help meet the changing Primary Health Care requirements to deliver more services to patients locally against a changing demographic where the population is aging and living longer. This is considered to be a significant community benefit. The proposal also allows the existing community based asset to bring itself into line with DDA legislation and to continue to provide medical care for the community in the future.

The site is in a highly sustainable location and is readily accessible by a choice of means of transport and the extensions have been significantly amended to reduce the scale of the front extension

The partial loss of the locally listed building is justified and whilst the development is sizeable, the impact upon the street scene is considered to be acceptable. Subject to conditions, the amenities of neighbours can be adequately safeguarded.

The provision of a Green Travel Planning will off-set the additional demands likely to be placed upon parking by virtue of the greater intensity of use.

The amended proposal complies with the adopted development plan and there are no other material consideration which would justify a departure from the Development Plan in this case.

The proposal also complies with guidance within the National Planning policy Framework by providing a sustainable form of development environmentally, socially and economically.

On the basis of the above information, a recommendation of conditional approval is made:

SUBJECT TO

HEADS OF TERMS

- Monitoring costs for the Travel (£5000 in total over 5 years in the form of £1000 per annum)

Levy (CIL) Regulations

In order to comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 it is now necessary for planning applications with legal agreements to consider the issue of whether the requirements within the S106 satisfy the following:

- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- (b) directly related to the development; and
- (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

The provision of a Travel Plan underpins the commitment to sustainable travel choices. The nature of the provision of medical services, particularly where the catchment is aging can lead to an over- reliance on car parking. This initiative will assist in reducing carbon emission by challenging behaviour through yearly monitoring by the Travel Plan Co-ordinator with a view to encouraging and supporting accessibility of the site to other modes of transport.

On this basis the provision of the Travel Plan is necessary, directly relates to the development and is fair and reasonable in relation to the scale and kind of development proposed

Application for Full Planning

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to a Section 106 Agreement and the following conditions

1. A03FP - Commencement of development (3 years)
2. A03EX_1 - Medical extension - materials to be submitted
3. A03EX - Materials to match existing Festival Hall entrance
4. A02LS - Submission of landscaping scheme (hard and soft)
5. A04AP - Development in accord with revised plans (numbered)
6. A04LS - Landscaping (implementation)
7. A03TR - Construction specification/method statement
8. A06GR - No windows to be inserted
9. A06LP - Front extension to be used for medical purposes only
10. A14GR - Business hours for medical user (excluding Sundays)
11. A22GR - Protection from noise during construction (hours of construction)
12. A23GR - Pile Driving
13. A25GR - Obscure glazing requirement (side and rear facing windows of medical uses adj to the Talbots)
14. Window fabrication, roof materials, door fabrication, portico details of front extension to be submitted prior to commencement
15. 2nd floor internal layout as submitted plans without further permission
16. refuse store for medical user - details inc elevation to be submitted and implemented prior to first use
17. details of any air conditioning units for medical centre to be submitted for medical user/pharmacy
18. details of car parking barrier to be submitted prior to medical use commencing
19. Pharmacy use only (permitted development rights removed within Class A1)
20. lighting scheme to be submitted
21. details of long term cycle storage for staff of medical extension part of development to be submitted
22. travel plan



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