

Application No: 15/3507M

Location: Mere Court Hotel And Conference Centre, WARRINGTON ROAD, MERE, WA16 0RW

Proposal: Listed building consent for additional proposed 24 no bedroom purpose built ancillary accommodation and internal remodeling of existing coach-house. Resubmission of application 14/3170M

Applicant: Ailantus Hotels

Expiry Date: 15-Oct-2015

Date Report Prepared: 18th November 2015

SUMMARY

Insufficient information has been submitted with the application to be able to assess the impact of the external and internal alterations to the Grade 2 curtilage Listed Coach House and Lodge buildings and also the reception area of the Grade 2 Listed Mere Court Hotel, which are all designated heritage assets. Furthermore, the increase in size of the window on the rear elevation of the Coach House is considered to have an unacceptable adverse impact on the historic and architectural integrity of this curtilage Grade 2 Listed building, causing harm to the significance of this heritage asset and the public benefits associated with the proposals would not outweigh this harm.

RECOMMENDATION- REFUSE

REASON FOR REPORT

The application is for Listed Building Consent for minor alterations to the curtilage Listed Lodge building to form 2no apartments and to the Coach House building to enhance the functional opportunities within the building linked to the hotel. Minor internal alterations to the Grade 2 Listed Mere Court hotel are also proposed. This application is associated with planning application reference 15/3506M, which is a small scale major application for the erection of additional hotel accommodation within the curtilage of the site in addition to the minor external works to the Lodge and Coach House buildings.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site measures 26,004.85 sq. m and comprises Mere Court Hotel and Conference Centre– a large Manor House originally called Meadowlands, built in 1907 in an

Arts and Crafts style with a detached Coach House and Lodge building, which are curtilage listed buildings, located to the entrance set within extensive grounds associated with this country house.

The site is accessed from Warrington Road in Mere and is surrounded by fields to the sides and rear. The hotel is a Grade II listed building and located within the designated Green Belt.

All trees on the site are covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This application is for Listed Building Consent for internal and minor external alterations to the curtilage Grade 2 Listed Coach House, curtilage Listed Lodge building and minor internal alterations to the reception area of the Grade 2 Listed Mere Court hotel.

The proposed works are as follows:

Mere Court Hotel

- Minor internal refurbishment of the reception area of the hotel

Lodge Building

- Conversion of existing building from 1no dwelling to 2no apartments comprising:
 - Ground floor door changed to window
 - Removal of 2no internal ground floor partitions
 - Alterations to lobby entrance door, addition of internal door to lobby
 - Window alteration to shower room
 - Installation of partition to 1st floor bathroom
 - Installation of partition to 1st floor lounge/ kitchen

Coach House

- Single storey kitchen extension
- Replacement and enlarged window to rear elevation
- Removal of partitions at ground and first floor
- Installation of partition at ground floor
- Small front entrance extension

Relevant Planning History

97/0139P Change of use from training college to hotel Appeal allowed 18-Feb-1998

97/1049P Change of use of training college to hotel, and erection of single-storey building with 16 bedrooms Approved 15-Oct-1998

97/1050P (1) Change of use of existing buildings (house, coach house & lodge) from use as training college to hotel, and (2) Erection of previously approved dormitory 'H' block for use for hotel purposes Refused 06-Oct-1997

99/0767P two-storey bedroom block (19 bedrooms) approved 10.6.1999

14/3170M

Listed Building Consent for proposed 2 Storey bedroom extension to existing grade II listed hotel premises. Internal remodelling of existing coach-house for function use associated with the hotel (within curtilage of listed building)

Withdrawn 27-Aug-2014

14/3121M

Proposed 2 Storey bedroom extension to existing hotel premises. Remodelling of existing coach-house for function use associated with the hotel.

Withdrawn 12-Oct-2014

NATIONAL & LOCAL POLICY

By virtue of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the application should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is repeated in the NPPF (para 2).

The Development Plan for Cheshire East currently comprises the saved policies from the Congleton Borough (January 2005), Crewe and Nantwich (February 2005) and Macclesfield Local Plans (January 2004).

National Policy/Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF states that

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. (para 6)

And, at the heart of the NPPF

...is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. (para 14)

For decision-taking this means

...approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay...and

where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- a) *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or*
- b) *specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.*

Sustainable development includes economic, social and environmental roles (para 7)

The section of the NPPF of particular relevance to the appraisal and determination of the application is:-

-Part 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

The NPPG came into force on 6th March 2014, replacing a range of National Planning Policy Guidance Notes and complimenting the NPPF.

Local Policy - Development Plan

Macclesfield Borough Local Plan – saved policies (MBLP)

Since publication of the NPPF the saved policies within the Macclesfield Borough Council Local Plan are still applicable but should be weighted according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The saved Local Plan policies considered to be most relevant are outlined below:

-BE18 (Listed Building Consent)

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy – Submission Version (CELP)

The following policies are considered relevant material considerations as indications of the emerging strategy: -

-IMP1 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development)

-SE7 (Historic environment)

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

None.

VIEWS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Mere Parish Council- No Objection.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

Tatton Park- Support of the application.

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

OFFICER APPRAISAL

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Principle of Development

The principle of the development is accepted, subject to the historical and architectural impact upon the heritage assets.

Design/ Impact on the Listed Buildings

The site comprises a Grade II listed building which is a designated heritage asset. Whilst the grounds to the property are not included within the list description, they make a positive contribution to the character of the listed building. The lodge building and coach house, built around the same time of the hotel, are listed by virtue of being sited within the curtilage of the Grade 2 Listed Building.

Para 131 of the NPPF emphasises the importance of preservation of the Heritage asset.

The following has to be assessed in this regard:

1. Harm to the historic fabric
2. Harm to the significance of the asset itself

Harm to Historic Fabric and the Significance of the Heritage Asset

The Conservation Officer raises objections to the proposed works. It is considered that the proposed replacement rear elevation window would have a harmful impact on the historic fabric and historical significance of the Coach House building. The public benefits associated with the proposals are not considered to outweigh this harm.

Furthermore, insufficient information has been submitted with the application to assess the impact of the development on the historic fabric and significance of the Mere Court Hotel as no proposed plans have been submitted. Furthermore, insufficient information has been submitted in the heritage statement in terms of the significance of the proposed loss of historic fabric to the Lodge building and the Coach House building, which are both curtilage Grade 2 Listed. These have been requested but at the time of writing this report have not been submitted.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The alterations to the buildings would ensure that their established viable uses would be retained and enhanced, which will secure the longevity of these heritage assets.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

The development will provide economic benefits in respect of a) employment during the construction phase, b) use of local services by employees during the construction phase and c) future incumbents of the apartments will contribute to the local economy as a result of using the services and facilities in the area.

PLANNING BALANCE, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

To conclude, insufficient information has been submitted with the application to be able to assess the impact of the external and internal alterations to the Grade 2 curtilage Listed Coach House and Lodge buildings and also the reception area of the Grade 2 Listed Mere Court Hotel, which are all designated heritage assets. Furthermore, the increase in size of the window on the rear elevation of the Coach House is considered to have an unacceptable adverse impact on the historic and architectural integrity of this curtilage Grade 2 Listed building, causing harm to the significance of this heritage asset and the public benefits associated with the proposals would not outweigh this harm.

In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Planning and Enforcement Manager has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Northern Planning Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.

Application for Listed Building Consent

RECOMMENDATION: Refuse approval

1. Adverse impact on the curtilage Listed Building

