

Forest Heath District Council

**DEVELOPMENT
CONTROL COMMITTEE**

4 FEBRUARY 2015

DEV/FH/15/002

**Report of the Head of Planning and Regulatory
Services**

**PLANNING APPLICATION DC/14/2236/FUL - LAND AT LAKENHEATH HOTEL,
124 HIGH STREET, LAKENHEATH**

Synopsis:

Application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and associated matters.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Committee determine the attached application and associated matters.

CONTACT OFFICER

Case Officer: Julie Sheldrick
Tel. No 01638 719227

Committee Report

Date	24 November	Expiry Date:	19 January 2015
Registered:	2014		
Case Officer:	Julie Sheldrick	Recommendation:	Approve with conditions
Parish:	Lakenheath	Ward:	Lakenheath
Proposal:	Planning Application DC/14/2236/FUL - construction of three dwellings and re-positioning of existing vehicular access		
Site:	Land at Lakenheath Hotel, 124 High Street, Lakenheath		
Applicant:	Mr S White, Mrs T Lovatt & Miss V White		

Background:

This application is referred to Development Control Committee following consideration at the Delegation Panel and because the Parish Council raise objections.

The application is recommended for APPROVAL.

Proposal:

1. This planning application proposes the erection of three dwellings that comprise of the following:
 - Plot 1 - a detached two storey dwelling fronting onto High Street. This would provide three bedrooms.
 - Plots 2 & 3 – a pair of semi-detached dwellings set back within the site and to the rear of the main hotel building. These would each provide three bedrooms.
2. A single storey cart lodge would be attached to the front of Plot 2 to provide two parking spaces for that dwelling. A single storey cart lodge would also be attached to the side of Plot 3 to provide two parking spaces for that dwelling. A further two parking spaces would be provided to the end of the rear garden of Plot 1 and additional parking spaces would be provided along the southern boundary for hotel customers and visitors.

Application Supporting Material:

3. Information submitted with the application as follows:
 - Location plan

- Drawings – block plan, floor plans and elevations
- Amended drawing – Plot 1 elevations
- Design & Access Statement
- Photographs
- Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment preliminary Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan (Hayden's, October 2014)
- Contamination Report (Landmark, September 2014)

Site Details:

4. Lakenheath Hotel is a grade II listed building that fronts onto High Street. The site lies within the Lakenheath Conservation Area and within the settlement boundary. Neighbouring residential dwellings lie to the south of the site in the form of a row of terraced dwellings that front onto High Street with long rear gardens. The rear garden of No.132 extends along the southern boundary of the site. A modest single storey dwelling is situated immediately to the rear of the hotel. A relatively recent cul-de-sac development lies to the south west of the site, known as Pintail Close.
5. The site is accessed from High Street. It currently comprises of a hard surfaced area that is used for parking and a soft landscaped area to the front of the site, set behind a front boundary wall. The area to the south-west is grassed with trees along the boundaries and enclosed by a boundary wall and fence.

Planning History:

6. Previous applications have been submitted for alterations to the hotel building and the continued siting of a mobile home at the site but this planning history is not considered relevant to the determination of this application.
7. The following listed building consent application is being considered in conjunction with this planning application:
 - DC/14/2238/LB – Application for Listed Building Consent – demolition of attached single storey outhouse at rear of hotel.

Consultations:

8. FHDC Conservation Officer – *“The proposed development follows the advice offered at pre application stage resulting in a development sympathetic to both the character and appearance of area and the setting of the listed building. Reference to historic maps has informed the principle of the proposed development whilst the design and choice of materials ensures a distinct hierarchy between the listed building and the new development. No objections to the principle of the proposed development subject to a number of minor changes and additional information”* (Officer note: an amended plan has been submitted to incorporate the suggested design changes to Plot 1 and additional information such as door and window details, material samples,

bargeboard details and dormer window details would be secured by condition)

9. FHDC Tree Officer – No objection (verbal comment)

10. Highways Authority – Recommend conditions.

11. Environmental Health: No objection subject to an informative re: contamination. Recommend conditions re: working hours, removal of waste material, lighting and acoustic insulation.

12. SCC Archaeological Service – Recommend conditions.

13. Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service – Comments re: access and water supplies.

Representations:

14. Parish Council: Object for the following reasons:

"This proposed development lies in the Conservation area of Lakenheath and contains on its site a Listed Building (an old Manor House now used as a Hotel) The character of the conservation area has in the past been eroded by infill development which was inappropriate because it was not in harmony with the mass, scale, materials and detail of the area. As a Manor House spacious grounds would be expected. Town and Country Planning Act 1990 suggests that Conservation areas and Listed Buildings are usually chosen as places of special architectural or historic significance the character or appearance of which should be preserved or enhanced. This is endorsed by the NPPF which clearly states conserve and enhance the historic environment.

In considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. The proposals are out of keeping with the characteristics of the site and surroundings and character of the street scene, larger gardens. Buildings should only be provided where necessary for the viability of preserving and enhancing the character of the conservation area. Open space should remain as open space not a dense area for housing with little gardens to support them.

It is a cramped form of development out of scale and character with surrounding properties in Pintail Close behind. It will detract from the visual and spatial continuity of the street scene. Building the dwelling at the front will mean loss of sight of the rear gardens. The proposals certainly are not of an appropriate scale, form, height or alignment nor design which respects the areas character and setting. It does not retain the important natural features such as open spaces, plot division trees and hedges which contribute to the

special character of the area. There is a proposal to remove many trees which are not proposed to be replaced.

There is a potential loss of neighbour amenities through overlooking of garden areas and loss of outlook from existing windows. We suggest that the noise, disturbance and loss of privacy are likely to result from the movement of traffic along the access road in close proximity of the dwellings would cause material harm to the living condition of the occupiers.

It will be a two car family occupying these larger proposed houses should permission be granted for a build and no provision for visitor parking. Refuse Bins. These will be placed on the pavement. This will cause a blockage and be dangerous to pedestrians using the High Street.

This proposal would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and would adversely affect views into and out of it contrary to the provisions of Planning Policy Guidance Note 15, Planning and the Historic Environment. Planning consent for the development should therefore be refused.

However if you are minded to approve, Lakenheath Parish Council Planning Committee would want to see working fireplaces and chimneys not fakes and there should be provision for additional planting to replace lost trees. Native species only”

15. One letter of representation has been received from the occupier of No.132 High Street. Their comments can be summarised as:

- Concern about disruption to household with the stone wall being taken down and what would this be replaced with? (Officer note: the boundary wall between the site and No.132 would be retained)
- Overlooking from windows of the new dwellings.

Policy: The following policies of the Forest Heath Core Strategy (May 2010) and the Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury Joint Development Management Policies Document have been taken into account in the consideration of this application:

16. Forest Heath Core Strategy (May 2010):

- Policy CS1: Spatial Strategy
- Policy CS3: Landscape Character and the Historic Environment
- Policy CS5: Design Quality and Local Distinctiveness

17. Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury Joint Development Management Policies (Submission Document, October 2012, and Post Hearing Modifications, October 2014):

- Emerging Policy DM2: Creating Places – Development Principles and Local Distinctiveness
- Emerging Policy DM16: Listed Buildings
- Emerging Policy DM18: Conservation Areas
- Emerging Policy DM23: Residential Design

Other Planning Policy:

18. The objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and guidance contained within National Planning Policy Guidance have been taken into consideration.

Officer Comment:

19. The issues to be considered in the determination of the application are:

- Principle of Development
- Design and Setting of the listed building
- Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area
- Residential Amenity
- Parking and Highway Safety

Principle of Development:

20. The site lies within the settlement boundary for Lakenheath that is identified as a Key Service Centre within Core Strategy Policy CS1, where the principle of infill development is acceptable subject to other material considerations.

Design and Setting of the Listed Building:

21. The proposed development is the result of extensive pre-application discussions with the case officer and conservation officer. The layout of the proposal has been informed by historic maps that show three cottages at the front of the site and a range of buildings to the rear of these cottages. Plots 1, 2 and 3 have each been positioned to reflect this earlier built form and to create a traditional courtyard arrangement that would be appropriate in terms of the setting of the listed building.

22. The design and materials of the proposed dwellings reflects the historic character of surrounding development. Plot 1 has been designed to reflect the traditional form, proportions and appearance of the row of terraced cottages that front the High Street to the south. Plots 2 and 3 have been designed to have a coach house appearance that would be subservient to the main listed building. In addition, the associated cart lodges would have a traditional appearance that would be sympathetic to the courtyard arrangement. Overall, the conservation officer is satisfied that the proposal would be sympathetic to the setting of the listed building.

23. The proposed courtyard arrangement is considered to create a sense of place and a distinctive development that would appear subservient to the main listed building. There would be sufficient amenity space for all future occupants of the buildings and the location of the parking spaces within the site would not dominate the overall appearance of the development and would ensure the creation of a safe and attractive environment.

Character and Appearance of the Area:

24. The parish council have raised concerns that the proposal would be a cramped form of development that would be out of scale with properties within Pintail Close to the south-west. However, Pintail Close is a modern cul-de-sac development that is not considered sympathetic to the overall character and appearance of the conservation area. For this reason it has been de-designated within the Lakenheath Conservation Area Appraisal and as such, Pintail Close no longer falls within the conservation area. Whilst the parish council's comments are noted, this modern style of development is not considered appropriate within the setting of the listed building and has little regard to the surrounding historic environment.
25. The layout and design of the proposed development has taken into account the historic significance of the site and has regard to the surrounding historic built environment. The conservation officer is satisfied that the proposal is sympathetic to the character and appearance of the area.
26. The proposal seeks to remove a number of mature trees from the site to accommodate the proposed dwellings. This includes the Leyland Cypress to the front of the site and along the southern boundary and other mature trees within the site. A Sycamore and Cherry tree would be retained to the rear of the listed building and measures have been recommended for their protection during construction. Following discussions with the tree officer it is considered that the benefits to the public realm in terms of providing a high quality built environment would outweigh the loss of these low quality trees.

Residential Amenity:

27. The majority of first floor windows within Plot 1 have been positioned within the front and rear elevations to avoid any overlooking to the neighbouring property (No.132) to the south. The first floor window to the stairwell would be positioned in the north-west elevation that faces onto the hotel. The driveway that serves No.132 provides a separation between the existing end of terrace dwelling and the boundary of the application site. Given the position of the proposed dwelling within the site and its relationship to the existing neighbouring property, the proposal is not considered to cause any issues of overshadowing or dominance to the detriment of neighbour amenity.
28. The occupier of No.132 has raised concerns about overlooking and disruption from the removal of the boundary wall, however, the existing boundary wall would be retained as part of this proposal. This would ensure the privacy of both existing and future occupiers of the dwellings.
29. The first floor windows within Plots 2 and 3 have also been positioned to prevent any overlooking to neighbouring properties. The majority of first floor windows would be located within the front and rear elevations although rooflights would be positioned within the south-east elevation of

Plot 2. These would be 1.7 metres above floor level and taking into consideration the relationship with the neighbouring property, these are considered acceptable in order to prevent overlooking.

30. Whilst there is likely to be some additional activity and vehicular movements associated with three dwellings on this site, the vehicular access would be relocated away from the neighbouring property (No.132) and the proposed buildings as well as the existing boundary wall would ensure that any disturbance from this additional activity is minimised. Taking into consideration the existing activity associated with the use of the site as a hotel, the proposal is not considered to result in significant disturbance to neighbouring properties. A condition restricting the hours of construction is considered appropriate to ensure that neighbour amenity is not affected at unreasonable hours.

Parking and Highway Safety:

31. The proposed layout shows that there would be sufficient parking spaces within the site to serve both the proposed dwellings and customers of the hotel. Listed Building Consent application DC/14/2238/LB seeks the removal of the single storey outhouse at the rear of the hotel to allow for the parking area to the rear to be reconfigured. This would provide an improved parking arrangement and safer pedestrian access for customers and visitors to the hotel. The Highways Authority raise no objections to the proposal subject to conditions relating to the layout of the access, position of gates, provision of parking spaces and visibility splays.
32. The parish council has raised concerns about refuse bins being placed on the pavement, however, there is sufficient space within each plot to ensure the storage of bins within the site and as such they would only need to be placed on the pavement for a temporary period on collection days. Details of bin storage within each plot would be secured by condition.

Other Matters:

33. Due to recent Government guidance published on 28th November 2014, which effectively updates the National Planning Policy Framework, local authorities are restricted in their use of planning obligations under Section 106 of the Act. Before this guidance was published, the proposed development would have triggered a requirement for a S106 Unilateral Undertaking to secure a monetary contribution towards the provision of Open Space and Social Infrastructure, however, this is no longer applicable because the scheme proposes less than 11 dwellings.

Conclusion:

34. The proposed dwellings are considered acceptable within this location and would be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of the listed building. Furthermore, the proposal is not considered detrimental to neighbour amenity or highway safety. The proposal would accord with Policies CS1, CS3 and CS5 of the

Forest Heath Core Strategy (2010), emerging policies of the Joint Development Management Policies document and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework that seeks to deliver sustainable development.

35. In conclusion, the principle and detail of the development is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with relevant development plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Recommendation:

36. It is recommended that permission is **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit
2. Samples of materials
3. Window details
4. Door details
5. Dormer window details
6. Bargeboard details
7. Boundary treatment details
8. Soft landscaping scheme and implementation
9. Details of hard surfaces
10. Recommendations of Tree Survey to be implemented
11. Archaeological work
12. Hours of construction
13. External lighting details
14. New vehicular access to be laid out in accordance with drawing DC105 amended to 4.5 metres
15. Bin storage details
16. Parking to be provided in accordance with approved drawing
17. Visibility splays to be provided and maintained
18. Compliance with approved plans

Documents:

All background documents including application forms, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online:

<http://planning.stedmundsbury.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do;jsessionid=01D23A0FCC1EA466267B210EDD030D59?action=firstPage>

Alternatively, hard copies are also available to view at Planning, Planning and Regulatory Services, Forest Heath District Council, District Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY.