

REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

29 January 2015

REPORT

Subject Heading:

L0014.14 – Langtons House, Billet Lane, Hornchurch – Listed Building consent for new surface materials to the stable yard; additional works to the Billet Lane pedestrian entrance; changes to the surface materials to immediate context to Langtons House including a new ramp to south elevation door; new hard surfaces within the gardens to paths; reopened entrance to brick wall adjoining stable block; new external lighting; new park furniture and new park signage (received 5/11/14)

Ward

Saint Andrews

Report Author and contact details:

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Policy context:

Local Development Framework
The London Plan
National Planning Policy Framework

Financial summary:

None

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Ensuring a clean, safe and green borough	[x]
Championing education and learning for all	[]
Providing economic, social and cultural activity in thriving towns and villages	[x]
Valuing and enhancing the lives of our residents	[x]
Delivering high customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	[]

SUMMARY

This matter is brought before committee as the application site is Council owned. This proposal relates to Langtons House, a Grade II listed 18th century house and public gardens located in Billet Lane, Hornchurch. Listed building consent is sought for new surface materials to the stable yard; additional works to the Billet Lane pedestrian entrance; changes to the surface materials to immediate context to Langtons House including a new ramp to south elevation door; new hard surfaces within the gardens to paths; reopened entrance to brick wall adjoining stable block; new external lighting; new park furniture and new park signage.

In all respects, the proposal is considered to accord with the relevant policies contained in the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document and The London Plan. Approval of the application is therefore recommended, subject to conditions. The application will require referral to the Secretary of State for determination.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the application and all relevant documentation be forwarded to the Secretary of State for determination in accordance with Section 12 of the Listed Building Act 1990 and regulation 13 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 and that should the Secretary of State be minded to grant Listed Building Consent that the conditions and Reason for Approval below be considered in respect of such consent:

1. Time Limit - The development to which this consent relates must be commenced not later than three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2. Accordance with plans - The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the plans as listed on page 1 of this decision notice.

Reason: It is considered essential that the whole of the development is carried out and that no departure whatsoever is made from the details approved, since the development would not necessarily be acceptable if partly carried out or carried out differently in any degree from the details submitted. Also, in order that the development accords with the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Policy DC61.

3. Surface materials – The surface materials to the stable yard and to the immediate context of Langtons House shall be constructed in accordance with the paver laying document and the Design & Access Statement unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of the Listed Building and its setting and comply with Policies DC61 and DC67 of the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

INFORMATIVES

1. Statement Required by Article 31 (cc) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management) Order 2010: No significant problems were identified during the consideration of the application, and therefore it has been determined in accordance with paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

REPORT DETAIL

1. **Site Description:**

- 1.1 This proposal relates to Langtons House, a Council owned, Grade II listed 18th century house and public gardens located in Billet Lane, Hornchurch. The site is located in the Langtons Conservation Area. There are residential properties on the majority of the perimeter of the site. There is vehicular access to the site from Billet Lane. Langtons House is owned and managed by the London Borough of Havering. The buildings and gardens are used as a public park and wedding venue.

2. **Description of development:**

- 2.1 Listed building consent is sought for new surface materials to the stable yard; additional works to the Billet Lane pedestrian entrance; changes to the surface materials to immediate context to Langtons House including a new ramp to south elevation door; new hard surfaces within the gardens to paths; reopened entrance to brick wall adjoining stable block; new external lighting; new park furniture and new park signage.
- 2.2 The additional works to the Billet Lane pedestrian entrance relate to the replacement of the new bricks at the top of the existing wall. The pathways on the existing site will be resurfaced with Breedon gravel. Staffordshire blue pavers are proposed in the Stable Yard. Proposed paving on pedestrian footpaths and steps along the House will be conservation paving in a buff colour. At the eastern end of the Stable Block, there is an original entrance through to the wooded area at the back of the building, which has since been bricked up. The proposal involves reopening this closed doorway. There would be a new ramped approach to the south door of Langtons House to allow for wheelchair and buggy use.

- 2.3 All lighting throughout the scheme will be of heritage design and style, except for those located in the maintenance yard. These however, will still be in keeping with the nature of the area and will be wall mounted. The two existing heritage driveway light columns will be restored and additional columns have been sourced to match these. Lighting of the Stable Yard will be a mixture of both wall mounted and column heritage lights – both Windsor lamps. Column mounted Windsor heritage lights have been used for the car park and quantities have been kept to a minimum.
- 2.4 The new furniture will create rest places at both suitable locations and locations which maximise views. Additional seating and bins will be provided. Existing benches will be used around Langton's House with the use of modern furniture limited only to Fielder's Field. Entrance signage will offer a map and brief introduction to the park and its historical context. Interpretation signage has been located at key intervals highlighting elements of significance. Signage for the Billet Lane entrance will be bespoke to Langtons Gardens and will be wall fixed within recesses in the proposed walls.

3. **Relevant History:**

- 3.1 P1536.14 - New surface materials to Stable Yard; Additional works to the Billet Lane pedestrian entrance; Changes to surface materials to immediate context to Langtons House including new ramp to south elevation door; new hard surfaces within the Gardens to paths; reopened entrance to brick wall adjoining stable block; new external lighting; new park furniture; new park signage – to be determined.

P0486.14 - Proposals for demolition of existing toilet block, repairs to walls and repairs and refurbishment to Bath house. New door access to Billet Lane – Withdrawn.

P0485.14 – Proposals for demolition of the existing stores. Existing garage converted into café with external alterations. Repairs and reroofing to the Orangery. Works to existing bothies. New openings in garden wall – Approved.

L0008.14 - New lighting to be positioned within the confines of Langtons Gardens – Withdrawn.

L0005.14 - Proposals for demolition of existing toilet block, repairs to walls and repairs and refurbishment to Bath house. New door access to Billet Lane – Approved.

L0004.14 – Proposals for demolition of existing stores and replacing new public toilets and bin store. Existing garage converted into a café. Repairs and reroofing to Orangery, works to existing bothies, new workshop, new greenhouse and new openings in garden wall – Approved.

L0009.08 – Listed Building Consent for internal alterations including removal of partitions and installation of air conditioning units and general refurbishment and decoration – Approved.

4. Consultations/Representations:

- 4.1 The application has been advertised in a local newspaper and by way of a site notice, as the proposal relates to a listed building and the site is located in the Langtons Conservation Area. The occupiers of 100 neighbouring properties were notified of this proposal. Twelve letters of objection were received (three of which were from the same address) with detailed comments that have been summarised as follows:
- Concerns regarding the expansion of the existing car park in Langtons Gardens into Fielder's Sports Field.
 - The size and vehicular use of the pathway being created, multiple entrances and covenants regarding Fielder's sports field.
 - Removal of trees.
 - Queried the proximity of the proposed car park entrance to the café, pedestrian and highway safety and associated traffic.
 - There is sufficient parking available at the Queen's Theatre car park and in Keswick Avenue.
 - Concerns regarding the pathway that is to be installed around Fielder's Field for wheelchair access and its impact on trees, the cricket boundaries and the field.
 - Anti-social behaviour and security.
 - Traffic.
 - Loss of public amenity.
 - Increase in on street parking.
 - It is alleged that some residents have been misinformed by Council staff following the original public consultation regarding the plans for Langtons and information has been withheld.
 - Concerns that the cricket pitch field will be redeveloped.
 - Concerns regarding the café, including litter, graffiti and alcohol.
- 4.2 In response to the above comments, the café has been approved under applications L0004.14 and P0485.14. The proposal does not involve redeveloping the cricket pitch field. Covenants are not material planning considerations. At present, the staff park in the stable yard. Whilst the plans show an area of new car parking and footpaths these do not form part of this application as they are intended to be undertaken as permitted development. No trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders have been removed. The remaining issues will be addressed in the following sections of this report.
- 4.3 The Highways Authority has no objection to the proposals.
- 4.4 English Heritage – This application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.
- 4.5 The Council's Heritage Officer was consulted and provided the following comments:

- Langtons House is a Grade II listed building, set within the Langtons Conservation Area. This application is for works to the stable yard, outbuildings and gardens of Langtons House which are part of wider scheme to restore the complex of buildings and gardens funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The proposed changes to the hard landscaping of the stable yard are considered to be a positive enhancement to the setting of the listed building. The proposed new layout of the stable yard improves the legibility of the space, and the proposed materials are emotive of the historic use as a stable yard.
- The proposed lighting scheme is also considered acceptable; the proposed lamps and standards, are visually very similar to the original lamp columns on the driveway approach to the house, and therefore the addition of new lamp standards where necessary keeps a sense of cohesion and supports the existing character of the area. The contemporary style lamps are also considered acceptable, as these are placed on the modern structures, or where lower level lighting is necessary. As such they would not detract from the appearance of the heritage assets, or the character of the conservation area.
- The proposals to reinstate the blind opening within the wall to the north of the stable block, and the closure of an existing opening which is blocked by the trading standards building is considered a positive change to the heritage asset. The existing opening appears incongruous and unattractive, therefore its closure using timber panelling to appear like a closed gate is a positive alteration which is in character with its position between the stable yard and the orchard. The proposed opening is acceptable, which utilised the existing historic fabric to improve permeability around the site. The proposed gate is acceptable as it is an authentic replica of a traditional garden gate.
- The proposed new pedestrian gate onto Billet Lane is considered acceptable; the location of the gate would improve access and legibility into the site as a public space and the proposed gates are considered an appropriate design. The proposal to replace inappropriate bricks to the top courses of the existing wall is also seen as an enhancement to the curtilage structure, however, it should be conditioned that brick samples are submitted for approval to ensure they match the existing in colour and texture.
- The proposed signage boards are all acceptable; they will allow increased understanding of the site, without detracting from the setting of the heritage assets or the conservation area.
- As such, it is recommended that the application is approved; the proposed works will positively enhance the designated heritage assets, their setting and the character and appearance of the Langtons Conservation Area.

5. **Relevant policies:**

- 5.1 Policies CP18 (Heritage), DC18 (Protection of public open space, recreation, sports and leisure facilities), DC61 (Urban Design), DC67 (Buildings of

Heritage Interest) and DC68 (Conservation Areas) of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document are considered material together with the Langtons Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

5.2 Policies 7.4 (Local Character) and 7.8 (Heritage Assets and Archaeology) of the London Plan are relevant.

5.3 Chapters 7 (Requiring good design) and 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework are relevant.

6. **Staff Comments**

6.1 The main issues in this case are the impact of the proposed alterations on the appearance and historic character of the Listed Building and the Langtons Conservation Area.

7. **Listed Building Implications**

7.1 Policy DC67 advises that an application for listed building consent will only be allowed where it does not adversely affect a listed building or its setting. Government policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework advises that there should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation should be.

7.2 The proposal is judged by the Council's Heritage Officer to be both justified and acceptable. It is considered that the overall scheme at Langtons House will have a positive impact on both the listed structures and their settings, and will vastly improve public access and enjoyment of the historic site and would enhance the character and appearance of the Langtons Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable and to accord with both national and local planning policies. Subject to no contrary direction from the Secretary of State it is recommended that listed building consent be granted.

8. **Conclusion**

8.1 Having regard to all relevant factors, Staff are of the view that this proposal would be acceptable. It is considered that the overall scheme at Langtons House will have a positive impact on both the listed structures and their settings, and will vastly improve public access and enjoyment of the historic site and would enhance the character and appearance of the Langtons Conservation Area. For the reasons set out in the report, Staff consider that a grant of Listed Building Consent can be given subject to referral to the Secretary of State. Local Authorities within London do not have delegated powers to grant Listed Building Consent on authority owned buildings.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None.

Legal implications and risks:

This application is considered on its merits independently of the Council's interest as applicant and owner of the site.

Human Resources implications and risks:

None.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Council's planning policies are implemented with regard to Equalities and Diversity.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application forms and plans received 5/11/2014.