



REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT

3 November 2011

Subject Heading:

P1162.11 – Langtons Gardens, Billet Lane, Hornchurch

The construction of a new end of lake feature wall (Application received 29th July 2011)

Report Author and contact details:

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Policy context:

**Local Development Framework
London Plan
National Planning Policy**

Financial summary:

None

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

Ensuring a clean, safe and green borough	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Championing education and learning for all	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing economic, social and cultural activity in thriving towns and villages	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value and enhance the life of our residents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivering high customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY

This application relates to the gardens of Langtons, a group of individually Grade II listed buildings located in the heart of Hornchurch and within the Langtons Conservation Area. Planning permission is sought for the construction of a new

end of lake feature wall to replace an existing wall, which is to be removed. The proposed feature wall would appear as a mock bridge is intended to replace an existing unattractive modern structure. The proposed works, in staff's view, are of an acceptable design and would not detract from the setting of nearby listed buildings. It is also considered that the proposal would enhance the appearance of the Langtons Conservation Area. 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 applications is therefore recommended, subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That planning permission is granted subject to the conditions set out below.

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

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. Accordance with plans - The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved plans, particulars and specifications.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority consider it 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. Materials – Full details of all materials, including samples, to be used in the construction of the feature wall hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To preserve the character and integrity of the listed buildings, in accordance with Policy DC67 of the LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

INFORMATIVES

1. Reason for Approval:

It is considered that the proposal satisfies the relevant criteria of Policies CP17, CP18, DC61, DC67 and DC68 of the LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document. The proposal is also considered to be in accordance with the provisions of Planning Policy Statement 5 'Planning for the Historic Environment'.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Site Description

Langtons was built around 1760 on the site of an earlier house. Langtons consists of the main house, which stands in a picturesque garden, within which stand several C18th garden buildings - an orangery, gazebo, and stable block. The house and garden buildings are all individually Grade II Listed. Today Langtons Gardens or Park as it is locally known can be described as a mature landscape with a tree lined path around a serpentine lake, leading to an open space in front of the house. This proposal concerns a portion of the Gardens located to the westernmost end of the lake directly to the rear and north of nos. 28 & 30 Keswick Avenue. A concrete end of lake feature wall presently occupies the application site.

3. Description of Proposal

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the construction of a new end of lake feature wall to replace an existing wall, which is to be removed. The proposed wall would be sited on an almost identical footprint to the existing wall and would have the appearance of a mock bridge. The proposed wall would measure 11 metres in width and have a varying overall height. At the centre point the proposed feature wall would be 2.3 metres in height from the level of the lake or 1.4 metres above ground level. The proposed wall is to be clad in Kentish Ragstone rubble.

4. Relevant History

- 4.1 There is no planning history relevant to this current application.

5. Consultations/Representations

- 5.1 The application was advertised and notification letters sent to 60 adjoining properties with no letters of representation being received.
- 5.2 English Heritage supports the proposal and are of the view that the design of the structure is appropriate. It is requested that details of materials are sought via a planning condition in the event that planning permission is granted.

6. Relevant Policies

- 6.1 Policies CP17 (design), CP18 (heritage), DC58 (biodiversity), DC60 (trees and woodland), DC61 (urban design), DC67 (buildings of heritage interest) and DC68 (conservation areas) of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Documents are material planning considerations.
- 6.2 Policies 7.4 (local character) and 7.8 (heritage assets and archaeology) of the London Plan are relevant.
- 6.3 National policy guidance set out in Planning Policy Statement 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' and Planning Policy Statement 5 'Planning for the Historic Environment' is also relevant.

7. Staff Comments

- 7.1 This application is put before the Committee as it concerns Council owned land and has been submitted by a Council Service. The main issues to be considered by Members in this case are the impact upon the character and setting of nearby listed buildings and the Langtons Conservation Area.
- 7.2 According to the early plans that exist of Langtons the serpentine lake was created around 1800. The current retaining feature wall at the western end of the lake, which is to be removed, was constructed in the 1970s and is of modern concrete construction. The existing wall is judged to be unattractive and detracts from this part of the Langtons Gardens. In view of this staff raise no objection to the removal of the existing wall and its replacement. No documentary or illustrative evidence has been found of the original structure that existed in this location. Notwithstanding this, in order to ensure that the proposed feature wall is appropriate within its setting research has been undertaken by the applicant of similar structures on country estates. The design of the proposed feature wall has therefore been derived to specifically ensure that it is appropriate for the era of the house and gardens.
- 7.3 The proposed feature wall would be sited on an almost identical footprint to the existing wall. The wall would have the appearance of a mock bridge. The proposed wall would have a large central arch with a recessed wall to the rear. The rear wall would be set back from the main wall fronting the lake and is to be dark in colour in order to give the impression of depth to the opening. The proposed wall would feature two side arches also set back from the main wall.
- 7.4 In addition to the site being within the Conservation Area the proposed feature wall would be within close proximity of three statutory listed heritage assets, namely Langtons House, the orangery and gazebo. Staff are of the view that the proposed replacement wall feature would be of suitable design and siting. Staff are of the view that this proposal presents an opportunity to improve the appearance of part of the Langtons Gardens which in turn

would enhance the character and appearance of this portion of the Conservation Area. Staff are also of the view that the proposal would not adversely affect the setting of the nearby listed buildings.

7.5 The proposed works to the gardens are judged to be acceptable in planning terms and would not have an adverse affect on the street scene or the wider environment. The proposal would not have an adverse impact on the existing trees within the Garden nor adversely affect the biodiversity value of the lake.

7.6 The siting and scale of the proposed feature wall is such that it would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of nearby occupiers.

7.7 The proposed works would not create any parking or highways issues.

8. Conclusion

8.1 This application relates to the construction of a replacement wall feature to the end of the lake within Langtons Gardens. The proposed wall, in staff's view, is of an acceptable design and would not detract from the setting of nearby listed buildings. It is also judged that the proposal would enhance the appearance of the Langtons Conservation Area. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in all other respects and it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None.

Legal implications and risks:

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

Human Resources implications and risks:

None.

Equalities implications and risks:

The proposal would improve one aspect of the Langtons Gardens, which is open to all members of the community as a public park. The proposal would not adversely affect accessibility.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Application form, plans and supporting statement received on 29th July 2011.