

Application No: [W 15 / 0977](#)

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Town/Parish Council: Beausale, Haseley, Honiley & Wroxall

Expiry Date: 02/09/15

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Wroxall Abbey, Birmingham Road, Wroxall, Warwick, CV35 7NB
Retention of an extension to an existing marquee, covered walkways and pergolas for a further temporary period of three years (Resubmission of W/12/0545.) FOR Wroxall Abbey Estate

This application is being presented to Committee as the Parish Council supports the application and it is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee are recommended to REFUSE to grant planning permission.

DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The application proposes to retain the extension to an existing marquee, pergolas and covered walkway extensions which have been erected without planning permission within the Wren garden, alongside a series of Yew hedges and adjacent to the Church Yard of St Leonard's (Wren's Cathedral).

Planning permission is sought to retain the marquee extension, pergolas and covered walkways for a further temporary period of 3 years.

THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

The Wroxall Abbey Estate relates to 27 acres of open parkland with a collection of Listed Buildings and private grounds. The Abbey itself is a 18th Century manor house to the north west of which are Grade II listed stables which have been converted to additional hotel accommodation and to the east of which is the Grade I listed Wren's Cathedral. The site also includes a scheduled ancient monument and Grade II listed gardens which are set within a parkland setting.

The Abbey is a substantial Victorian mansion built in the Victorian Gothic style, which is Grade II listed. The property was constructed by Walter Scott of Liverpool for James Dugdale. The original house, once owned by Christopher Wren was demolished in around 1870. Various alterations and improvements to the estate were carried out during Wren's ownership including the layout of what is referred to as 'The Wren Garden'. This garden is enclosed to the east and north by early 18th Century brick walls. With the exception of the presence of a permanent marquee, the Wren Garden reflects the original outline of the garden.

PLANNING HISTORY

There are various applications relating to the site and the associated hotel complex. The most relevant in the consideration of this application are:-

W/12/0545 - Retention of an additional marquee and covered walkways (retrospective application). This application was refused because of the impact upon the heritage assets within the site and because the proposals represented inappropriate development in the Green Belt in respect of which no very special circumstances had been demonstrated.

W/13/0286 - Retention of an extension to an existing marquee, covered walkways and pergolas for a temporary period of two years. Planning permission was granted for a temporary period of 2 years in order to support the existing hospitality use of the site in the short term and to provide an opportunity for the applicant to bring forward alternative and less harmful proposals.

RELEVANT POLICIES

- National Planning Policy Framework

The Current Local Plan

- DP1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP3 - Natural and Historic Environment and Landscape (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP4 - Archaeology (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP8 - Parking (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DAP4 - Protection of Listed Buildings (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DAP11 - Protecting Historic Parks and Gardens (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)

The Emerging Local Plan

- DS19 - Green Belt (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 - Publication Draft April 2014)
- BE1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 - Publication Draft April 2014)
- NE2 - Protecting Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 - Publication Draft April 2014)
- HE6 - Archaeology (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 - Publication Draft April 2014)
- TR4 - Parking (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 - Publication Draft April 2014)
- HE1 - Protection of Statutory Heritage Assets (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 - Publication Draft April 2014)
- HE4 - Protecting Historic Parks and Gardens (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 - Publication Draft April 2014)

Guidance Documents

- Vehicle Parking Standards (Supplementary Planning Document)

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Beausale, Haseley, Honiley and Wroxall Parish Council - Support

Historic England - Objection

Public Response One objection has been received regarding the harm from the marquee to the Wren Garden and the setting of Wroxall Abbey.

Assessment

The main issues relevant to the consideration of this application are:-

- Whether the development is inappropriate for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) relating to Green Belt;
- Its effect on the openness of the Green Belt and on the character and appearance of its surroundings including the setting of a range of heritage assets and;
- If it is inappropriate development, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Inappropriate development within the Green Belt

The NPPF at paragraph 79 states that the essential characteristics of the Green Belt is openness and permanence. Paragraph 87 states, as with previous Green Belt policy, that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 88 states that very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

The structures the subject of this application comprise inappropriate development to which there is therefore an objection in principle unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

Very Special Circumstances

A previous application (W/12/0545) for the retention of the structures the subject of this application was refused on the basis of the impact on the heritage assets at this location and the harm to the Green Belt. It was considered at the time that very special circumstances had not been demonstrated to outweigh the harm of the proposed development.

A further application (W/13/0286) was subsequently considered including detailed information setting out the need on a short-term basis to retain the temporary features to support the existing hospitality use of the site and the maintenance of those heritage assets. On that basis, planning permission was granted for a temporary period to enable the applicant to bring forward an appropriate proposal for the site which would enable the harmful temporary features to be permanently removed.

However, whilst the 2 year temporary period has now expired, there is no indication of any progress having been made in bringing those further proposals forward and no very special circumstances have been identified sufficient to permit the further retention of these inappropriate features such that the objection in principle to the (now) unauthorised temporary features remains.

National Guidance identifies that a temporary permission may be appropriate where it is expected that the planning circumstances will change in a particular way at the end of that period, but that it will rarely be justifiable to grant a second temporary permission. It identifies that further permissions should normally be granted permanently or refused if there is clear justification for doing so and that there is no presumption that a temporary grant of planning permission should be granted permanently.

The openness of the Green Belt and the impact on the Heritage Assets

The NPPF paragraph 131 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and paragraph 132 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the asset's setting. Paragraph 134 states that where the proposals will result in less than substantial harm to heritage assets, that harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals.

The extensive historic grounds in which the manor house stands provide an important context in which to understand its historic relevance.

Whilst the extension to the marquee, pergola and covered walkways are screened such that they would not visually impinge upon the main house, they are of a considerable size and by reason of their extent and scale, the combined structures dominate the formal gardens and walkways and are clearly harmful to the historic setting within which they are located. The structures include a dominant long, white roof and are readily identifiable in the landscape. The combined cumulative impact is significant resulting in the presence of substantial structures where previously there was a formal garden and pathways which would also result in material harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

Guidance produced by English Heritage, entitled "*Temporary Structures in Historic Places*", sets out methods for evaluating such proposals. It identifies that for special events there is a tradition of marquees being erected in the grounds of historic buildings and it recognises that "very short term, genuinely temporary and wholly reversible changes are unlikely to have an unacceptable impact on setting". However, the guidance acknowledges that "longer term or recurrent changes, may have a more serious impact."

In view of the period of time over which the unauthorised structures have been and are proposed to remain, it is considered that they would continue to result in less than substantial but nevertheless significant harm to the historic tapestry of this site and that there are no public benefits of the retention of those features that would outweigh that harm.

Summary/Conclusion

The Marquee extension and covered walkways are considered to comprise inappropriate development within the Green Belt to which there is therefore an objection in principle and in respect of which there are no very special circumstances sufficient to outweigh that harm. Their continuing presence at the site results in less than substantial but nevertheless significant harm to the setting of the heritage assets within the site in respect of which there are no public benefits which would outweigh that harm.

REFUSAL REASONS

- 1 The NPPF states development within the Green Belt by definition is inappropriate unless there are very special circumstances which outweigh the harm.

The proposal relates to a the erection of an extension to an existing marquee, pergolas and covered walkways which will be located within the Green Belt.

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the marquee extension, pergolas and covered walkways are inappropriate development in the Green Belt which, by definition, are harmful and no very special circumstances to outweigh this harm have been presented.

The development is thereby considered to be contrary to the national objective of protecting the Green Belt.

- 2 Policy DAP4 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011 states that consent will not be granted for development which will adversely affect the special character, historic interest, integrity or setting of Listed Buildings.

The proposal relates to the erection of a marquee extension, pergolas and covered walkways located within the setting of various Listed Buildings and gardens.

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the development has a negative impact on the historic interest, integrity and setting of the Listed Buildings by virtue of its size, appearance and incongruous character when viewed in relation to the historic setting of the Wroxall Abbey complex.

The development is thereby considered to be contrary to the aforementioned policy.

