

Planning Committee: 17 July 2018

Item Number: 7

Application No: [W 18 / 0805](#)

Town/Parish Council: Lapworth

Case Officer: Helena Obremski

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Registration Date: 02/05/18

Expiry Date: 27/06/18

The Oak, Stratford Road, Beaudesert, Stratford on Avon

Part retrospective application for retention of existing development on site comprising 60-bedroom hotel. Including demolition of existing function room, three storey rear extension and conversion of space on ground and first floors of existing public house/restaurant. Ground floor extension to existing restaurant and external alterations including amendments to rear extension to provide amended roof line and new windows, 2 no. gables on rear elevation, plus associated landscaping and car park alterations. FOR Westbourne Leisure Limited

This application is being presented to Committee due to an objection from Tanworth Parish Council having been received.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee are recommended to grant planning permission, subject to the conditions listed in the report.

DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks part retrospective planning permission for the retention of the existing development on site comprising a 60-bedroom hotel. This includes demolition of existing function room, three storey rear extension and conversion of space on ground and first floors of existing public house/restaurant. The development also includes a ground floor extension to existing restaurant and external alterations including amendments to rear extension to provide amended roof line and new windows, 2 no. gables on rear elevation, plus associated landscaping and car park alterations.

There is also an application currently submitted to Stratford District Council (SDC) (18/00312/FUL) for the same description of development which seeks to regularise the site. In comparison to the previously refused application (16/00450/FUL), the proposal has been amended which includes the following:

- Reduction in number of rooms to enable a reduced roofscape and overall building mass;
- Extension of the roof line to be similar to the front elevation;
- Installation of black rainwater goods and painted brickwork below DPC, again to tie in with the original building;

- Introduction of timber posts, buttress walls and corner roof features, to tie in with the front elevation;
- Provision of window fenestrations to match the original building;
- Extension of existing wall along length of the side elevation of the building; and
- Removal of the roof and replacement with lower level roof, removing the existing dormer windows and replacing them with rooflights, as per the front elevation.

However, it should be noted that only a very small section of the site and proposal lies within Warwick District, namely the fire escape and very end of the rear extensions. As such, Warwick District Council are only making a decision on these elements of the scheme.

THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

The site lies on the edge of the District, in the Green Belt, with the majority of the existing developed site and its access within Stratford District. The rear boundary is onto a narrow country lane with mature trees in an overgrown hedge. The building is a large public house with hotel accommodation which has a low eaves at the front with dormer and gable projections. The rear wing is 2.5 storeys with dormers and gable, and the entire building is white painted render with a brown tiled roof.

PLANNING HISTORY

Planning permission was refused in 2009 for a 70 bedroom hotel and in 2010 for a 40 bedroom extension to the hotel which was dismissed at appeal. There have been further permissions on the site for various alterations and extensions, but these have not involved development within Warwick District. Planning permission was granted for a 14 bedroom extension in the form of a rear wing following demolitions in 2012 by SDC, since this was outside Warwick District (12/02929/FUL and 13/01607/VAR).

The Planning Statement notes that following on from granting planning permission for the 14 bedroom extension, that the applicant determined that this would not provide a viable return on the investment required. This resulted in the unlawful construction of a 45 bedroom extension to provide hotel accommodation, including the erection of two gables at the rear of the building, with the main building being used as a public house, restaurant and conference space on the ground floor. The first floor was converted to provide an additional 17 bedrooms, creating 62 bedrooms in total.

In 2014 a retrospective application was granted by Warwick District Council for a rear extension to provide overnight accommodation (use class C1) and minor alterations to the car park (W/14/0387). This sought to regularise the site, and was assessed by Warwick District Council because the fire escape extends into the District, which was why an application was required to be submitted to this LPA when it was not required previously.

An application was also submitted to SDC to regularise the site (16/00450/FUL), however, this was refused due to the detrimental impact of the development on the Green Belt and the fact that the development was not appropriately related to the scale and nature of the existing activities on the site. At the same time an application was submitted to SDC (16/00451/FUL) for retrospective planning permission for extensions to provide 44 hotel bedrooms, which was approved, and included the two rear gable extensions and extensions to the restaurant.

RELEVANT POLICIES

- National Planning Policy Framework
- The Current Local Plan
- BE1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- BE3 - Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- NE2 - Protecting Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- CT2 - Directing New or Extended Visitor Accommodation (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- TR3 - Parking (Warwick District Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- TR1 - Access and Choice (Warwick District Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- DS18 - Green Belt (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- Guidance Documents
- Vehicle Parking Standards (Supplementary Planning Document)

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Lapworth Parish Council: No objection.

Tanworth Parish Council: Objection, permission should not be granted for the same reasons given by Stratford District Council when refusing permission for application 16/00450/FUL. The reduced scheme does not justify permission. Confidence in the planning system would be severely damaged if a 62 bedroom hotel were built without permission and allowed to remain.

Councillor George Atkinson (Ward Councillor Tanworth-in-Arden): Supports application, the NPPF states that rural businesses should be supported because of employment needs, which also exists in its Core Strategy as well as their Core Objectives. Whilst the site is located within the Green Belt, this and other planning policies accumulate to very special circumstances.

WCC Ecology: Awaiting updated comments.

WCC Landscape: No objection, if permission is granted, a condition should be attached for a landscaping scheme.

ASSESSMENT

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

- Principle of the Development & Impact on the Green Belt
- The impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area
- The impact on the living conditions of nearby dwellings
- Parking
- Ecological Impact
- Health and Wellbeing

Principle of the Development & Impact on the Green Belt

Tanworth Parish Council have objected to the proposal, stating that permission should not be granted for the same reasons given by SDC when refusing permission for application 16/00450/FUL. They also state that the reduced scheme does not justify permission, and confidence in the planning system would be severely damaged if a 62 bedroom hotel were built without permission and allowed to remain.

Councillor George Atkinson (Ward Councillor Tanworth-in-Arden) has supported the application, and notes that the NPPF states that rural businesses should be supported because of employment needs, which also exists in its Core Strategy as well as their Core Objectives. Whilst the site is located within the Green Belt, this and other planning policies accumulate to very special circumstances.

The whole site lies in the Green Belt where the NPPF does not regard the erection of extensions or alterations to buildings as inappropriate development providing it does not result in disproportionate additions to the original building. Policy CT2 of the Local Plan states that extensions to visitor accommodation will only be permitted where these do not significantly intensify the use of the site or establish new uses which are not ancillary.

Under the previous submission in 2014 to WDC, Officers considered that there was a clear and realistic fall back position in the permission granted by SDC in 2012. This was for a very similar large rear extension to the building which was considered to not result in a disproportionate addition to the building by increasing the size by 23%. The permission was a similar size to a rear wing which was demolished, and it was considered that the proposal improved the setting of the Green Belt by replacing an ad hoc extension in need of repair, and that there would have been no further encroachment into the open countryside. A case was also accepted that the extension would improve the viability of the business by enabling weddings, events and conferences to be attracted to the improved facilities. A similar case also applies to this application, in that SDC approved a 44 bedroom hotel room extension in 2016, which represents a genuine fallback position for the extension of visitor accommodation in this location.

The principle of altering the building and fire escape is therefore considered acceptable since the extension is very similar to that previously granted, which was considered appropriate development in the Green Belt. The additional development now proposed in the District is very limited and would not result in

a disproportionate addition to the original building. In fact, the alterations would reduce the ridge height of the section of development located within the District, replacing dormers with rooflights, which is considered to have less of an impact on the Green Belt than the existing structure.

The development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Local Plan policies CT2 and DS18 and the NPPF.

The impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Under the previous application approved by Warwick District Council in 2014, Officers considered that the open, lightweight nature of the framework, which was not enclosed, would not have a material impact on the openness of the countryside or extend the impression of built development on the site. The fire escape which has been installed is materially different, being slightly wider, however, this still remains an open, lightweight structure which is not considered to materially impact on the openness of the countryside.

The fire escape is also positioned on the rear of the building, where it is not visible within the street scene, and is not considered to be harmful to the character of the area. When considered against the context the site, and recognising that it would be required for fire safety purposes, it is considered that the fire escape would be acceptable in design terms.

The development as proposed is considered to reflect the design of the main part of the property and is not considered to be harmful to the street scene. The majority of the development lies within Stratford District, however, a condition will be added to secure the use of matching materials to those of the existing building for the proposed alterations to ensure an appropriate form of development.

WCC Landscape have commented on the application and request that if permission is granted, a condition should be attached for a landscaping scheme. However, owing to the very limited nature of the area of development which actually lies within the District, this is not considered necessary or reasonable to request.

The development is therefore considered to accord with Local Plan policy BE1 and the NPPF.

The impact on the living conditions of nearby dwellings

The nearest neighbour to the application site is over 60 metres from the proposed development. It is therefore considered that there would be no harm to neighbouring residential amenity as a result of the proposal.

The development is therefore considered to accord with Local Plan policy BE3 and the NPPF.

Parking

The current site has 62 bedrooms (unlawfully) and benefits from a large car parking area providing 131 spaces. The proposal would see a reduced number of bedrooms to 60 and the site already has permission for 44 bedrooms. The Council's Vehicle Parking Standards guidance would require 1 parking space per bedroom in this low accessibility zone, and therefore the car park provides ample space for the proposed number of bedrooms.

Ecological Impact

WCC Ecology requested an initial bat survey of the property as there is a record of a bat roost within the building. This has been provided by the applicant and Officers are awaiting updated comments regarding the survey from WCC Ecology. Planning Committee will be updated on this matter prior to the meeting.

Health and Wellbeing

The proposal would regularise part of the site and provide additional visitor accommodation which is considered to provide wellbeing benefits.

Conclusion

It is therefore considered that the proposed development which lies within Warwick District would have no increased detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt or character of the countryside. The development would cause no harm to neighbouring residential amenity and would provide adequate parking. The application should therefore be approved.

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this permission. **REASON:** To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details shown on the site location plan and approved drawings PA-212, PA-213, PA-214 and PA-215, and specification contained therein, submitted on 25th April 2018. **REASON:** For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policies BE1 and BE3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.
- 3 All external facing materials for the development hereby permitted shall be of the same type, texture and colour as those of the existing building. **REASON:** To ensure that the visual amenities of the area are protected, and to satisfy the requirements of Policy BE1 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.