

**DISCLAIMER**

Decision route to be decided by nominated members on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2009. For further information see

<http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/planning-and-built-environment/planning-applications/development-control-members-briefing/>

<b>Delegated Report (Members Briefing)</b>		<b>Analysis sheet</b>	<b>Expiry Date:</b>	<b>02/06/2009</b>
		N/A / attached	<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>	<b>5.5.09</b>
<b>Officer</b>			<b>Application Number(s)</b>	
Charles Thuaire			2009/0751/P	
<b>Application Address</b>			<b>Drawing Numbers</b>	
The Coach House Hampstead Lane London N6 4RU			See decision notice	
<b>PO 3/4</b>	<b>Area Team Signature</b>	<b>C&amp;UD</b>	<b>Authorised Officer Signature</b>	
<b>Proposal(s)</b>				
Change of use of Coach House to a single dwelling house and various extensions and alterations, including the remodelling of south elevation by widening 3 wings at ground and 1 <sup>st</sup> floor levels, erection of a bay window and conservatory at ground floor of south elevation, and excavation to create a new basement floor, as an amendment to part of planning permission 2003/2670/P dated 05/10/2005 (for the part conversion and part redevelopment of site for 27 residential units including alterations, extensions and conversion of Athlone House to 1 x 7 bed house, The Coach house to 2 x 2 bed units, The Gate House to 1 x1 bed house and Caen Cottage to 1 x 3 bed house, demolition of all remaining post war buildings, and erection of 3 new blocks to provide 22 flats with underground parking).				
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		Grant permission		
<b>Application Type:</b>		Full Planning Permission		

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	59	No. of responses	01	No. of objections	00
			No. Electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	A site notice was erected between 14/4/09 and 05/05/09 – No responses have been received.					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	<u>Highgate CAAC</u> - no objection <u>Athlone House Working Group</u> - concerns at: possible effect of basement on 2 lime trees on south side due to effect on water table by new blocks to south; increased size of house which is in excess of original proposals for whole Athlone House site and its assessment; need to ensure it satisfies policies and for extensions of properties in Green Belt and MOL and that it does not set a precedent. <u>English Heritage</u> - no comments to make, can be determined locally <u>Haringey Council</u> - no objection					

### Site Description

Unlisted former coach house building within the Highgate conservation area dating from the late C19. The building is sited on Hampstead Lane, with the north elevation forming part of the tall brick boundary wall onto the road. It is within the grounds of Athlone House, having formerly served the main house as stables. It was later used as ancillary accommodation for the Middlesex Hospital at Athlone House, for some time as staff quarters and later a caretaker's cottage.

It is identified as making a positive contribution to the CA. The building is two storeys in brick with pitched roof and prominent chimneys, and three projecting bays to the rear, one above the entrance and 2 as wings on either side. There are 2 mature lime trees on its southwest side.

The previous planning permission has been partly implemented, in that the 3 new blocks of flats have been built in the grounds of Athlone House in place of the former nursing home and approx 12m to the south of the Coach House. Athlone House is still derelict and awaiting proposals by the new owners for its restoration back to a single dwellinghouse; similarly the 3 outbuildings (Coach, Caen and Gate Houses) are awaiting conversion back to dwellinghouses.

The site falls on Metropolitan Open Land and Private Open Space as well as within Site 1 of the UDP schedule of land use proposals.

### Relevant History

planning permission 2003/2670/P granted 05/10/2005 for the part conversion and part redevelopment of site for 27 residential units including alterations, extensions and conversion of Athlone House to 1 x 7 bed house, The Coach house to 2 x 2 bed units, The Gate House to 1 x1 bed house and Caen Cottage to 1 x 3 bed house, demolition of all remaining post war buildings, and erection of 3 new blocks to provide 22 flats with underground parking

### Relevant policies

SD1,6; B1,3,7; N1,2,8  
CPG  
Highgate CAS

## Assessment

### Background

The previously approved scheme 2003/2670/P for the whole Athlone House site sought refurbishment to the Coach House and limited alterations to the exterior including south facing dormers, in association with its conversion from a caretaker's cottage to 2 selfcontained maisonettes. This element of the scheme was not implemented although the overall planning permission is still live as a result of the implementation of the 3 separate blocks of flats in the grounds (see above)- the Coach house is now in separate ownership from Athlone House.

### Proposal

The new scheme involves conversion to a single dwelling house plus various extensions and alterations- these include:

- remodelling the south elevation by widening the 2 projecting side wings at ground and 1<sup>st</sup> floor levels, so that the eastern one retains a hipped gable roof as at present, while the western wing rebuilds the existing tower feature in a different form centrally above the wing;
- erection of a ground floor square brick built bay window with balcony and French doors above on the western wing; erection of a ground floor lean-to timber conservatory on the eastern wing;
- slightly widening and remodelling the central entrance wing with a different roof profile;
- excavation to create a new basement floor under most of the whole house to provide games and gym rooms, plant and store rooms, plus associated lightwells and railings to the south facade between the central and side wings.
- the north facade will be retained and restored; the west and east side elevations will have new and altered windows and doors.
- the existing vehicular entrance to the eastern side of the house will be remodelled by setting back the gates behind curved wall sections between the 2 existing retained gate piers to reinstate access to a new carparking area for 2 cars to the east side. Hard and soft landscaping is also shown as part of this scheme.

The scheme has been revised to take account of design officer concerns, by remodelling the wings and conservatory, retaining more features including the chimneys, and clarifying the extent of demolition.

### Issues

Demolition; impact of alterations on appearance of building and character of conservation area; impact on trees; parking/traffic; landuse; acceptability of extensions including new basement on MOL and POS.

### Landuse

No objection is raised in principle to the conversion of the building to a dwellinghouse. The previous permission granted the principle of changing the building from ancillary Class D1 accommodation to a selfcontained residential use in the form of two maisonettes. The proposed house will now have three large double bedrooms and amply complies with CPG space standards, and provides a useful family sized unit.

### MOL/Open Space

Policy N1 only allows appropriate development on Metropolitan Open Land which includes *inter alia* limited extension, alteration and replacement of existing dwellings.

In this case, the extensions of the ground and 1<sup>st</sup> floor wings plus the conservatory and bay window increase the floorspace by 30 sqm which represents a 8.7% increase of the whole building, whereas the footprint represents a 14% increase from existing- these increases are considered to be limited in size in relation to the overall floorspace and footprint of the house and do not materially enlarge the house.

The basement increases the floorspace by 159 sqm which represents a 46.5% increase over the existing house floorspace and, if combined with the other extensions, means a 55% increase. This is considered to be a

significant and material increase in size over the existing house and thus can be regarded as inappropriate development which does not comply with policy N1. However there are considered to be exceptional reasons for treating this scheme as an exception to this policy.

London Plan para 3.303 asserts that MOL will be protected in the same way as Green Belt land. Policy N1 in fact reiterates the advice given in PPG2 on Green Belts, and thus it is necessary to consider how the development accords with PPG2. Para 3.4 of PPG2 lists the types of appropriate development which includes *inter alia* limited extensions to dwellings and also limited infilling and redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in adopted local plans (subject to meeting criteria in para C3/C4). Para 3.6 also states that extensions to dwellings which do not result in disproportionate additions to the original building are not inappropriate in Green Belts. Para 3.4 finally states that limited infilling of Para 3.2 states that very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

In this case, the scheme is described and treated as a variation to the previous redevelopment of the overall site of Athlone House estate for residential uses. The site is within Site 1 identified in the UDP schedule of land use proposals which states the preferred use as a mix of C2/C3 or solely C3 and states that redevelopment of the site should be confined to replacement of substandard existing buildings and expected to deliver affordable housing.

The approved scheme entailed conversion of the 3 ancillary cottages plus Athlone House itself into new dwelling houses and demolition of all the postwar blocks and erection of 3 new blocks of flats. Although the scheme did not involve any major alterations or extensions to the 4 retained buildings, there is nothing in the planning brief or report recommending permission that suggests that such extensions including basements would have been unacceptable in principle. The proposal seeks to amend the approved scheme by adding another floor at basement level to one house plus extending and altering it by remodelled wings and a new conservatory. The applicant therefore asserts that the proposal should be assessed as a scheme for limited infilling of major redeveloped sites rather than limited extensions of existing dwellings, and officers concur with this approach, particularly as it could be argued that there is no existing dwelling as such here, as the lawful use of the existing property is still a (vacant) D1 use.

The building is within a former hospital site and specifically identified as a major existing developed site in an adopted local plan, thus accords with the criteria for such an approach in PPG2. Para C4 of Annex C of PG2 states that complete or partial redevelopment of such sites is acceptable provided 4 criteria are met-

- a) have no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt;
- b) contribute to the achievements of objectives for use of land in Green Belts;
- c) not exceed the height of existing buildings;
- d) not occupy a larger area of site than existing buildings.

In this case, it is considered that the variation to the approved redevelopment scheme to allow extensions to the Coach House complies with these criteria:

- a) the remodelled south elevation and new basement do not affect the open character of the heath or surrounding open space within the Athlone House estate; indeed they are not visible at all from the heath as the Coach House is masked in such views by the new blocks of flats.
- b) it contributes to the objectives for use of Green Belt land, by retaining and enhancing an attractive landscape.
- c) it does not change the building heights;
- d) it is estimated that the approved scheme for the Athlone House scheme had a footprint of 3645sqm which was a reduction of 26.5% from the previously existing footprint of 4962sqm. The approved scheme with this new proposal for Coach House marginally increases the footprint to 3675sqm but is still less than the original footprint.

It is therefore concluded that the scheme should be considered as a variation to the approved scheme for infilling and redevelopment of major existing developed sites rather than as an extension to an existing dwellinghouse. It thus complies with the criteria for redevelopment in Green Belts and MOL areas contained in PPG2 and cannot be treated as “inappropriate development” for the purposes of this advice. Furthermore it is considered that given the unique circumstances of the case, this scheme would not set a precedent for other sites on the fringes of the Heath which only involve private dwelling houses not covered by such planning briefs or UDP schedule designations.

Policy N2 only allows development on Private Open Space if it is ancillary to a use taking place on the land and there is a demonstrable need for that use there. Furthermore such development should be small in scale and not detract from openness of the open space.

In this case, the extensions provide additional accommodation for the dwellinghouse and are small in scale so that they do not harm the open character of the heath or surrounding open space as explained above.

## **Design**

### **Demolition**

A clearer set of demolition drawings have been provided which confirm that the roof is not to be removed, but altered in localised areas and re-covered. The alterations to the south wall, with minor openings on the east and west walls, do not constitute substantial demolition and as such conservation area consent is not required in this case. However the internal walls and floors will all be removed, which was likely to be the case with the previous scheme anyway according to the approved plans.

### **Roof**

It has been confirmed that the roof is not to be rebuilt, but re-covered. The decorative ridge tiles will be reinstated and replaced in facsimile where damaged. The chimney is now being retained.

### **South elevation**

There are three slim projecting wings to the south elevation, the westernmost of which incorporates a raised roof, which is square on plan, elevated on a ribbon of glazing and forms a tower feature. It is proposed to widen each of the projecting wings. These alterations are not considered to be harmful in principle but it was considered that in the original scheme the extended roof treatment of the widened west tower resulted in an uncomfortably bulky appearance. The detail of the ‘tower’ has now been amended to be slimmer, and retains its appearance as an independent element. The canted bay has been amended to a square-section bay, which is more in keeping with the existing architecture. The Juliette balcony above this has been omitted. It is proposed to erect a timber-framed conservatory extension to the eastern wing. Again although there was no objection to the principle of a lightweight addition here, it was considered that the detailed design would benefit from being simplified and reduced in width, so as not to compete with the architectural form of the building. The design of the conservatory has been amended – it has been simplified, set in from the sides, lowered in height and the arched opening in the main wall behind is now retained.

### **West elevation**

There is an existing pointed-arch opening with non-original door and windows within. It was proposed to infill this with brickwork and to form a new opening adjacent, with timber-framed French doors under a straight brick lintel. The existing opening cannot be reused as there is an operational chimney behind this. The proposed new opening has been reconsidered, the detailed design of the doors improved and a gauged brick arch proposed. These amendments have improved the appearance of this element.

### **East elevation**

There is a double door-width opening here with non-original doors within; it is proposed to widen this to form French doors. This is not considered to be contentious.

### **North elevation**

Few changes proposed here: the replacement of windows which are beyond repair are not considered to be contentious but full details of the replacements will be required by condition which seeks clear details of all new windows, demonstrating the dimensions and profiles of all frames and glazing bars, and their position within the

reveals. Brick cleaning is proposed – again, not considered problematic in principle, but a cleaning methodology should be submitted and approved prior to this taking place, to ensure that the fabric is not harmed.

#### Lightwells

It is proposed to install low reconstituted stone balustrades with a flush grille over the aperture, in order to meet building regulations. The height and position of the balustrades are considered now acceptable.

#### Gates

No objections are raised to the re-opening of the gates between the retained piers – clearer details will be required of this element, however.

In conclusion, the revised design is now considered to address the previous concerns and is now considered to be sympathetic to the original form and appearance of the house and to preserve the character and appearance of this part of the Highgate conservation area.

#### Trees

The applicant's arboricultural consultant has advised in response to the Atholne House Working Group's comments that the new basement will have no impact on the adjoining lime trees as their root protection areas will not be encroached upon nor will the water table be affected. The Council's tree officer concurs with this advice and considers that no harm will occur to the 2 trees by construction or the basement itself. The landscape plan for the rear garden, which shows various paths, grassed areas, shrubs and 5 new trees plus a perimeter pyracantha hedge, is considered acceptable. The parking area will be in resin-bound gravel with perimeter shrubs.

#### Transport

Sufficient space exists on site for cycle parking in accordance with standards. The 2 carspaces, although technically in excess of standard, is acceptable here given the layout of the site and its parking area (taking account of the need for onsite manoeuvring space) and the site's lack of adequate accessibility by public transport. The remodelled and reopened vehicular entrance has been carefully designed to improve visibility splays and will not cause any harm to highway safety. No construction management plan is required due to the size and location of the site in relation to public highways.

**Recommendation- the scheme is considered acceptable in terms of landuse policy, design, trees and transport.**