

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	Full Planning Committee - 28/02/2012	Item No: 5.1
Report Originator	Michael Boniface Development Officer	Application No: KET/2011/0258
Wards Affected	Barton	
Location	Barton Seagrave Hall, Barton Road, Barton Seagrave	
Proposal	Full Application: Change of use to hotel, wedding venue, conference centre, with spa facility and associated ancillary works	
Applicant	Mr T Hazelton Hazelton Group & Wicksteed Trust,	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- *To describe the above proposals*
- *To identify and report on the issues arising from it*
- *To state a recommendation on the application*

2. RECOMMENDATION

THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER RECOMMENDS that this application be APPROVED subject to the following Condition(s):-

1. *The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this planning permission.*

REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. *The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the amended plan numbers 1061-24F, 1061-30F, 1061-25F, 1061-29C, 1061-43 and 1061-23B received by the Local Planning Authority on 16th November 2011.*

REASON: To clarify the terms of the permission and to avoid detriment to the character and appearance of the listed buildings in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and advice contained within PPS5.

3. *The principal buildings shall not be occupied or the use hereby permitted commenced until the works to the Orangery have been implemented in full.*

REASON: To ensure that the proposed Orangery is brought back into viable use and further damage and deterioration prevented in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and advice contained within PPS5.

4. *The proposed timber clad link building between the Dovecote and the Stable Buildings shall not be constructed other than in accordance with a sample panel which shall have been constructed on site and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. As approved, the sample panel shall be retained on site and kept available for re-inspection throughout the construction period. The weatherboarding shall be finished in dark brown or black*

stain on all areas indicated on drawing 1061-30F. The boarding is to be no less than 180mm in total width along its vertical plane and 25mm in depth along its thickest edge. Shiplap and waney edge timber shall not be used. The weatherboarding shall be retained in this manner thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of preserving the architectural and historic interest of the listed building in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and advice contained within PPS5.

5. No development shall commence on site until details of the materials to be used for all hard and paved surfacing have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved surfacing shall be completed before the adjoining buildings are first occupied.

REASON: In the interests of preserving the architectural and historic interest of the listed building in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and advice contained within PPS5.

6. No development shall take place on site until full details of the design, materials and method of fixing the proposed link between the spa building and principal buildings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with these details.

REASON: In the interests of preserving the architectural and historic interest of the listed building in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and advice contained within PPS5.

7. No development shall take place on site until a scheme for protecting adjacent occupiers from noise has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall consider but not be limited to potential impacts from the proposed function rooms, car parking area, any plant associated with the swimming pool/spa and the kitchen facilities. The development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved scheme and the scheme shall be fully implemented before the use hereby permitted is commenced. Background noise levels at the nearest residential dwelling shall not be increased as a result of the development.

REASON: To protect neighbouring residential amenity in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

8. There shall be no external illumination on the site at any time other than in accordance with a detailed scheme which shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To protect neighbouring residential amenity in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

9. No development shall take place on site until details of a ventilation system for the extraction and disposal of cooking odours has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The use hereby permitted shall not commence until the approved details have been fully implemented.

REASON: To protect neighbouring residential amenity in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

10. No development shall commence on site until details of a scheme for the storage and collection of refuse has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The use of the building shall not commence until the approved scheme has been fully implemented and shall be retained as approved thereafter.

REASON: In the interest of amenity in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

11. The existing vehicular access shall be extended to a width of 5m for the first 10m within the site (beyond the retained boundary wall) and surfaced with a hard bound material.

REASON: To allow vehicles to pass one another and avoid conflict in the interests of highway safety and in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

12. No development shall take place until a scheme of road markings which avoid conflict between vehicles at the highway access to the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The use hereby approved shall not commence until the scheme has been implemented in full.

REASON: To avoid conflict between vehicles in the interests of highway safety and in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

13. The submitted Travel Plan (July 2011) shall be implemented upon occupation of the development and thereafter the development shall not operate other than in accordance with the plan.

REASON: To promote a modal shift towards more sustainable modes of travel in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

14. No development shall take place other than in accordance with the conclusions and recommendations contained within the Protected Species Survey (July 2011) and the Protected Species Follow Up Survey (July 2011).

REASON: To protect ecological interests within the site in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and advice contained in PPS9.

15. No development shall take place other than in accordance with the submitted Sustainability and Energy Efficiency Statement (July 2011).

REASON: In the interests of energy efficiency and sustainable construction in accordance with policy 14 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

16. No development shall take place other than in accordance with the recommendations contained within the Tree Survey (July 2011). The trees indicated as being retained shall be protected in accordance with BS 5837:2005 throughout the development.

REASON: To ensure appropriate tree protection in the interests of public amenity and in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

17. Prior to the commencement of development, a scheme detailing the security measures/standards to be incorporated within the development with reference to the ACPO 'Secured By Design' scheme shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be carried

out in accordance with these approved details.

REASON: To reduce the potential for crime in accordance with policy 13 of the Core Spatial Strategy for North Northamptonshire.

18. No development shall commence on site until a sample panel of all facing materials has been constructed on site and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved details. As approved, the sample panel shall be retained on site and kept available for re-inspection throughout the construction period. The samples panel must demonstrate the proposed walling material, mortar type, bond, coursing and pointing.

REASON: In the interests of preserving the architectural and historic interest of the listed building in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and advice contained within PPS5.

19. No development shall commence on site until details of the types and colours of all roofing materials to be used, together with samples, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved details. The samples shall include a minimum of 3 tiles and a ridge tile along with details of the source/supplier.

REASON: In the interests of preserving the architectural and historic interest of the listed building in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and advice contained within PPS5.

20. No development shall take place on site until full details of all new timber finishes (including windows and doors), verge detailing and rainwater goods have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In the interests of preserving the architectural and historic interest of the listed building in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and the advice contained within PPS5.

21. No development shall take place on site until full details of all new windows and doors have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include window and door elevations at a scale of at least 1:10, horizontal and vertical cross sections at a scale of at least 1:5 and details of specific mouldings at a scale of at least 1:2. Window details shall also include proposals for the depth of reveal (to face Brickwork) and include opening method and sill. The works shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that form thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of preserving the architectural and historic interest of the listed building in accordance with policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and the advice contained within PPS5.

Notes (if any) :-

- This planning permission is subject to "pre-commencement" conditions which require details/drawings to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before ANY development may lawfully commence. Any

development commenced in breach of these "pre-commencement" conditions will be unauthorised, a breach of planning control, and liable to immediate Enforcement and Stop Notice action.

Justification for Granting Planning Permission

The proposal is in accordance with national and local policies as set out in Planning Policy Statements/Guidance Notes 1, 4, 5, 9, 13, 23, 24 and 25, Policies 2, 26 and 27 of The East Midlands Regional Plan, Policies 1, 8, 9, 13 and 14 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and Policy 103 of the Local Plan for Kettering Borough. The proposal is also in accordance with adopted Supplementary Planning Documents, Biodiversity (July 2011) and Sustainable Design (February 2009). There are no material considerations that indicate against the proposal.

Officers Report

3.0 Information

Relevant Planning History

KET/2007/0686 – Certificate of lawfulness sought to formalise use of the building for catering, lectures and meetings – REFUSED 05/10/2007

KET/2007/0685 – Internal alterations to upgrade Orangery – REFUSED 28/03/2008

KET/2006/0581 – Repair to Orangery including cathodic protection of buried ironwork – APPROVED 09/08/2006

KET/2006/0181 – Replace 3 dormer windows in west wing (casements only) – APPROVED 12/04/2006

KET/2006/0121 – Change of use from nursing home to NHS office suite (ground floor) and art studios with ancillary offices (first floor) – APPROVED 31/03/2006

KET/2002/0907 – Change of use from nursing home to NHS office suite (ground floor) and art studios with ancillary offices (first floor) – APPROVED 23/01/2003

Site Description

Officer's site inspection was carried out on 31/08/2011.

The site lies to the north of Barton Seagrave and accommodates a large stone built country house and associated outbuildings. Barton Seagrave Hall is a country house dating mainly from the 18th century, with an earlier core of the 16th century and later additions. It is listed Grade II which places it in the top 8% of listed buildings in England. It is on English Heritage's Heritage at Risk Register. The site includes the Grade I listed 18th century Orangery, also on the Heritage at Risk Register, and a Grade II listed stable block. It lies within Barton Seagrave Conservation Area and a Schedule Ancient Monument opposes.*

A modern residential development adjoins the site to the east with the historic settlement of Barton Seagrave itself opposing on the south side of Barton Road. Open fields otherwise surround creating a rural setting for the building albeit with distant views of Kettering. The site generally slopes downwards to the west towards Kettering. Vehicular access is gained directly from Barton Road.

Proposed Development

Change of use to a 52 bedroom hotel, wedding venue, conference centre and spa facility. The proposals involve an extension to the rear of the principal building, a new swimming pool and spa building on the site of existing

dilapidated barns to the north of the site, creation of a car park within the walled garden, reinstatement of an existing conservatory and a series of both external and internal alterations to accommodate the proposed use. The existing Orangery is also to be brought back into use as an ancillary building.

Any Constraints Affecting The Site

- Barton Segrave Hall – Grade II* listed
- Orangery – Grade I listed
- Stable block - Grade II listed
- Conservation Area
- Public Footpath adjacent

4.0 Consultation and Customer Impact

Barton Segrave Parish Council

No objection subject to a S106 agreement requiring highway improvements to the junction of Barton Road/St Botolphs Road, possibly a roundabout and/or traffic islands. Filter lane from Barton Road to St Botolphs Road. S106 should also provide improved sports and leisure facilities for the local cricket club such as new pavilion or clubhouse. Improved sports facilities for Barton Segrave Junior School and Latimer Arts College should also be secured.

Highway Authority

No objection. It is accepted that there is likely to be only a minor change in the level of traffic accessing the site and limited improvements are therefore necessary. The existing pillars of the wall provide a sufficient access width of 5.8m and alterations will not therefore be required given its listed status. The access within the site should however be widened to 5.0m for the first 10m into the site. A centre line and give way markings would also be beneficial. Some concern is raised regarding the juxtaposition of the access and the bus lay-by and appropriate road marking should therefore be secured by condition.

English Heritage

Support. The proposals to convert the Hall and associated buildings into a hotel, and build a new spa complex in the grounds, are generally sympathetic to the character, significance and setting of the historic buildings and will secure their repair and long-term future. We have assessed the proposals in line with the guidance contained in Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5): Planning for the Historic Environment, and in particular policies HE7, HE9 and HE10. In our view the public benefits of the proposals will outweigh any harm caused to the significance of the designated assets, and any new development on the site will be appropriate in terms of scale, height and massing.

Ancient Monuments Society

Barton Segrave Hall, its stables and outbuildings including orangery form an exceptional group and the proposed re-use is welcomed. It is however noted that the proposal involves the creation of an opening between the dining room and the library. This is the oldest part of the house (1550-1600) and this has not been sufficiently justified. Similarly, no photographs have been provided of the service stairs to be removed and their significance should be established

prior to determination.

Environment Agency

Although the red line boundary is greater than 1Ha, the increase in impermeable area is much less (0.357Ha). The submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy are appropriate to the scale and nature of the development. No objection subject to conditions requiring the development to accord with these documents.

The Wildlife Trust

No objection.

Northants Bat Group

No objection. The findings, recommendations and enhancement suggestions contained in the bat survey are accepted. As bat roosts are present, a protected species licence should be obtained.

NCC Archaeology

A Heritage Assessment and Building Survey have been provided but are lacking detail in some areas. It is suggested that a survey has been carried out in line with English Heritage's Level 2 requirements however the photographs do not sufficiently record the external elevations or internal rooms and circulation spaces. No recording of the ruined buildings within the walled garden and the areas to the north have been provided due to accessibility issues; this should be arranged. There is no indication of the recording methods used or the contents of the project archive. Whilst a good level of information has been provided further detail is necessary and should be secured by condition.

Northamptonshire Police

Insufficient information has been provided regarding security and crime prevention. Further information should be sought in regards to car parking, building security, guest room security and staff safety.

Environmental Health

No objection subject to a condition requiring a scheme of acoustic insulation. Details of external lighting, kitchen ventilation/extraction, bin stores and any plant or machinery should also be secured.

Neighbours

24 letters of objection for the following reasons:

- Residential amenity.*
- Noise.*
- Traffic/parking.*
- Nuisance.*
- Heritage impacts.*
- Conflicting information submitted.*
- Odour.*
- Loss of privacy/overlooking.*
- Impact on views.*

- *Inappropriate design.*
- *Planning history includes previous refusals.*
- *No need for a further hotel/spa facility.*
- *Ecological impacts.*
- *Highway safety/inappropriate access.*
- *Loss of light/overshadowing.*
- *Any jobs would be seasonal.*
- *The Hall could be a focal point for the arts and music.*
- *Loss of artist's studios.*

5.0 Planning Policy and Legislation

Section 66 and 72 - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

National Policies

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth

PPS5 – Planning for the Historic Environment

PPS9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

PPG13 – Transport

PPS23 – Planning and Pollution Control

PPG24 – Planning and Noise

PPS25 – Development and Flood Risk

Development Plan Policies

East Midlands Regional Plan

2 – Promoting Better Design

27 – Regional Priorities for the Historic Environment

North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy

1 – Strengthening the Network of Settlements

8 – Delivering Economic Prosperity

9 – Distribution and Location of Development

13 – General Sustainable Development Principles

14 – Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Construction

Local Plan

103 – Leisure: Hotel Accommodation

Supplementary Planning Documents

Biodiversity SPD (July 2011)

Sustainable Design SPD (February 2009)

6.0 Financial/Resource Implications

None

7.0 Planning Considerations

The key issues for consideration in this application are:-

- 1. Principle of Development;*
- 2. Design, Character and Impact on Heritage Assets;*
- 3. Amenity and Environmental Matters;*
- 4. Highways and Parking;*
- 5. Ecology;*
- 6. Sustainable Design and Construction;*
- 7. Crime and Disorder;*
- 8. Trees and Landscaping.*

1. Principle of Development

The proposed development comprising hotel accommodation, wedding venue, conference centre and spa constitutes a main town centre use as defined by PPS4. This national policy document places an emphasis on supporting economic growth where it can be accommodated in a sustainable manner and without other adverse impacts. In particular, it seeks to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres but recognises that development of an appropriate scale should also be supported elsewhere where it is demonstrated that the proposals would not detract from town centre prosperity.

PPS4 directs main town centre uses to town centres in the first instance. Policy EC14.3 of the document requires that a sequential assessment be made for any main town centre use proposal which is not located within an existing centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan. The site is not within the town centre boundary and instead occupies an 'out of centre' location. Policy 103 of the Local Plan is however supportive of hotel development subject to a number of criteria, principally that the site falls within the town inset boundaries; the proposed site does. Although the Local Plan (1995) is somewhat out of date having been replaced in the most part by the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy, the Secretary of State has specifically saved this policy confirming that it remains relevant, applicable and in accordance with national policy. A sequential assessment and impact assessment (in accordance with policy EC15) is not therefore necessary.

Whilst this is so, the applicant has considered alternative opportunities for hotel provision in Kettering and notes that two sites are allocated for hotel development within the Area Action Plan for Kettering Town Centre. Site STQ5 forms part of substantial redevelopment works envisaged for the Station Quarter. The site is currently operating an employment use and is in third party ownership. Furthermore, the envisaged comprehensive road improvements are likely to take a number of years to materialise. Site SSQ5 is allocated for commercial development with potential for a hotel and planning permission has indeed been granted for a hotel and retail development. The approved development provides a smaller hotel than that now proposed and the site is not capable of accommodating a hotel with the level of facilities required i.e. swimming pool and spa, wedding and conference facilities. Furthermore, this site would not provide the high quality historic building and setting which is sought for this type of hotel or meet the needs of the applicant and their

intended visitors. The sites are not therefore available or deliverable for the development now proposed.

It is considered that the hotel would be unlikely to draw people away from the town centre given the nature of the hotel proposed and any permission granted would not preclude the delivery of further hotel development within the town centre. Indeed, site SSQ5 has been granted permission and commenced development. The site is in close proximity to the town of Kettering and is served by public transport to the town and its amenities. It is therefore considered that the proposed hotel is of an appropriate scale for its location.

Importantly, it would also facilitate the viable and long-term re-use of an important listed building which is currently in a poor state of repair and on the English Heritage Buildings At risk Register. It is acknowledged that the proposed development would result in the loss of space currently used for artist's studios. Whilst this is regrettable, the buildings are only partly occupied by this existing use and these activities do not generate the levels of income necessary to effectively maintain these important buildings. This is evident in the ongoing deterioration of the buildings. In any case, there is no policy protection within the development plan for such uses and this application must be considered on its own merits.

The Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) defines Kettering as a 'Growth Town', a primary focus for development; as such, the town is considered an appropriate location for the proposed scheme particularly where it involves the efficient use of Brownfield land and brings an important historic building back into viable use.

Policy 13 of the CSS is supportive of development subject to a number of sustainable development criteria. Of particular relevance, development should:

- (d) have a satisfactory means of access and provide for parking, servicing and manoeuvring;*
- (h) be of a high standard of design which would respect and enhance the character of its surroundings;*
- (i) create a strong sense of place by strengthening the distinctive historic and cultural qualities of the townscape;*
- (l) not result in an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity;*
- (n) not have an adverse impact on the highway network or highway safety; and*
- (o) conserve and enhance designated built environmental assets and their setting.*

These matters are considered below.

2. Design, Character and Impact on Heritage Assets

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that "in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".

PPS5 provides national policy guidance and advises Local Planning Authorities to consider the significance of the heritage asset in question and the extent to which the proposed works would impact upon the significance of the building and its setting.

Barton Seagrave Hall is listed Grade II and described in the list description as an early 18th century country house with later additions. During pre-application discussions and site inspections it became evident that there is an earlier core to the house, and this has been confirmed by the Archaeological Survey accompanying the applications. The earliest phase of the house in fact dates from the 16th or early 17th century, with the main construction phases carried out in the 18th century and some later additions. The Hall is on English Heritage's Heritage at Risk Register, as it is in a state of slow decay and only partially in use. Both the Council and English Heritage have been concerned about the deteriorating state of some of the fabric, and the absence of any long term solution for its use for some time.*

Adjacent to the Hall is the Grade I listed Orangery dating from the late 18th century. It is a rare survival of its type and is of exceptional architectural and historic interest on a national scale. Despite having been repaired with grant aid from English Heritage, it remains on the Heritage at Risk Register because it is not in use and suffers from vandalism. It is therefore considered that a sympathetic scheme to convert Barton Seagrave Hall into a hotel and spa complex will be beneficial in securing a viable future for the site, leading to repairs and ongoing use for both the Hall and the Orangery. The Hall has long ceased to be a single dwelling and has undergone numerous alterations for institutional use in the 20th century, many of them unsympathetic. While a hotel scheme will necessitate some new development and some sub-division of internal spaces, this can be done sympathetically and there is an opportunity to repair, enhance and better reveal significance by removal of unsightly additions.

A grade II listed stable block also stands within the site and survive in good condition accommodating cobbled floors, timber stalls, hay racks, hopped viewing windows and sliding sash windows above stable doors. The buildings therefore provide great historic interest in their own right but also as an important part of the overall group of listed buildings on the site.

It is of course important that any proposals avoid substantial harm to the listed buildings and their setting (in line with PPS5, policy HE9.1), and that any harm that would be less than substantial be balanced against the public benefits of the scheme (PPS5, policy HE9.4). The applicants have gone to some lengths to minimise harm to the significance of the designated assets and their setting, and also to ensure that any new development on the site makes a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment (in line with PPS5, policy HE7.5). A good level of supporting documentation and historical analysis accompanies the applications (see PPS5, policies HE6 and HE7.1) including a Heritage Assessment, Archaeological Survey, Design and Access Statement and Structural Survey.

The applicant has also been forthcoming with amendments during the course of the application to address concerns and ensure the best possible solution for the buildings with minimal adverse impacts and interventions. Concerns were initially raised in regards to the following aspects:

- *loss of the staff stairs and a decorative partition in the C18th service range,*
- *design of the replacement conservatory and failure to re-use existing internal fittings and floor tiles,*
- *remodelling of the grade II stable block involving loss of internal fittings and replacement of doors with windows,*
- *failure to make use of the existing Orangery,*
- *No mention of historic mounting block,*
- *Design of link to Dovecote.*

All of these issues have now been addressed and the application is considered on the basis of the amended plans.

The Principal Building (Grade II*)

The works to Barton Hall itself comprise removal of modern partition walls and reorganisation of the internal spaces however the original walls and plan form are to be retained as far as possible. The main proposals in this area include:

- *Creation of an opening between the C16th hall and cross wing and the late C18th library to the north,*
- *Remodelling of the lobby area to create a reception including an extension,*
- *Loss of the Victorian Sash Windows on the western frontage,*
- *Replacement conservatory,*
- *Rear extension to modern buildings and link to Dovecote.*

Whilst the creation of an opening between the C16th hall and the C18th library will undoubtedly result in detriment to the historic fabric of the building and its historic plan form, it is accepted that the new opening to link the proposed dining spaces and the remodelling of the entrance is necessary to meet modern requirements for a restaurant. The changes are required to make the scheme viable for the applicant and the level of harm inflicted on the building is not so great as to amount to substantial harm requiring the refusal of planning permission. The sense of historic separation between the cross wing and former library would still be discernible with an opening of the width proposed and the works could be reversed at a later date so as to restore the former plan form of the building. Conditions should be used to secure full details of the proposed method of structural support to be introduced.

It is proposed to replace the existing windows on the West elevation which appear to be later additions. Although the windows are not original, they nonetheless form part of the narrative of the building and may represent features from the Victorian remodelling works. The windows do however appear to have been altered over the years and represent little merit in themselves. They are in a poor state of repair and their replacement with single glazed 6 over 6 sash windows more in keeping with other openings in

this part of the building is considered acceptable.

Reinstatement of the former conservatory on the east side of the hall is a positive proposal as the remnants of the internal fittings still remain but are currently exposed to the elements. It is noted that the design, size and form of the proposed structure seek to reflect that of the previous conservatory in line with the photograph provided. The original tiled floor will be reinstated and the slate table and ornate cast iron legs will be refurbished, restored and retained within the conservatory. These are important historic features which contribute to the character of the original building and their retention serves to enhance the listed building. Details as to how the proposed conservatory would be fixed to the masonry of the hall and how it would accommodate the porch and arched recess should be secured by condition.

A modest single storey extension is proposed to the rear of the building so as to increase the size of the proposed kitchen facilities. The addition would impact a range of late C20th brick built additions which are insensitive to the principal building and the alterations therefore provide an opportunity to improve the design and appearance in this area. The extension would also provide a link to the existing Dovecote building in order for this area to provide an effective functional use.

A small addition would also be provided along the south edge of the internal courtyard which has again been subject to previous alterations; this would provide back office facilities behind the proposed reception area. The addition is very small and subject to the use of appropriate materials would not detract significantly from the character of the building. The addition would be accessed via an existing door serving modern toilets and the existing sash windows would be retained in situ.

The contents of the structural survey are noted and the necessity for the remedial work prescribed is largely accepted. I am sceptical however about the need for, or effectiveness of, proposed damp proof courses as an early remedial option. The building is inherently porous being of limestone and so in the first instance I would expect to see leaking rainwater goods repaired, broken and missing roof tiles replaced and internal plumbing renewed. These actions, accompanied by lowering ground levels, perhaps with soakaways, and better ventilation may solve some problems without costly invasive work being necessary. Whilst this is so, the building will undergo significant works in order to accommodate the proposed development and the effectiveness of the measures described above would take some time to ascertain. If ineffective, invasive works will be necessary to prevent deterioration of the building and it would be far more practical to carry out such works whilst the building was undergoing other works and remains unoccupied. I consider that the proposed damp proofing would not amount to significant harm to the character of the building and is necessary in ensuring viable long-term use.

The Orangery (Grade I)

The Orangery has been restored using grant funding from English Heritage but has since been boarded up and unused leading to vandalism. It is imperative

that this Grade I listed building is brought back into use as part of the development so as to avoid deterioration. The scheme now proposes the installation of a small kitchen area and reinstatement of toilet facilities (fittings and pipe work remain in place). The building would thereafter be used ancillary to the remainder of the development. It is considered reasonable to impose a condition on any planning permission granted requiring the proposed works to the Orangery to take place prior to occupation of the development so as to ensure their implementation and viable reuse of the structure.

Outbuildings containing stables (Grade II)

These are described in paragraph 5.24 of the Heritage Assessment Statement while section 2.2.6 of the Archaeological Survey states “stables internally survive in generally good condition...Considerable care was taken during their recent conversion into artists studios to retain cobbled floors, timber stalls and hay racks”. The buildings also retain their hopped viewing windows and horizontal sliding sash windows positioned above stable doors. These features define the buildings character as a functional stable block and it is therefore considered that their retention is essential in maintaining this character and the significance of the building. The proposals have therefore been amended accordingly to make use of the existing openings, maintain the plan form (albeit with small openings to allow access between stables) and for internal fixtures to be retained. This should be secured by condition but will successfully allow reuse of the building whilst retaining its character.

The Dovecote barn is largely unaltered at present however the proposed works represent a sympathetic conversion, which deftly handle the subdivisions required, minimise the loss of historic fabric, keep the inherent ruggedness of the building and maintain as far as possible the sense of internal space. This would result in only limited implications for the significance of the asset. Good external detailing for doors and windows will be vital to preserve the building’s existing character and appearance and its contribution to the hall group and should be secured by condition.

Existing timber garages currently occupy the space between the stables and dovecote but present little historic merit as clearly modern additions. These structures would be demolished and a two storey link would be provided providing access to the first floor. This would be a clearly modern addition which could blur the distinction between the stable block and the dovecote and care has therefore been taken to ensure a subordinate appearance. The addition would appear as a modern infill and would be highlighted as such through the use of horizontal timber cladding on the south elevation to retain the distinction between the historic and modern buildings.

The walled garden complex (curtilage structure)

These contribute significantly to our understanding of the level of provision for a house of this type in this part of Northamptonshire. The walls themselves and their existing openings are to be retained although large parking areas are to be introduced in place of the existing grassed areas and overgrown shrubs. The former use of the area will remain identifiable by virtue of the walls and the potting sheds (which are to be converted and reused) however the surface

treatments will be important in ensuring that the area does not become overly engineered in appearance. Conditions should be used to secure details of the proposed materials. It is noted that some of the larger trees existing on the peripheries of the walled gardens are to be retained and this will help to soften the appearance of the parking area.

Former farm buildings (curtilage structures)

The most extensive modern extensions are to occur in this area. It is unclear what archaeological potential these buildings contain as vegetation prevents their inspection however it is quite clear that the buildings are in a poor state of repair. The roof has collapsed and walls appear unstable as great amounts of trees and vegetation have taken over.

The design of the proposed spa is quite intensive but appears to lie on or only slightly over the existing footprint and the location would not appear to impinge on the setting of the principal listed buildings unacceptably. The building has been designed to maintain a barn like appearance with simple rectangular plan formed (viewed externally) and minimal openings which take on the proportions and appearance of former agricultural openings. The building would present a larger mass than that of the existing barns however this is necessitated by the nature of the proposed use which incorporates a swimming pool and spa facilities. Overall, the design and appearance of the structure would be sensitive to its surroundings and would not detract from the setting of the principal buildings.

The link to the spa building is acceptable subject to appropriate materials and finishes. It would help if a differentiating material was used for the link building so as to maintain the definition between the older buildings that is currently created by the existing gap between them. The proposed drawings indicate that glazing could be used to achieve this however limited detail has been provided and this should be secured by condition.

Impact on the Conservation Area

The site stands within a designated conservation area; Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".

The proposed alterations are likely to result in only very subtle changes to the character of the Conservation Area. The front elevation of the building which is prominent from the public realm despite large trees and the existing stone boundary wall would be largely unaltered with only repair and restoration works proposed. Glimpses of the reinstated conservatory are likely to be possible however this has been designed to reflect the former structure which is in keeping with the character of the building and would therefore preserve its setting. The proposed parking area would stand close to Barton Road and the adjacent footpath however this would be entirely surrounded by the existing walled garden and this will provide effective screening from the public realm. Very limited visual impact would therefore result from this element of the scheme and the character and appearance of the conservation area would

again be preserved. In all other respects the proposals, as they are described would enhance the local character.

3. Amenity and Environmental Matters

The building currently benefits from an extant planning permission for an NHS office suite and art studios. Whilst the site is not currently operating to its optimum capacity (currently just art studios), the office use could be recommenced at any time. A commercial use is therefore established and the proposed development would not result in a significantly more intense commercial activity than is already permitted. Works are proposed along the eastern extent of the site adjacent to neighbouring residential properties, including the car parking area within the walled garden and the spa complex to the north, however tall stone boundary walls are in place and the nature of the development as a luxury hotel is not likely to generate large amounts of noise and disturbance subject to appropriate conditions controlling noise sources.

A document entitled 'Noise Assessment' accompanies the application and identifies a number of potential noise sources including the car park, function room, swimming pool and café. A range of principles aimed at reducing noise impacts are set out however no detailed noise data or necessary mitigation measures are identified. Conditions should be used to obtain details of acoustic insulation for any external plant and ensure that background noise levels do not increase at the nearest noise sensitive dwelling. Further information would also be necessary for any external lighting, kitchen ventilation and extraction, refuse stores and plant associated with the swimming pool.

Whilst some amount of noise and disturbance are inherent with a use of this type, the development can be accommodated without significant adverse impact to neighbouring properties.

4. Highways and Parking

Barton Hall is served by an established vehicular access and the application intends to continue the use of this access without alteration. Concerns were raised about the suitability of this access during the course of the planning application given its location close to the junction with Polwell Lane and the existence of a bus stop. The applicant has provided a 'Supplementary Traffic Assessment' which compares the amount of traffic associated with the extant planning permission with that anticipated to be generated by the proposed development. The report concludes that the amount of traffic associated with the proposed development would be less than the extant use as offices and art studios and a lesser impact on the highway network would therefore result. Furthermore, the nature of traffic attracted to the site would not be dissimilar to that of the existing use. The Highway Authority accept that that there is likely to be only a minor change in the level of traffic accessing the site and on this basis it is not necessary or reasonable to require alterations to the existing vehicular access. Reuse of the existing access also removes the need for alterations to the listed boundary wall which would impact upon both the fabric of the wall itself and the wider setting of Barton Hall. Conditions should be used to secure widening of the hard surfaced area behind the boundary wall to

5m and obtain a scheme of road markings to avoid conflict between vehicles.

PPG13 and policy 13 of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy seek to reduce reliance on private motor vehicles and promote a modal shift towards more sustainable modes of travel. The site is well connected to Kettering town centre and the limited amenities offered in Barton Seagrave. Public transport provides regular access to the town centre along with a defined cycle route. The development would therefore be accessible in a sustainable manner. A Travel Plan accompanies the application which seeks to maximise sustainable travel opportunities through the appointment of a Travel Plan Coordinator to promote public transport, walking and cycling opportunities and to monitor uptake; a condition should secure accordance with this plan. PPG13 also suggests that Local Planning Authorities should not require more parking to be provided than the applicant considers necessary to further support modal shift aims. 82 parking spaces and 22 cycle spaces are proposed and this is considered an appropriate level of provision.

5. Ecology

A Protected Species Survey and Follow Up Survey detail the results of site surveys carried out to establish the potential presence of protected species. The documents identify the presence of nesting birds and evidence of bats within the buildings on site. A range of mitigation measures are therefore proposed including the soft stripping of roof coverings, supervision by a qualified ecologist and provision of replacement roosting sites. The measures should be identified in a detailed method statement for the construction works and this should be required by condition. Potential habitat was also identified for Great Crested Newts in the ponds to the north of the site however survey works have established no actual presence of these species. A badger sett was also discovered in the western part of the site and is identified as an outlier sett that has only occasional use. The location of the sett is such that it would be unaffected by the proposed works however precautionary mitigation measures are proposed. Subject to conditions requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the conclusions and recommendations, no significant adverse impact would result to ecological interests.

6. Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy 14 of the Core Spatial Strategy states that developments should meet the highest viable standards of resource and energy efficiency and reduction in carbon emissions. The applicant has provided a 'Sustainability and Energy Efficiency Statement' which sets out their intentions to use a variety of construction techniques allowing them to exceed current building regulations and achieve a BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Research Method) rating of 'very good' in accordance with the development plan.

Policy 14 also suggests that 30% of the energy requirements generated by the development should be met on site and renewably and/or from a decentralised renewable or low-carbon energy supply. The applicant has investigated a range of renewable energy and low carbon solutions but highlights the constraints of working with a significant listed building. Technologies such as

solar panels and wind turbines have been discounted given their intrusive visual impact that would undoubtedly detract from the historic character and significance of the buildings. It is however proposed to utilise a combination of energy efficiency improvements within the principal buildings and Ground Source Heat Pumps within the modern additions. This combination can achieve the target of 30% set out in policy. A condition should therefore require the development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted 'Sustainability and Energy Efficiency Statement'.

7. Crime and Disorder

Limited information has been provided in relation to crime prevention measures to be incorporated within the development however the introduction of a full time occupier will in itself bring security benefits for the site. The Grade I listed Orangery has been subjected to vandalism in recent times and has consequently been boarded up. The proposed use would result in a constant on site presence and includes re-use of the Orangery ancillary to the principal buildings. This is likely to deter opportunistic vandals and ensure the long term protection of the listed buildings within the site. A condition should however be attached to any planning permission granted which requires a scheme of security measures to be incorporated within the development so as to further minimise the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour in accordance with policy 13 of the CSS.

8. Trees and Landscaping

The submitted Tree Survey provides a detailed analysis of the trees on site and evaluates their health, amenity contribution and potential impacts from development. The majority of the trees within the site are to be retained as important features to the historic setting of the buildings however the development will necessitate the removal of some smaller trees in close proximity to the buildings and parking area proposed. The trees to be removed provide limited public amenity value and some are in poor health; their removal is considered acceptable to allow effective reuse of the building. It is however important that the large trees prominent at the frontage of the site and those within the grounds to the north west are retained. A condition should be attached to any planning permission which requires their protection in accordance with the submitted Tree Survey and BS5837:2005.

Conclusion

The proposed development accords with both national and local planning policy and would ensure that an important listed building is brought back into viable long-term use. There are no material planning considerations that indicate against the scheme and as such planning permission should be granted in accordance with S38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Background Papers

Title of Document:

Date:

Contact Officer:

Previous Reports/Minutes

Ref:

Date:

Michael Boniface, Development Officer on 01536 534316

