

MEETING:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
DATE:	14 APRIL 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	<p>DMNC/100481/CD - PROPOSED REMOVAL OF EXISTING MINOR EXTENSIONS, INTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND NEW EXTENSION TO FORM OFFICES AND COMMUNITY ROOMS FOR RENT (AMENDMENTS TO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PLANNING APPLICATION DCNC2009/0435/CD) AT GRANGE COURT, PINSLEY ROAD, LEOMINSTER, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR6 8NL</p> <p>DMNC/100482/L - PROPOSED REMOVAL OF EXISTING MINOR EXTENSIONS, INTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND NEW EXTENSIONS TO FORM OFFICES AND COMMUNITY ROOMS FOR RENT (AMENDMENTS TO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PLANNING PERMISSION DCNC2009/0436/L)</p> <p>For: Mr Williams per Mr Frederick Gibson, 14 The Tything, Worcester, WR1 1HD</p>

Date Received: 5 March 2010 Ward: Leominster South Grid Ref: 349916,259074

Expiry Date: 12 May 2010

Local Members: Councillor RC Hunt and Councillor PJ McCaull

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 Grange Court is a Grade II* listed building and is very much a landmark in the town. It is located on the eastern side of The Grange, a large open space at the heart of Leominster and set within a mature landscape. The area is also within Leominster's Conservation Area and the outer precinct of Leominster Priory, which is the town's only Grade I listed building and also a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- 1.2 The building, now vacant, was used by the Council as office accommodation. This use diminished over recent years as the Council sought to rationalise the disparate nature of its services. Limited car parking is provided through an area of tarmac directly in the foreground of the building and is accessed via an existing entrance onto Pinsley Road. A large public car park is located approximately 100 metres to the west of the site where parking is free for a limited period. A second free car park is located at the bottom of Broad Street, approximately 300 metres away, where all day parking is available.

- 1.3 The building is also within 200 metres of the town's main shopping area and the area is generally one of frequent public activity with pedestrians either using The Grange as an informal open space or as a through route to and from the town centre.
- 1.4 The history of Grange Court is unusual, and it is this which has brought about its Grade II* listed status. It was originally erected in 1633 at the top of Broad Street in the town and was used as its market hall. The building was designed by John Abel, who later went on to become the King's Carpenter, and features particularly fine carvings throughout the timber frame. Like those in Ross on Wye and Ledbury, it is typically a timber framed structure with panelling and was originally designed with a completely open ground floor.
- 1.5 During the 19th century the building was considered to be a traffic hazard and was dismantled. It was eventually bought by John Arkwright, grandson of the famous industrialist Richard Arkwright, who was also responsible during the same period for the renovation of Hampton Court at Hope Under Dinmore. The building was reconstructed in its current location in 1853 with the purpose of being used as a Victorian gentlemen's residence. At this time the building was to undergo some significant alterations. The ground floor was enclosed to create two rooms and a central stone staircase added. The previously open space at first floor was subdivided to create smaller private rooms and significant one and two storey brick extensions added to the side and rear, whilst a detached coach house was newly constructed to the north east.
- 1.6 This application follows recent planning permission and listed building consent for the adaptation and extension of Grange Court, including some elements of demolition, to provide a range of uses for community and voluntary organisations and local businesses. The proposal is for a number of amendments to the design of the approved scheme, but its fundamental principles remain the same.
- 1.7 Central to the originally approved scheme was the provision of an extension to Grange Court. This takes the form of a single storey 'L' shaped addition attached to the southern elevation of the host building with wings projecting in both southerly and easterly directions. The design is of a contemporary style with flat roofs concealed behind a steep mono-pitched roof facade running as a band along both wings. Such an arrangement provides an opportunity for high level glazing, ventilation and the installation of solar energy collectors.
- 1.8 The wings are linked by a central foyer/reception that gives access to all parts of the building. This attaches directly to the two storey Victorian brick extension which is to be adapted in order to incorporate a new lift and staircase and this gives access in turn to the upper floor of the original timber framed building.
- 1.9 The basic premise of the scheme described above remains unchanged, but it is to these elements of the proposal that the amendments primarily relate. The design of the foyer is to be simplified with its west elevation being fully glazed, realigned and slightly reduced in floor area, from 59.4m² to 57.6m². The height of the parapet has increased from 3.5m to 4.2m in order that it appears as a more dominant element in relation to the new wings. The design of the canopy over the main entrance has also been simplified with column supports previously approved being completely removed.
- 1.10 The east wing has been handed so that the corridor is now on the north side and allows office space to look into an enclosed garden area created by the wings. The fenestration of the east wing has been amended to include high level windows, but the roof height remains the same. Timber louvers are to be used to create shading on the west elevation of the south wing. A timber pergola supporting horizontal louvers will create shading for both wings on their respective elevations facing onto the enclosed garden. The 'Green Roof System' previously proposed for flat roofed parts of the scheme is to be replaced with a more cost-effective sedum roof, and those parts previously to be finished with lead will now be so with a 'Terne' coated stainless steel.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mr A Banks on 01432 383085

- 1.11 The only change to the arrangements for Grange Court relate to part of the brick element to the rear of the building that is to be retained. A second floor window shown in the east elevation is to be omitted and replaced with a combination of a new rooflight in the eastern roof slope and a new dormer window in the north elevation.

2. Policies

Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan

- 2.1
- | | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| Policy S7 | - | Natural and historic heritage |
| Policy S11 | - | Community facilities and services |
| Policy DR1 | | Design |
| Policy DR3 | - | Movement |
| Policy E7 | - | Other employment proposals within and around Hereford and the Market towns |
| Policy E8 | - | Design standards for employment sites |
| Policy TCR10 | - | Office development |
| Policy T8 | - | Road hierarchy |
| Policy LA5 | - | Protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows |
| Policy LA6 | - | Landscaping schemes |
| Policy NC1 | - | Biodiversity and development |
| Policy HBA1 | - | Alterations and extensions to listed buildings |
| Policy HBA4 | - | Setting of listed buildings |
| Policy HBA6 | - | New development within conservation areas |
| Policy ARCH3 | - | Scheduled Ancient Monuments |
| Policy CF5 | - | New community facilities |

National Guidance

- 2.2 PPS 5 - Planning for the Historic Environment. This a new document published on 24 March 2010, and replaced the previous PPG15.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 DCNC2009/0435/CD and 0436/L proposed removal of existing minor extensions, internal alterations and new extension to form offices and community rooms for rent. Planning Permission granted 7 August 2009, listed building consent granted by Sec/State 1 September 2009.
- 3.2 92/0007 – Proposed construction of council chamber and office wing joining on to Grange Court – Planning permission and listed building consent were approved following referral to the Secretary of State. This permission has not been implemented.
- 3.3 77/0893/L – Demolition of buildings to the rear of Grange Court – Withdrawn.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 English Heritage – comments awaited.
- 4.2 Victorian Society – comments awaited.
- 4.3 Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings – comments awaited.
- 4.4 MADE – Design Review West Midlands – comments awaited.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.5 Conservation Manager - comments awaited.
- 4.6 Transportation Manager - comments awaited.
- 4.7 Manager of Environmental Health and Trading Standards - comments awaited.
- 4.8 Economic Development are supportive of the development as it allows for a number of small/incubator businesses to grow and establish themselves in the town centre.

5. Representations

- 5.1 Leominster Town Council – comments awaited.
- 5.2 At the time of preparing the report the publicity period has not expired. The last of the various dates is 22 April.
- 5.3 To date one letter of representation has been received from Revd Michael Kneen, The Rectory, Church Street, Leominster who strongly supports the application.
- 5.4 Any other representations received prior to the meeting will be reported to the meeting.
- 5.5 The applicant's agent has provided a detailed statement to describe the proposed amendments to the scheme. Aspects of this are reflected in the description of the proposal at paragraphs 1.9 to 1.11 above. Other points that are raised can be summarised as follows:

The configuration of the flights of the new main stairs has been changed. This is considered to improve the efficiency of the layout and to make the new main stair, hall and landing a more open and imposing space. The internal alterations have also led to some associated changes to the positions of windows, kitchen and toilet areas.

The size of the foyer is slightly reduced and the design of the west wall of the foyer has been made much more simple and refined, the height of the parapet has been raised, the porch roof has been reduced in size and its columns have been eliminated. The changes to the plan of the foyer have also enabled the elimination of two flat roofed porches at the south east and north east corners of the foyer. The result of these changes is that the foyer and new main entrance become the dominant part of the 'L' shaped new range.

It is now understood that the originally proposed 'Green Roof System' requires relatively expensive maintenance and, therefore, if a green roof is to be provided, the amended proposals are based on using a Sedum instead of wild flowers. The project is subject to an environmental assessment and is required to achieve a "very good" rating under the authoritative BREEAM system. When the original applications were prepared it was thought that green roofs were an essential part of compliance which was the principal reason this roof finish was proposed. Now it is found that it is not essential to incorporate a green roof to comply with a 'very good' BREEAM rating.

The original design included panels of horizontal metal louvers projection from the walls of the office wings to reduce glare and overheating. These were supported on cantilever brackets fixed to the top of the walls above the heads of the windows. Partly because of the change of handing of the east wing, it is thought that the character of the enclosed courtyard would benefit from a more traditional system for shading. Therefore, it is proposed to achieve this by horizontal louvers supported on a timber framed pergola rather than on cantilevered metal brackets.

The glazing of the southern office wing has been fitted with external vertical timber louvers. These maintain views out of the corridor whilst providing small 'architectural scale' and also means that the entrance doors to the foyer will be the focus for people approaching this side of the building.

- 5.6 The full text of these letters can be inspected at Planning Services, Garrick House, Widemarsh Street, Hereford and prior to the Committee meeting.

6. Officer's Appraisal

- 6.1 The application raises a variety of material planning considerations. These were dealt with at length in respect of the previous applications. This was reflected in the variety and nature of public comment. It is not expedient to consider all these issues again since these matters have been addressed. Consequently this appraisal will deal only with those elements of the scheme which are different to that previously approved.

Design and Appearance

- 6.2 It is considered that the proposed amendments are improvements upon the original design and offer significant benefits over the original scheme. In particular, the changes to the appearance of the foyer give a clearer focus in terms of identifying the entrance to the building. The junction between Grange Court and the new extensions was previously rather awkward. The amended scheme makes this abutment simpler and pays greater regard to its relationship with Grange Court itself, and especially the first floor dormer window above.
- 6.3 The handing of the internal floor area of the east wing will make for a more pleasant environment as work spaces will look out onto the enclosed garden area as opposed to the car park. The change will have no effect in terms of the buildings relationship with neighbouring residential properties.
- 6.4 The introduction of timber louvers on the west elevation of the south wing offer a contemporary solution to issues of glare and overheating and sit comfortably with the overall design. Similarly the timber pergolas on the respective elevations of both wings within the enclosed garden reflect the slightly more informal sense of this part of the scheme.
- 6.5 The internal alterations proposed to Grange Court itself will not cause any demonstrable impact to the fabric of the building over and above that which has already been approved. The positioning of a new dormer window in the north elevation will not cause any demonstrable harm to the residential amenity of 2 Pinsley Road as it is over ten metres from the boundary with intervening mature trees and shrubs.

The Loss of Important Trees

- 6.6 The amendments proposed have no additional impact on the issue of the trees.

Highways and Other Matters

- 6.7 The amendments proposed have no additional impact on highway issues.

Summary

- 6.8 The proposal will secure a long term use for a building with an uncertain future. The minor changes referred to above are considered to improve the utility of the building, increasing the likelihood of a secure future and on balance, the scheme is considered to conform to the spirit of PPS5 and the Council's own policies regarding listed buildings and conservation areas.

6.9 As the building is Grade II* listed the determination of the listed building consent application falls to the Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government. The same requirement does not apply to the application for planning permission.

RECOMMENDATION

In respect of application for planning permission DMNC/100481/CD:

a) **Subject to the receipt of no representations raising substantially new issues not previously considered by the end of the statutory consultation period, that the Head of Planning and Transportation be delegated to grant planning permission subject to the following condition:**

1. **B04 amendment to existing permission**

INFORMATIVES:

1. **N15 – Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission**

2. **N19 – Avoidance of doubt – Approved Plans**

In respect of application for listed building consent DMNC/100482/L:

b) **That the application for listed building consent is referred to the Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government with a recommendation that the Council is minded to approve the application subject to the following condition:**

1. **B04 listed building consent**

INFORMATIVES:

1. **N15 – Reason(s) for the Grant of Listed Building Consent**

2. **N19 – Avoidance of doubt – Approved Plans**

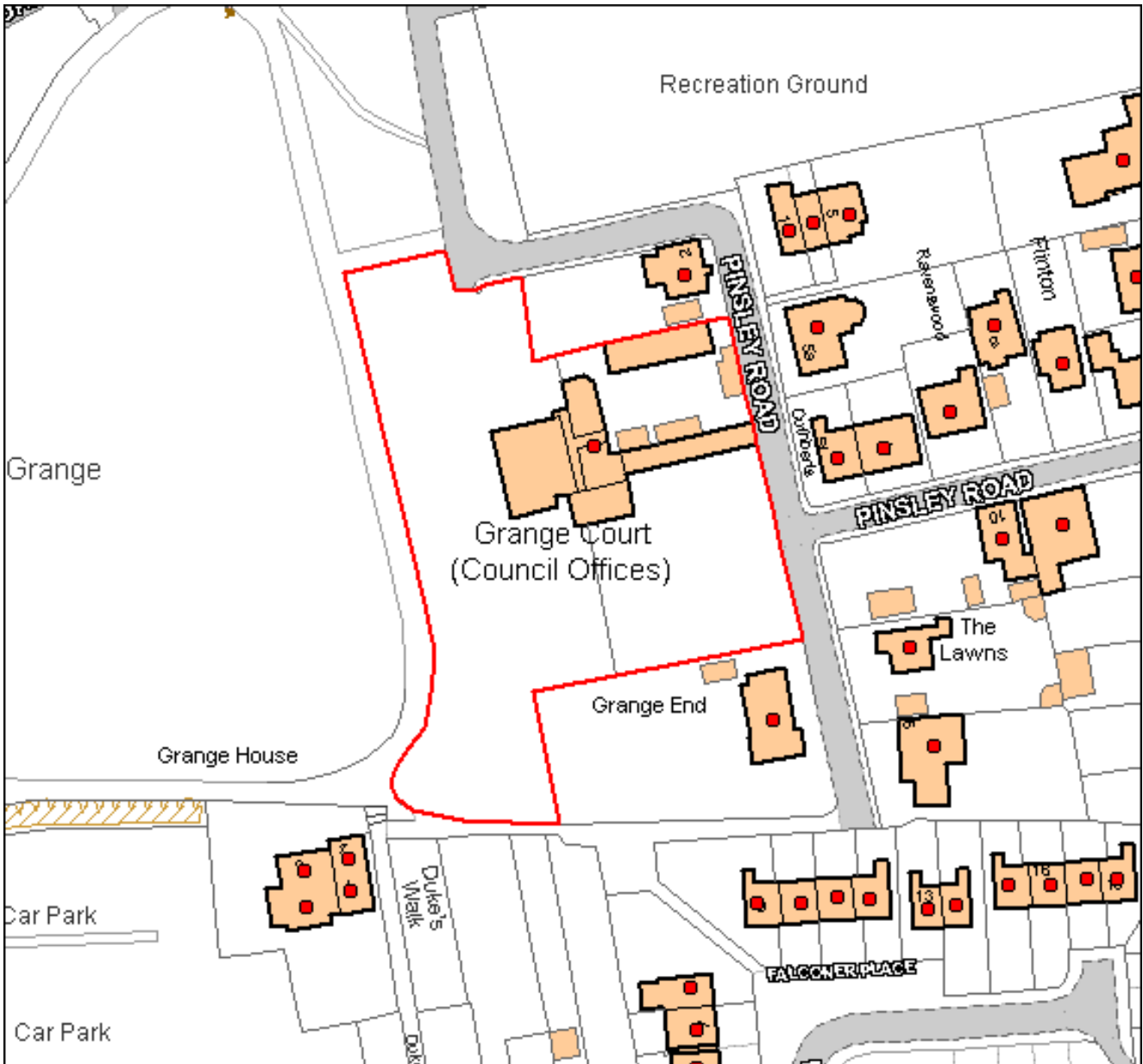
Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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APPLICATION NO: DMNC/100481/CD

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