

9 DCNC2004/3716/F - CHANGE OF USE OF GROUND FLOOR TO SNOOKER HALL AT BROOK HALL, 27 BROAD STREET, LEOMINSTER, HEREFORDSHIRE**DCNC2004/3717/L – AS ABOVE****For: Mr M Roberts per Mr T Margrett Green Cottage
Hope Mansel Ross-on-Wye Herefordshire HR9 5TJ****Date Received:
26th October 2004****Ward:
Leominster North****Grid Ref:
49556, 59240****Expiry Date:
21st December 2004**

Local Member: Councillors Brig P Jones CBE and Mrs J French

Introduction

These applications were deferred at the last meeting of the Sub-Committee for plans/details required by the Historic Buildings Officer to be submitted.

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 Brook Hall, a Grade II Listed Building, is located on the west side of Broad Street, between the restoration shop and Vicarage Street. It is in the Leominster Conservation Area and within a primarily residential area as shown on the Leominster Town Centre Inset Map in the Leominster District Local Plan. It is a two-storey building with attic rooms, faced in yellow brick under a Welsh slate roof. The building is vacant. The ground floor was last used by New Life Church.
- 1.2 These applications propose the use of the ground floor as a snooker hall and lounge bar. They do not affect the upper floors.

2. Policies**2.1 Leominster District Local Plan (Herefordshire)**

- A2 – Settlement hierarchy
- A18 – Listed Buildings and their settings
- A21 – Development within Conservation Areas
- A52 – Primarily residential areas
- A54 – Protection of residential amenity

2.2 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan

- CTC7 – Development and features of historic and architectural importance

2.3 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft)

- HBA1 – Alterations and extensions to Listed Buildings
- HBA3 – Change of use of Listed Buildings
- HBA6 – New development within Conservation Areas

- 2.4 PPG1 – General Policy and Principles
PPG6 – Town Centres and Retail Development
PPG15 – Planning and the Historic Environment

3. Planning History

98/0142 - Internal works. Approved 17.8.98.

DCNC2004/0182/F & DCNC2004/0183/L - Conversion to snooker hall and bar area and 4 flats. Refused 11.8.04.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 None required.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Traffic Manager: No objection.

- 4.3 Chief Environmental Health Officer: "No comment."

- 4.4 Conservation Manager: 'Behind the early C20 brick facing lies a remarkable timber-framed, two-storey with attic, C16 house with a jettied cross wing to the north. A brief survey undertaken some ten years ago revealed that this is a quality building whose high status is shown by its close studding and chevron decoration on the north side which is now also hidden by a rendered covering.

The early floor plan, with cross passage, is evident and much of the timbered structure remains. At first floor level, there is evidence of some remarkable and rare wall paintings one of which is partly visible behind a more recent covering of fibre-board.

Later changes to the house are also of significant interest. One of the rear first floor chambers contains surprisingly complete C17 fielded panelling and a moulded fireplace. Features from an C18 fashionable 'makeover' include the plastering of internal floor beams, some of which contain decorative mouldings; moulded architraves, heavy six-panel doors and deep skirtings. All of these add distinction and character to the property.

Brook hall is a property of great historical and architectural interest. In view of its status and of its surviving features, it is considered to be approaching the category of a two star rated building.

As the application states that there will be no alterations, the need for Listed Building Consent is questioned. However, despite the statement that there will be no changes, there are concerns with this application because it is likely that some aspects of the work will affect the character of the building. The proposed use of the smaller rooms in the older part of the property is not entirely clear except that one room will contain a bar. To ensure that the character and fabric of the room is retained, details of how that bar will be serviced, as well as details of the bar itself will be required. During a previous application, it was noted that several doors had been removed. The application drawing shows doors in place and details of re-instated, replacement doors will need to be provided.

More major changes, such as the installation of kitchens, wastes and extracts, are likely to have an impact on this property and listed building consent will be required for such works.

Any changes to the fabric of the building to comply with the building regulations, especially fire, sound and access, are likely to affect the special interest of the building and listed building consent will be required for these works. Given the sensitivity of this building to change, these issues could be problematical.

Any repairs, other than purely traditional and 'like for like' will need listed building consent.

Although there is no objection in principle to change of use for rear of building, the lack of information regarding the proposals for the rest of the ground floor cause serious concern. As the application stands, I must reluctantly recommend approval, but request that conditions regarding the provision of details of bar area and doors are imposed. I would also request that the applicant is made aware of the fact that any additional works, not contained in this application, will require an additional application for listed building consent.'

5. Representations

5.1 Leominster Town Council: 'Recommends refusal as this development is considered to be:

- 1) inappropriate use of an historic building; and
- 2) in an inappropriate location on a busy, blind corner.'

Further comment from the Town Council: "Members expressed concern with regard to the preservation of the architectural merit of the building and would request that your Sub-Committee consider the building as a whole, as it is so important architecturally. It was suggested that consideration of the application might be deferred and the local representative of the Council for British Archaeology and/or Victoria and Albert Museum be given access and invited to produce a report."

5.2 Nine letters of objection have been received:

- a) This is not a suitable location for a snooker hall and would be detrimental to Brook Hall, and to the Conservation Area.
- b) This is a primarily residential area with established shops and boarding house businesses which assist other businesses in the town. The ambience and well-being of areas like this is vital to the regeneration of the town centre and its long-term business future.
- c) There is inadequate parking.
- d) There are already 3 snooker halls in Leominster, we do not need another, and there are enough bars.

5.3 The full text of these letters can be inspected at Northern Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford, and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

6. Officers Appraisal

6.1 These applications have been submitted following the decision to refuse the previous proposals NC2004/0182/F and NC2004/0183/L, for the following reason:

'It is considered that the proposal does not recognise or respect the special qualities of this Listed Building. The alterations required to bring this building into alternative use are considered invasive so as to adversely affect and destroy its architectural and historic character. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policy A18(D) of the Leominster District Local Plan (Herefordshire), Policy CTC7 of the Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan and the advice contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment.'

- 6.2 This application is for the change of use of the ground floor only to snooker hall with no alterations to the historic fabric of this Listed Building. However, a free-standing bar is proposed. The proposal does not affect the upper floors. Notwithstanding the further comments of Leominster Town Council, there is no reason as to why this application cannot be considered as submitted. Further as the proposal does not involve the demolition of a Grade II Listed building there is no requirement to consult with the national amenity societies, which would include the Council for British Archaeology and the Victorian Society, but not the Victorian and Albert Museum.
- 6.3 Brook Hall is located within a primarily residential area where other uses can be developed while maintaining a pleasant residential environment, as shown on the Leominster Town Centre Inset Map in the Leominster District Local Plan. The ground floor of the building was last used as a place where people congregate, uses included place of worship, day nursery and other group activities.
- 6.4 Generally, snooker halls do not cause noise nuisance that would give rise to loss of residential amenity. While it is acknowledged that there may be some unwelcome and undisciplined behaviour of patrons when leaving the snooker hall, it is not considered that this will lead to unacceptable disturbance. However, given the location of the building, it would not be unreasonable to restrict opening times to coincide with licensing hours.
- 6.5 Matters of competition with other snooker halls and other licensed premises in Leominster are not material planning considerations in the determination of this application.
- 6.6 Brook Hall is located close to a large public car park and close to available public transport. Given the close proximity to these facilities the proposal lends itself favourably to underprovision of parking, thereby creating a sustainable form of development.
- 6.7 At the time of this report the plans/details required by the Historic Buildings Officer have not been received. However, the applicant has advised they will be available by the date of the Sub-Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

NC04/3716/F

Subject to the receipt of suitably amended plans, the officers named in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be authorised to issue planning permission subject to conditions considered necessary by officers.

Decision:

Notes:

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NC04/3717/L

Subject to the receipt of suitably amended plans, the officers named in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be authorised to issue listed building consent subject to conditions considered necessary by officers.

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.