

Item No. 5

**Application Reference Number P/18/0358/2**

<b>Application Type:</b>	Listed Building Consent	<b>Date Valid:</b>	23/02/2018
<b>Applicant:</b>	Miss Christina Church		
<b>Proposal:</b>	Two storey extensions and alterations to stable building to facilitate conversion to teaching facility (Listed Building Consent).		
<b>Location:</b>	Quorn Hall Meynell Road QUORN LE12 8BQ		
<b>Parish:</b>	Quorn	<b>Ward:</b>	Quorn & Mountsorrel Castle
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Deborah Liggins	<b>Tel No:</b>	01509 634733

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This application is referred to Plans Committee following the ‘call in’ process by Councillor Shepherd who is concerned about the design and appearance of the development, loss of privacy, noise, vehicle movements and overbearing impact.

An application for Planning permission is also submitted for the proposal under P/18/0274/2.

**Description of the Application Site and Proposal**

Quorn Hall itself and the outbuildings fall within the Limits to Development of Quorn as set out in the adopted Local plan. The playing field and tree belt next to the bypass to the north of the Hall complex is actually outside the settlement limits. The whole site, including the playing field and tree belt, also lies in the Quorn Conservation area. The Hall and the outbuildings are Grade II Listed buildings. Several of the buildings within the hall complex have been converted to residential dwellings and the Hall itself is used for residential training and education, offering independent schooling for pupils aged 6 to 17 years of age.

“The Wardens House” and “Huntsman’s Cottage” lie to the north-west and south west of the application site and contain principal windows in their ground floor facing elevations.

The site is within the Quorn Conservation Area, to the west of the River Soar and the main Hall is the Grade II Listed Building described as:

*“Country House, c1680 with 3rd storey of late C18 and much altered and added to C19 and C20. Red brick with pediment and slate roof with brick stacks. Three storeys of 5 sashes, mainly 6/6 and 1/1. C19 canted bay; entrance porch to left. Inside there is a good main staircase of c1680, well plan, with heavy strings and handrail and barley sugar twist balusters. Fine ceilings over with wire work wreaths of leaves, etc in centre and with a swagged cornice (similar to that at Newbold Verdon Hall, Leicester). A room*

*at top of back stairs (also partly c1680) has bolection moulded panelling and a fireplace with Delft tiles (now boarded 1983). Built for a branch of the Farnham family. Pevsner."*

The application site is an ancillary brick and slate building within the grounds of Quorn Hall. It is located to the north-west of the Hall and its ground floor is already in use for education purposes. This building contains a number of existing ground and first floor windows on its northern eastern (rear) and (south western) front elevations. The main entrance to the ground floor classroom space is currently from doors situated in the front elevation approximately 9m from the western end of the building. The western side elevation of the existing building contains a first floor window. A brick archway tunnel and prominent clock belfry are central features of the building.

The proposal relates to the section of the building to the left side of the brick archway tunnel and noticeable belfry as viewed from Huntsman's Close. The application seeks the conversion of the first floor of this ancillary building (currently unused space) to additional teaching space. Because of the low eaves height and the exposed 6 king-post trusses (with inadequate headroom above each truss tie beam) the proposal involves the erection of extensions to be able to travel between the various compartments of the roof space of the building without encountering low beams. The proposal will therefore create separate rooms between each truss whilst leaving the original trusses partly exposed. New entrances will be formed to the building's front and rear elevations with new internal staircases serving the new spaces. The new extensions will each project 1.6m and would be 4.5 wide. The eaves would be the same height as the existing building and the ridges of the extensions would be 0.5m lower than the existing ridge height of the building. These extensions would contain first floor windows in their front and side elevations, with the two south-western most extensions having all the windows obscure-glazed.

The submitted Heritage statement explains the full extent of the proposed internal works. The proposed extensions take the appearance of four projecting gables, three being supported on stilts on the front elevation and the fourth one forming the main entrance to the first floor on the rear elevation. The proposal also involves the insertion of two roof lights in the front elevation roof slope and twelve openable roof lights in the rear. These would be placed at such a height in the roof slope that the lower cills would be 2.3m above the first floor level. The two fixed sky lights within the front roof slope would have a lower cill height of 2m from first floor level.

Other elevational changes are the loss of four first floor windows to the front elevation, which, as a consequence of the position of the new extensions which would otherwise obscure them. An existing ground floor window in the front elevation is to be bricked up and a new one inserted just to its left. The submitted drawings indicate that all the existing first floor windows in the western gable and the rear elevation would be obscure-glazed.

The bay extensions would be constructed in blockwork and brickwork with the external face clad in cedar boarding. Natural slate would be used for the pitched roofs. Windows would be white painted timber and external doors black painted timber to match the existing.

The proposed plan also indicates that an enclosed former external doorway in the western elevation is to be re-opened to provide stair access to the first floor.

The application is accompanied by the following documents prepared by the applicant's agent:

- Design and Access Statement – this sets out the context of the proposal and explains that the current ground floor is approximately 182 sq.m. and will increase by 7 sq.m in area by virtue of the extension providing the new entrance. The existing first floor is 188 sq.m. and is expected to increase to 209 sq.m as a consequence of the various extensions. No changes are proposed to be made to the existing landscaping, vehicular access or car parking areas.
- Heritage Statement – This identifies the heritage assets and their setting and assesses their contribution to the significance of the overall heritage asset. The statement then assesses the effects of the proposed development whether negative or positive on that significance and explores ways to maximise enhancement and minimise harm. The applicant has taken the Council's Conservation Area Character Appraisal as a starting point and identifies that it is the history of the building that is significant rather than its architectural style although there are some identified features of architectural interest. The statement also assesses the contribution the building makes to the heritage asset of the Conservation Area and the setting of Quorn Hall itself. The statement sets out that the philosophy of the proposal is 'minimum intervention, maximum retention'. The applicant considers that the proposal preserves the existing trusses without major intervention and is an innovative and unique approach.

## **Development Plan Policies**

### Charnwood Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy

Policy CS2 – High Quality Design sets out the design-related criteria for achieving high quality design. It includes reducing the impact of development to make it more resilient to the effects of climate change; well-designed streets and spaces and making sure development is of an appropriate quality to protect the amenities of people who live or work nearby. It will therefore be essential to consider the massing, height, landscape, layout and materials in new development.

Policy CS14 – Heritage requires development proposals to protect heritage assets and their settings.

Policy CS25 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development sets out that the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning policy Framework. It pledges to work proactively with applicants to jointly find solutions to approve development wherever possible to secure improvements to the economic, social and environmental conditions in an area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Core Strategy will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## Borough of Charnwood Local Plan

Policy EV/1 – Design – seeks to ensure a high standard of design for development which respects the character of the area, nearby occupiers, and is compatible in mass, scale, layout, whilst using landforms and other natural features. It should meet the needs of all groups and create safe places for people.

### **Other Material Considerations**

#### National Planning Policy Framework

The Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England, how these are expected to be applied and taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications (Paragraph 2).

The Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that there are 3 dimensions to this.

- An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places to support growth and innovation
- A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations and by creating a high quality built development with accessible local services;
- An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural built and historic environment.

At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision making. For decision making, this means;

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting planning permission, unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted (Paragraphs 14 and 197).

The Framework says that local planning authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. The relationship between decision making and plan making should be seamless, translating plans into high quality development on the ground (Paragraph 186). It therefore requires Local Planning Authorities to approve development proposals which accord with the local plan without delay, and where the plan is absent, silent, or its policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted for development unless its adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or, specific policies in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted. In assessing and

determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 197).

Paragraph 132 of the NPPF requires local planning authorities to consider the impact of a development on the significance of designated heritage assets, with great weight being given to the conservation of those assets. Paragraph 134 goes on to say that where a proposed development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

### Planning Practice Guidance

ID 26 - Paragraphs 001-003 state that good design matters and what this can achieve through good plan making. Paragraph 004 notes that weight can be given to outstanding or innovative design and developments of poor quality design should be refused. Paragraph 007 states that planning should promote local character. New development should be integrated within existing surroundings.

### Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended)

This document consolidates previous legislation relating to special controls in respect of buildings and areas of special architectural or historic merit and sets out what alterations can be carried out to listed buildings and within Conservation Areas without the formal consent of the local planning authority. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act 1990 requires that in exercising an Authority's planning function, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of heritage assets.

### The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Leading in Design

The SPD provides guidance intended to encourage, promote and inspire higher design standards in new development throughout Charnwood and, amongst other things, at Appendix 4, sets out Space Standards for Residential Development.

### Quorn Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2008)

This document has the purpose of examining the historical development of the Conservation Area and describes its present appearance in order to assess its special architectural and historic interest. The appraisal is then used to inform the consideration of management and development proposals within the area. This document describes Quorn Hall and Quorn House as playing little part in the townscape of the conservation area as both are set within their own areas of parkland and are significant features of the village. Quorn Hall was a major employer in the village during its years as host to the Quorn Hunt and this influenced development of the locality.

### Quorn Village Design Statement (2008)

This document seeks to record the natural and built features of Quorn that are valued by its residents with the purpose of safeguarding and enhancing the village with appropriate and contextually sympathetic development. This document states that new development should respect the diverse origins of the village and avoid uniformity.

Variety and innovative contemporary design is encouraged subject to harmonizing with the scale and character of the immediate locality and the village as a whole. The document seeks to ensure that future developments preserve the essential character of Quorn and to suggest opportunities for appropriate restoration or enhancement. The aim of the document is to safeguard the integrity and independence of the village so that succeeding generations will continue to enjoy, understand and defend its historic foundation.

## **Relevant Planning History**

Various applications made over the years relating to alterations to the Listed Building and conversion of buildings within the complex to residential properties. More recently a very similar scheme to the current proposal was approved (under references P/16/2463/2 and P/16/2468 (LBC)). However, the approvals for these two applications were quashed in the high court following legal challenge and the applications were subsequently withdrawn by the applicant.

## **Responses of Statutory Consultees**

### Quorn Parish Council

The Parish Council objects to the proposal stating that the proposal and its choice of materials is intrusive and will alter the character of this attractive utility building. The proposal is considered to be at variance with the Quorn Village Design Statement. The comments of local residents are supported by the Parish Council. Alterations to built heritage should make a positive contribution and enhance heritage assets and it is considered that the proposal does not do this.

## **Other Comments Received**

Meynell Road – 1, 5, Garden Cottage  
Huntsman's Close – 3, Huntsman's Cottage

Main issues of concern are:

- The design of the extensions including the roof lights is inappropriate and would harm the authenticity and heritage value of the area & be aesthetically harmful to the listed building.
- The extensions would destroy the symmetry of the building.
- The expansion of teaching facilities is not required as there appears to be no information regarding increases in pupil numbers or teachers.
- Taxis collecting and dropping off pupils already queue at the entrance gates and block driveways to existing dwellings at the beginning and end of the school day & the private estate road is wearing out.
- All of the features of significance as outlined in the Heritage Statement would be lost in the carrying out of the development leading to substantial harm to the fabric of the building.
- Traffic nuisance from contractor's vehicles and coaches delivering children for canoeing activities.
- The proposals do not accord with Policy CS14.
- The proposed use of cedar boarding is considered to be inappropriate.

- The applicant should be made to repair the clock tower.
- No information is provided about the sort of classes which will be taught in the new accommodation or their frequency in terms of the potential for noise generation or the numbers of pupils involved.
- Loss of privacy as only some of the windows are proposed to be obscure glazed.
- Increased noise and disturbance both during construction and upon commencement of the use from pupils congregating near residential property boundaries, particularly as a doorway in the western elevation is to be re-opened. Only some of the windows are proposed to be fixed. Mechanical ventilation would also have the potential to be noisy.
- A preference is stated for the extensions to be wholly on the rear elevation of the building.
- The Heritage Statement does not provide an independent assessment of the proposal.
- The accuracy of red and blue lines on the submitted site plans.
- Loss of features of architectural or historic interest.
- Western staircase does not meet building regulations.

## **Consideration of the Planning Issues**

### The Design of the Resultant Building & Impact on Heritage Assets

The Government's aim is to promote high quality and inclusive design over the lifetime of developments, and require development to contribute positively to making places better for people. The proposal meets the requirements of Central Government policy on design in that the development enables the adaption of the building to support an existing primary use on the site.

The stable block is "Listed" as a curtilage building to Quorn Hall and it is situated within the conservation area, as such, potential harm to the heritage assets themselves and their setting requires consideration. Although the heritage statement identifies a methodology for assessing the setting of heritage assets its overall content does also identify the heritage significance, impact, level of harm and how this has been used to inform the proposal. The assessment of significance identifies the social and economic heritage value and the important architectural elements and materials that contribute to its significance. This has resulted in a design solution that allows these significant features, such as doors and windows, decorative brick banding at eaves level, timber king-post roof trusses, the lime ash floor at first floor level, brick corbelling features supporting the main floor beams, fireplaces and chimneys, to be retained and proposed additions that contrast but complement the existing building, in order to achieve better access to the first floor and for these spaces to be used more easily.

Even though the building is substantially hidden from wider public view its altered appearance will still impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The addition of contemporary designed elements using materials that contrast with the robust traditional structure of the existing building is considered to be an enhancement. Also considered beneficial is bringing existing floor space within a listed building back into use and for it to be used to improve and have a direct impact on the long term viability of a use that is compatible with the historic character of the building is also viewed as being beneficial.

The general scope of works does not differ significantly from that proposed in the previous scheme. The design solution allows the significant features of the building to be retained and the proposed additions, although of a contrasting design are considered to complement with existing building through the use of some traditional materials.

Although a neighbour considers that the 'listing' for the property includes particular items within the estate such as a horse feeding trough and corbelled brickwork in the stables building, these are not specifically mentioned in the listing and the proposal has been assessed against the significance of each heritage asset taken as a whole. The agent has, however confirmed that these features are to remain and these are shown as such on revised drawings received on 4th May 2018.

Reference is also made by a neighbour to the existing internal staircase at the western end of the building which will be brought back into use as a result of a re-opened doorway. Specifically, it is queried whether or not this staircase would be compliant with the Building Regulations. Advice from Building Control colleagues is that it could be made compliant if it is required to be and the execution of the works would be subject to Building Regulations. Consideration of the building regulations is a separate matter to that of planning control, nevertheless, the agent has confirmed that this is not a fire escape access or a staircase for general access to the first floor. It will be only be used for specific maintenance tasks. All other staircases are to be used as a priority for maintenance work.

It is therefore considered that the proposals would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset itself and the Quorn Conservation Area and a neutral impact on the setting of the principal listed building at Quorn Hall and its other associated outbuildings. This harm can be weighed against the public benefits provided by the proposals in accordance with Paragraph 134 of the NPPF and, in this case, it is considered that the modern interventions allow an under-used building to be brought into modern day use which helps to sustain the long-term viability of a heritage asset. The development therefore accords with Policy CS14 of the Core Strategy.

### Conclusion

The resultant building would not be visually prominent and it is considered that the development would cause less than substantial harm to significance of the curtilage listed building itself and the Quorn Conservation Area. The public benefit in seeing the building re-used and adapted to modern standards is considered to outweigh any harm to the heritage assets. The design is of good architectural quality with elevations that create contrasting visual interest and it is recommended that listed building consent is granted for the scheme.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Grant Conditionally

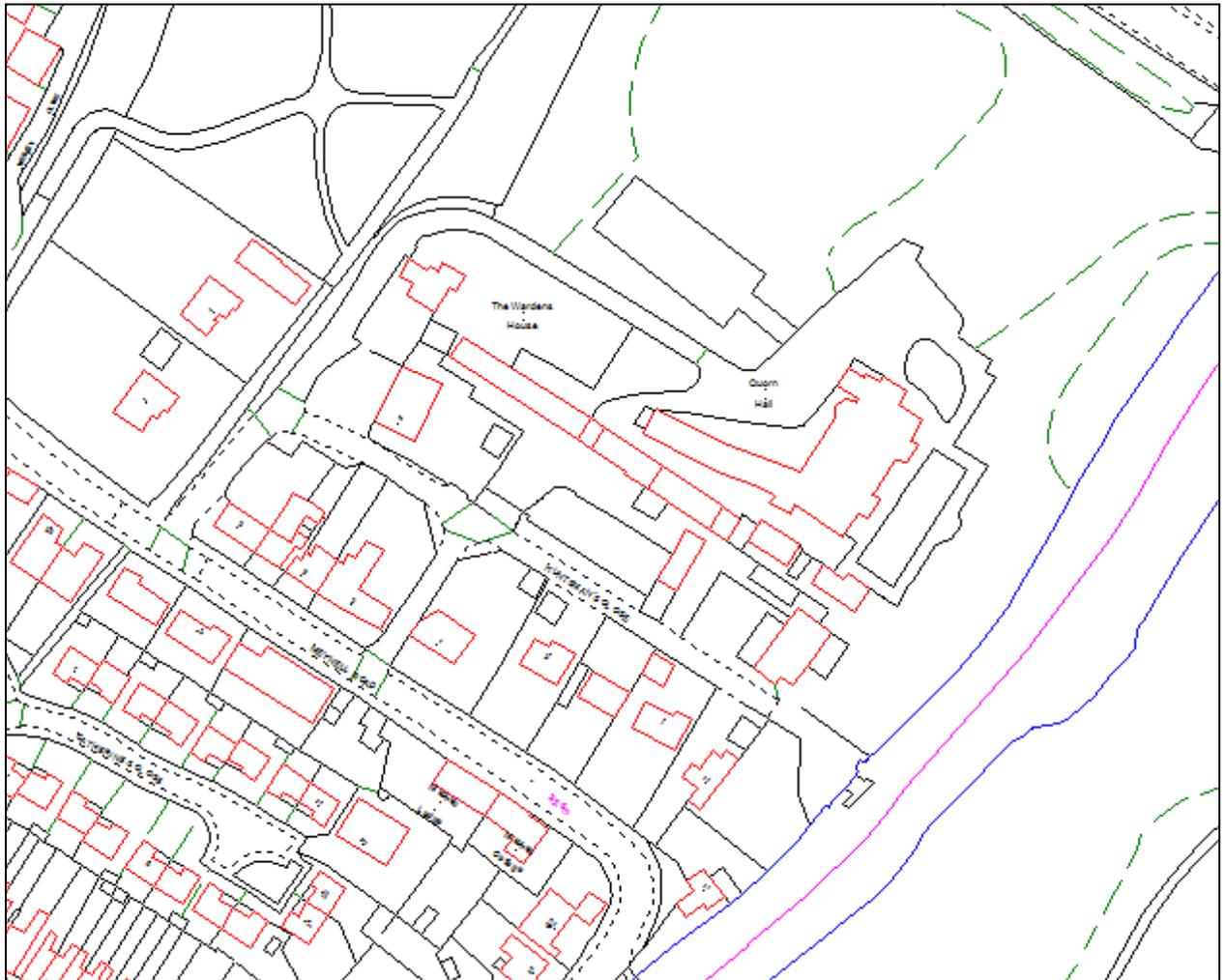
- 1 The works to which this consent relates must be begun within three years from the date of this consent.  
REASON: To comply with the requirements of Section 18(1) of the Planning

(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The development shall be carried out only in accordance with the details and specifications included in the submitted application, as shown on the drawings below;  
Approved Drawings:-  
31654-01.003D - Location Plan, Block Plan and site plan – revised plan received 4th May 2018  
31654-01.004A – Revised block plan showing extensions – received 4th May 2018  
31654-01.002K - Proposed elevations, floor plans and sections – revised plan received 4th May 2018  
REASON: For clarity and the avoidance of doubt and to define the terms of the permission.

The following advice notes will be attached to a decision

- 1 DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES RELEVANT TO THIS DEVELOPMENT  
- Policies CS2, CS14 and CS25 of the Charnwood Local Plan 2011-2028 Core Strategy and Policy EV/1 of the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan have been taken into account in the determination of this application. The proposed development complies with the requirements of these policies and there are no other material considerations which are of significant weight in reaching a decision on this application.
- 2 Listed Building Consent has been given for this development because the Council has determined that, although representations have been received against the proposal, it is generally in accord with the terms of the above-mentioned policies and it has due respect for and would not substantially harm the character and appearance of the listed building.
- 3 In addition, as the proposed development is located within a conservation area, the Council has considered whether it would enhance or preserve its character and appearance. Planning permission has been granted on the basis of the Council's opinion that the development would, at least, preserve that character.
- 4 The Local Planning Authority acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process. This led to improvements to the scheme to secure a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.



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