



To / Ian Ansell

From / Fred Caillat

Date / 6th May 2022

Your ref / EPF/0767/22 (LB) & EPF/0633/22

Our ref /

File ref / 000583

ADDRESS // GRANGE COURT, 72 HIGH ROAD, CHIGWELL, IG7 6PT

PROPOSAL // GRADE II* LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR THE AMENDMENTS TO THE APPROVED LAYOUTS TO ALLOW FOR THE COMMUNAL ENTRANCE TO THE MAIN BUILDING TO BE VIA THE CENTRAL MAIN DOOR AND PORTICO, AN INFILL TO THE SIDE TO CREATE A SMALL EXTENSION, WITH ASSOCIATED AMENDMENTS TO THE INTERNAL LAYOUT TO THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE MAIN HOUSE.

The significance of Grange Court

Grange Court was built in 1774; it has a handsome Georgian façade of classical design. Internally the majority of the principal rooms survive without subdivision and with important architectural features. The buff brick house with red brick and stucco dressings was refurbished by Sir Edwin Lutyens for his friend Sir Charles Baring in the early 20th century. The grand status of the house is reflected by the large drive at the front. The site has a long and complex history and played a prominent role in the history of the settlement of Chigwell.

It is the completeness of the plan form, quality of the architecture and the building's clear legibility as a fine example of its Georgian type, overlaid with Edwardian work that makes it deserving of its grade II* listed status. This places it in the top 5.5% of buildings in the country.

Relevant planning history

In 2017, a scheme, ref. LB/EPF/3275/17 & EPF/3264/17 was submitted and granted for the conversion of the listed building and rebuilding of a large extension to the rear, to provide 14 flats with associated parking and landscaping. This approved scheme was the result of comprehensive and cooperative discussions between the applicants, the LPA and HE in order to find a viable use of the listed building and the wider site, which would secure its future. The construction of a large rear extension aimed to provide an additional six apartments on site with modern facilities and standards. This would enable the conversion and conservation works needed to the listed building to be undertaken. This balance was struck so that, despite the conversion of the listed building, the level of harm to its significance could be controlled to a greater degree.

Grange Court has undergone several phases of development which are still readable today. This is due to the fact that these successive architectural interventions have respected and worked with the building to add to it, increasing the building's significance over time. This historic layout is particularly vulnerable to inappropriate changes. The consent granted in 2017 ensured that the layout of Grange Court, as a typical Georgian mansion, was still readable after its conversion. As a compromise, it was agreed to lose the line of sight (front to garden circulation) and to insert a door (at a natural break point) between the Lutyens staircase and corridor. This allowed the creation of self-contained apartments, of decent size, while retaining the spatial integrity and completeness of the principal rooms and the Lutyens areas.

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The current scheme

This scheme seeks consent for the amendment of the approved ground floor layout through changes that previously raised objections, as part of the refused 2019 scheme, ref. EPF/2501/19(LB) and EPF/2502/19.

The creation of a new communal entrance hall through the partitioning of the original entrance room

This would prevent the reading of this historic Georgian entrance room and sense of space, eroding its status. Evidence for the completeness of this room is demonstrated through the heights of the dado around the room. The height of the dado to the left of the entrance door (on entering) being the original (Georgian) height. This is confirmed by the photographs included in the document “*Ground Floor Historic Analysis*”, previously submitted as part of the approved scheme, ref. LB/EPF/3275/17 & EPF/3264/17.

According to the *Heritage Statement regarding the proposed rebuilding of the ground floor partition in the entrance hall*, the “cornice would be fitted on both sides of the partition, completing the room cornice and creating a ceiling “cell” with cornice adjacent to the columns.” This would add further confusion in the reading of the original layout and volume of the Georgian entrance room by creating a new space that would appear complete and “as intended” with uninterrupted decorative elements (cornice).

The division of the Lutyens corridor

This would diminish the appreciation of the volume and completeness of this space, designed by Lutyens. Alongside with the monumental staircase (also designed by Lutyens), the corridor is considered as an architectural element the contribution of which makes Grange Court of more than special interest and designated at grade II*.

The reinstatement of the historic circulation through the building from the original entrance door to the main staircase, via a truncated portion of the Lutyens corridor, as argued by the applicant, is not considered to outweigh the harm resulting from the fragmentation of these significant areas.

New ground floor extension

The current scheme proposes to infill at ground floor behind the front façade of the listed building to provide a new entrance to Flat G-2 as well as extra floor space. This would result in further loss of 18th & 19th century fabric (wall and windows). No information has been provided regarding the impact these works would have on both the historic layout and fabric of the building, as required by paragraph 194 of the NPPF (2021).

The incorporation of the service corridor within Flat 3

This would further fragmentate the ground floor layout, isolating the NE extension, a room that has been designed by Lutyens (according to *Ground Floor Historic Analysis*) from the other areas designed by the architect, such as the staircase.

The reconfiguration of the entrance to Flat 1, Bedroom 2

No objections, subject that the ensuite bathroom, dressing and WC follow the “pod” approach previously developed and supported - recessed from the ceiling to allow reading of the initial room volume and the appreciation of the wall and ceiling decorative elements.

Recommendations

For the reasons expressed above, we OBJECT to this proposed scheme. The proposed interventions, which have not been supported by any clear and convincing justifications, are found to be in contradiction with the original approach of the granted 2017 scheme, which promoted a balance between enabling development and the conservation of the listed building. It is considered that the proposal would cause an unacceptable level of harm to the significance of the grade II* listed building, irreversibly eroding the legibility of its historic layout and the completeness of its Georgian entrance room and Lutyens corridor.

This is supported by policy HC10 of our Local Plan and Alterations (1998 and 2006), policy DM7 of our Submission Version Local Plan (2017), and paragraphs 189, 194, 195, 197, 199, 200 and 201 of the NPPF (2021).

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Delegated Report

EPF/0633/22 and EPF/0767/21

Description of Site:

The application site comprises a detached Grade II* listed building on the south-east side of High Road. The main element of the building comprises a 3 storey mansion house, with single storey side wings on both flanks. Investigative works to the building commenced in 2019 and included stripping out, the demolition of a dilapidated rear addition and removal of parts of the roof. The property dates from the late 18th Century being originally built as single dwelling house. Parts of the building are known to have been remodelled by Sir Edwin Lutyens. The building was last used by Chigwell School and has been empty since late 2016, during which time the condition of the building has deteriorated.

The main building is set some 33m back from the road edge with an informal parking area to the front. There is a 30m deep rear garden which slopes down to the south east. The application site is surrounded on three sides by residential properties, which would have originally formed part of the wider plot of Grange Court, buildings to the north east believed to have been stables and land to the rear a larger garden. The building lies opposite St Mary's Church Hall. A public footpath runs along the south western site boundary between High Road and Meadow Way.

The site and much of the surrounding area is within the Chigwell Conservation Area.

Description of Proposal:

The application seek planning and listed building consent for alterations to the ground floor of the building to create a new entrance to the converted part of the building through the front portico, and an infill extension on the eastern flank where the approved scheme shows the entrance to the units. Internal changes to the building arising therefrom include a reduction to the living area to the ground floor west flat G1, inclusion of the redundant corridor space that results into flat G3 with layout changes, and the extension of flat G2.

Relevant History:

EPF/3264/17 Conversion, extension and partial demolition of existing building to provide 14 flats with associated parking and landscaping. Change of use from residential school building (Use Class C2) to residential (Use Class C3). This and the related Listed Building consent application (EPF/3275/17) were approved in March 2018.

EPF/2502/19 Variation to approved plans to create similar layout to what is now proposed – refused (along with related LBC application EPF/2501/19) on grounds of loss of historic fabric and internal elements of the building (Area Plans South)

Policies Applied:

Adopted Local Plan:

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning

applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan currently comprises the Epping Forest District Council Adopted Local Plan (1998) and Alterations (2006).

The following policies within the current Development Plan are considered to be of relevance to this application:

CP2 Protecting the Quality of the Rural and Built Environment
CP5 Sustainable Building
CP6 Achieving sustainable urban development patterns
CP7 Urban Form and Quality
HC1 Scheduled monuments and other archaeological sites
HC6 Character, Appearance and setting of Conservation Areas
HC7 Development within Conservation Areas
HC10 Works to Listed Buildings
HC12 Development affecting the setting of Listed Buildings
HC13 Change of use of Listed Buildings
DBE2 Effect on Neighbouring Properties
DBE3 Design in Urban Areas
DBE9 Loss of Amenity

NPPF (July 2021):

The revised NPPF is a material consideration in determining planning applications. As with its predecessor, the presumption in favour of sustainable development remains at the heart of the NPPF. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF provides that for determining planning applications this means either;

(a) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

(b) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making, but policies within the development plan need to be considered and applied in terms of their degree of consistency with the Framework.

In addition to paragraph 11, the following paragraphs of the NPPF are considered to be of relevance to this application:

2 Achieving sustainable development
5 Delivering sufficient supply of homes
11 Making effective use of land

- 12 Achieving well designed places
- 14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Epping Forest District Local Plan (Submission Version) 2017:

On 14 December 2017, the Council resolved to approve the Epping Forest District Local Plan (2011-2033) – Submission Version ("LPSV") for submission to the Secretary of State and the Council also resolved that the LPSV be endorsed as a material consideration to be used in the determination of planning applications.

The Council submitted the LPSV for independent examination on 21 September 2018. The Inspector appointed to examine the LPSV ("the Local Plan Inspector") held examination hearings between 12 February and 11 June 2019. As part of the examination process, the Council has asked the Local Plan inspector to recommend modifications of the LPSV to enable its adoption.

During the examination hearings, a number of proposed Main Modifications of the LPSV were 'agreed' with the Inspector on the basis that they would be subject to public consultation in due course. Following completion of the hearings, in a letter dated 2 August 2019, the Inspector provided the Council with advice on the soundness and legal compliance of the LPSV ("the Inspector's Advice"). In that letter, the Inspector concluded that, at this stage, further Main Modifications (MMs) of the emerging Local Plan are required to enable its adoption and that, in some cases, additional work will need to be done by the Council to establish the precise form of the MMs.

Although the LPSV does not yet form part of the statutory development plan, when determining planning applications, the Council must have regard to the LPSV as material to the application under consideration. In accordance with paragraph 48 of the Framework, the LPAs "may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- a) The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- b) The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- c) The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given)."

Footnote 22 to paragraph 48 of the NPPF explains that where an emerging Local Plan is being examined under the transitional arrangements (set out in paragraph 214), as is the case for the LPSV, consistency should be tested against the previous version of the Framework published in March 2012.

As the preparation of the emerging Local Plan has reached a very advanced stage, subject to the Inspector's Advice regarding the need for additional MMs, significant weight should be accorded to LPSV policies in accordance with paragraph 48 of Framework.

The following policies in the LPSV are considered to be of relevance to the determination of this application, with the advanced stage of the LPSV, all policies should be afforded significant weight:

No.	POLICY
SP1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
T1	Sustainable transport choices
DM1	Habitat protection and improving biodiversity
DM2	Epping Forest SAC and Lee Valley SPA
DM3	Landscape Character, Ancient Landscapes and Geodiversity
DM5	Green and Blue Infrastructure
DM7	Heritage Assets
DM9	High Quality Design
DM10	Housing design and quality
DM15	Managing and reducing flood risk
DM16	Sustainable Drainage Systems
DM19	Sustainable water use
DM21	Local environmental impacts, pollution and land contamination
DM22	Air quality

Consultation Carried Out and Summary of Representations Received

Date of site visit: Previous applications
 Number of neighbours consulted: 27
 Site notice posted: Applicant has not provided evidence that site notice was displayed.
 Responses received: No response received from neighbours.
 Parish Council: Chigwell PC objected to the application as inappropriate development to a Grade II* listed building.

Main Issues and Considerations:

The applications raises only listed building considerations, there are no neighbour amenity issues arising from the works, nor any other site related matters (landscaping, parking etc).

As referred to above, this amounts to a reworking of the scheme that was refused in 2020, albeit without the inclusion of a lift. The alterations to form the entrance break up the front main room of the building to form the passageway in, and the alterations to enclose part of the internal hallway breaks up divides the corridor which forms an integral part of the Lutyens designed core of the building. The side extension would result in the loss of part of the historic fabric from the side elevation.

The Conservation Officer has provided a detailed assessment of the issues raised. This concludes as under:

...we OBJECT to this proposed scheme. The proposed interventions, which have not been supported by any clear and convincing justifications, are found to be in contradiction with the original approach of the granted 2017 scheme, which promoted a balance between enabling development and the conservation of the listed building. It is considered that the proposal would cause an unacceptable level of harm to the significance of the grade II listed building, irreversibly eroding the legibility of its historic layout and the completeness of its Georgian entrance room and Lutyens corridor.*

Conclusion:

In light of the ongoing concerns at the impact of the development on the listed building, the applications should be refused for the reasons set out.