

Havant Borough Council
Heritage Consultation Response

Date – 29/8/2024

Officer – Rachael McMurray, Principal Heritage Officer

Application – APP/24/00121

Site Address – Langstone Lodge, 1 Langstone High Street, Langstone, Havant

Proposal - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a replacement dwelling, designed to match the extended form of dwelling as approved in 2022.

Site / Location

The application site is situated in Langstone, a historic village just north of the Hayling Bridge. It is located on the corner of Langstone High Street and Langstone Road. It comprises a large, detached dwelling, set back from the road, within substantial grounds, enclosed by a 2m (approx.) high brick wall and entrance gates from Langstone High Street.

The property is part one, part two-storey with accommodation in the pitched roof space and has been altered and extended in various ways since its construction in the late C19. The exterior is partly rendered, part exposed brickwork. On the main entrance there is a stone portico. On the southwest facing elevation, there are ground floor bay windows. The property features sash windows however, many of these are non-original. With the grounds there is a detached garage building, close to the main entrance from Langstone High Street.

History of Langstone Lodge

The property was estimated to have been built around 1875, as one of the three houses along Langstone Road, by the family of the Rector of Havant, George Robert Mountain. The other houses are; Woodfield (now Grade II listed) and Langbrook. Langstone Lodge is first identified on the 1897 ordnance survey map.

Prior to the submission of the application, the property has been gutted internally, with all staircases removed. A previous visit to the property by council officers in 2022, when it was habitable, revealed that minimal original fabric remained internally (some of this had been replaced with good quality replicas i.e. fireplaces, skirting boards etc). As a result of these alterations, the building would be highly unlikely to meet the criteria for statutory listing by Historic England for a building of this period. It is still however a notable and recognisable example of a large Victorian villa, complete with its setting of a large, landscaped garden to the north and represents part of the growth and prosperity of Havant and Langstone at that time.

Due to its historic and architectural interest, the building is highlighted within the Langstone Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) as a 'positive building' and at the time of the appraisal in 2011, was considered to be worthy of inclusion on the list of Buildings of Local Interest.

Whilst this local listing designation was not carried through at the time, the building is considered to be a 'Non-Designated Heritage Asset' which is defined in the NPPF (Annexe 2) as:

'Buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets'

The Langstone Conservation Area was first designated in 1975 and last reviewed in 2011. It is a designated heritage asset. It has significance as an area of special architectural and historic interest, where the character and appearance is considered worthy of preservation or enhancement. It has a unique waterside setting, with a number of important listed buildings which has evolved due to its location as the original harbour to Havant. It is also an area of important ecological habitats and within the protected landscape of Chichester Harbour.

Legislation

When assessing the proposal, the following legislation and policy context is taken in consideration.

Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires planning authorities, when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a **Conservation Area**, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area.

National Planning Policy Framework (revised November 2023)

Chapter 16 of the NPPF relates to **the Historic Environment** including paragraphs 195 – 214. The building subject to this application is not listed but is deemed to be a non-designated heritage asset (as set out in the introduction) and therefore the following paragraphs are most relevant to the determination of this application:

Para 207 states that:

*'where a development will result in **substantial harm to, or total loss of**, the significance of a designated heritage asset, permission should be refused, unless this harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits, or a number of criteria are met. Where less than substantial harm is identified paragraph 208 requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development*

Para 208 states that:

*'Where a development proposal will lead to **less than substantial harm** to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'*

Para 209 states that:

'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect

non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’.

Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy 2011 and Allocations Plan 2014)

Policy CS11 – Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of the Havant Borough

Policy CS11 (4) states that planning permission will be granted for development which:

‘Protects and where appropriate enhances the borough’s statutory and non-statutory heritage designations by appropriately managing development in or adjacent to conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites, buildings of local historic or architectural interest’.

Policy CS16 – High Quality Design

Policy CP16 (1a) of the Core Strategy states that:

‘Planning permission will be granted for development that is designed to a high standard, which helps to create places where people want to live, work and relax. All development should demonstrate that its design:

- a) Identifies and responds positively to existing features of natural, historic or local character within or close to the proposed development site’.*
- b) Integrates with existing local landscape features, promotes wildlife and biodiversity and/or applies characteristics of the local area into the design of a scheme wherever possible to create variety and interest;*
- c) Uses the characteristics of the locality to help inform the design of the new development including heights, massing, existing buildings lines, plot widths and depths, materials and proportions of windows and doors;*
- d) Is well connected to and integrates with the immediate local area and the wider area by linking to existing pedestrian and cycle routes and encouraging people to use public transport where possible; and*
- e) The development does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbours through smell, the loss of privacy, outlook, noise and overlooking.*

Policy DM20 (Allocations Plan) - Historic Assets

Policy DM20 states that;

‘Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that conserves and enhances the historic assets of Havant. It also states that application which affect, or have the potential to affect, heritage assets are expected to provide a Heritage Statement that:

- 1. Describe the significance of the asset and its setting, using appropriate expertise and where necessary original survey, at a level of detail proportionate to its significance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal.*
- 2. Sets out the impact of the development on the heritage assets and mitigation that is proportionate to the impact and the significance of the heritage asset, including where possible positive opportunities to conserve and enjoy heritage assets.*

Assessment

The proposal is to demolish the existing dwelling and replace it with a replacement dwelling, designed to match the extended form of the dwelling, as per previous planning permissions granted in 2022. The replacement dwelling would overall appear very similar to the existing, but with a raised floor level height of approx. 0.5m.

As set out earlier in this response, Langstone Lodge is identified as a NDHA within the boundary of a designated heritage asset – Langstone Conservation Area.

The classification of the building as a NDHA, brings into effect para 209 of the NPPF. The demolition of the asset would result in a substantial harm to its significance. A balanced judgement would mean that such harm could only be supported when it is clearly justified that the heritage asset cannot be retained. Which in the case of this application, is because of its structural condition. This is the case being put forward by the two reports which accompany the application.

1. Findings of Heritage Statement by RPS:

This application has been submitted with a Heritage Statement by RPS Heritage. The report assesses the significance of the building and finds it to have ‘historic interest’. It concludes that:

*‘The proposals will therefore lead to harm to the significance of the conservation area which, when considered in the context of the conservation area as a whole, will be ‘less than substantial harm’ in magnitude. This harm should be considered in the context of the numerous changes seen to the building through the 20 and 21st centuries and the current and the structural defects, which collectively mean that comprehensive repairs and stabilisation works would be unduly hazardous. **The demolition and reconstruction of the building is therefore necessary**, and it is recommended that a programme of Historic Building Recording, to be secured by condition, is undertaken in advance of this demolition’.*

Whilst the report does find that the loss of the building would result in less than substantial harm to the conservation area (as a designated heritage asset), it does not define the building itself as a non-designated heritage asset and therefore does not assess the harm of the total loss of this asset. It justifies the harm to the conservation area by concluding that the demolition of the building is necessary as its comprehensive repairs and stabilisation works would be unduly hazardous.

2. Findings of Hawkley and Dawson Structural Survey:

The application is also accompanied by a structural report carried out by Hockley and Dawson Consulting Engineers. The report advises that that:

‘There is clear evidence of many phases of alteration and addition to the structure, all in a rather arbitrary manner with multiple changes in floor level, materials, and form. A significant amount of the previous work being exposed is of poor quality and detrimental to the structural integrity of the building’.

And in summary:

‘Whilst all of the defects, if they were singular deficiencies, are in themselves individually repairable, taken as a whole, they will require some significant interventions, including the dismantling and reconstruction of large sections of defective masonry, the replacement of floor structure and the

complete reordering of most of the roof. These interventions will need to be combined with other structural strengthening measures to ensure that the building is sound, fully restrained, and competent.

‘These works, if carried out to the extant structure, will require significant and complex temporary support if the existing building is to be repaired and reordered in-situ. Work of this nature is of necessity complex and hazardous with a very clear methodology required and the work to be carried out in and around significant temporary structure to ensure that it remains a safe working environment. The structure will be very vulnerable whilst this work is attempted, and we feel it may be an effort that will not prove to be successful given the nature of the defects’.

*‘Given the current condition of the building and the amount of structure that will need to be replaced we feel that this is **unnecessarily hazardous to install complex temporary structure and attempt a competent repair**. The building will be very vulnerable during these works and particularly at risk as the support is transferred from the existing structural system, such as it is, to the temporary support’.*

The information therefore presented within the application is that the building has numerous identified defects and that it would be unnecessarily hazardous to attempt a competent repair to the building in its current state, hence the proposal to demolish and rebuild to the design proposed.

HBC Building Control Officer Review:

As a result of the structural issues being given for the proposed demolition, further advice was sought from the Council’s Building Control Officer, who advised the following:

‘I am under the impression that the building can be saved and will not need to be demolished to resolve the issues outlined. During discussions on site the engineer did not indicate as per his report that the building could not be saved in fact it was mentioned that the building could be saved at a cost. The engineers report allows for repair works to be undertaken within the roof area to support it to an adequate level. I am sure further investigation at lower levels could also find solutions to issues raised regarding rebuilding or stitching brickwork together’.

‘While I am not a structural engineer and would welcome a third parties’ structural engineers’ review of Hockley & Dawson report alongside photos taken and a possible site visit’.

Third Party Review:

Based on the advice from the BC Officer, a third party review of the Hockley and Dawson structural survey was commissioned, which included a site visit to the building and assessment of its current structural condition. This was carried out by VKHP Consulting – Structural Engineers.

In summary, this review also found there to be numerous structural defects within the building however, it concluded that:

‘The majority of the structure appeared to be in good condition with no signs of foundation movement or significant instability of the structure as a whole. The re-use of the building will require a new steel frame or similar alternative solution to re-support the roof structure, crack stitching, rebuilding of local areas of masonry, a new steel frame to the north east elevation and replacement of some timber elements internally among other repair works. A series of temporary works structures will be required to safely complete these works, but we anticipate that the design and execution of these works is not

beyond the ability of a competent temporary works designer and general contractor. It is the opinion of vkhp that the sum of these defects and subsequent repair works does not warrant the demolition of this structure’.

Summary

Based on the further assessment by VKHP and the view of the Building Control Officer, it appears that building could be repaired, albeit with a competent contractor and therefore, would avoid the substantial harm to a NDHA.

1. Impact on the designated heritage asset – Langstone Conservation Area:

Langstone Lodge is located within the Langstone Conservation Area and its proposed demolition would result in ‘less than substantial harm’ to the significance of the conservation area, as a result of the loss of a NDHA, having existed on the site since the late C18 in its current position, albeit with various alterations since its construction.

However, given that the proposal for the new dwelling is very similar to the existing property, albeit higher, this level of harm is lessened to a degree, to the medium-low end of the scale within ‘less than substantial harm’

Level of harm to the Langstone Conservation Area – Less than substantial at the medium to lower end of the spectrum.

2. Impact on the NDHA – Langstone Lodge (1 Langstone High Street):

Due to its local historic and architectural interest of parts of the external facades, Langstone Lodge is deemed to be a non-designated heritage asset. Applying a balanced judgement (as per the requirement of para 209 of the NPPF), it’s total loss would result in substantial harm to the significance of the NDHA.

Without clear and convincing evidence that the only option left for the building is to demolish it and rebuild, the LPA is not able to support the loss of the NDHA in this case.

Level of harm to the NDHA – Substantial harm.

Conclusion

OBJECTION

Reasons for refusal to be discussed with the case officer and a further response to follow with the suggested wording.