

Shared Heritage Services Team response

APP/20/00974

Langstone Lodge, 1 Langstone High Street

The site is located in the Langstone Conservation Area and within the setting of the Chichester Harbour AONB. No. 1 Langstone High Street comprises a large, detached property which is set in substantial grounds and set back from the main High Street and enclosed by a high brick boundary wall. The property, known as Langstone Lodge has been identified as a building of historic interest in the Langstone Conservation Area 2011 (CA).

The site forms the entrance to the conservation area when travelling southwards towards Hayling Island. The western boundary comprises a red brick wall of approx. 2-2.5m in height and to the rear of the wall is a line of young trees, with mature vegetation located further into the site. The wall extends for approx. 40m before opening out to Langstone High Street. The north boundary of the site is made up of a row of sycamore trees which separates the site from a driveway leading to no. 63 Langstone Road. To the north of this driveway, is a pair of former railway cottages which are statutorily listed but which have suffered significant fire damage.

Proposal:

The proposal is for the erection of a 'L' shape, single storey, 9no. bay garage and turning area using the existing access from Langstone Road. The building would have an eaves height of 2.6m and 4.5m to the ridge. It would feature a pitched roof turret in the centre where it turns. The building is proposed to be clad in timber and feature a clay tile roof. The building would be set back by approx. 5m from the boundary wall. The vegetation on the north and western boundaries are proposed to be retained.

The building is to be located in the north-west corner of the site, with the shorter side running parallel with the western elevation wall. It would make use of an existing vehicular access located on Langstone Road, rather than the one which serves the main house from Langstone High Street.

Legislation:

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.

The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019 and sets down the policies that the Council must take into account when determining planning applications. The 'Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2', states at paragraph 4:

'The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its archaeological, architectural, historic, and artistic interest' and provides at paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 that in order for the Local Planning

Authority to make decisions in line with legal requirements, the objectives of the development plan; and, the policy requirements of the NPPF, great importance is placed on understanding the nature, extent and level of the significance of the heritage asset.

The revised NPPF (February 2019) sets out in Chapter 16, the core principles relating to development affecting Heritage Assets that local planning authorities should consider in making planning decisions in the following paragraphs:

‘184. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

189. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

190. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

191. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

192. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Considering potential impacts

193. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

194. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

With regards to local planning policy, the following are relevant:

Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for development that:

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 CP16 (1a) of the Core Strategy states '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:

Identifies and responds positively to existing features of natural, historic or local character within or close to the proposed development site'.

Policy DM20 of the Allocations Plan 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 Planning and Heritage Statement submitted with the application has the following view:

'In terms of the policy criteria the open aspect of the large garden is retained by locating the building in the north-west corner and associating it with the adjacent built form. This will largely retain the significance of the open aspect to Langstone Road. As a result, the siting respects this part of the Conservation Area and the modest height of the building behind a substantial brick wall will have a commensurate modest and less than substantial impact on the Conservation Area'.

However, from the block plan, it is evident that the proposed building when coupled with the turning area, has a huge floorspace, which is not dissimilar to the main house itself. The eaves of the building would be 2.6m rising to 4.5m at the ridge. The boundary wall would obscure some of the view of the building however, at only 2.1m in height, a large portion of the roof would be visible. I do not agree that it would be read in conjunction with the neighbouring site (or rather its future development) as the timber section would be particularly obscured by the wall and separated by the row of sycamore trees.

The building would be set back by 5-6m from the boundary wall however it would extend for approximately 17m and at this length, would be highly visible and dominating when travelling southwards in particular towards Hayling island. At present, the existing boundary trees do not afford much screening, and these would take a considerable amount of time to provide a substantial level of screening.

It is unclear if other options for the location of the garage have been considered although from a highways perspective its proposed siting makes sense due to the presence of the existing second access. However, the garden is vast in size and I am of the view that other locations should be explored which have less visual impact on the entrance to the conservation area.

Overall, the view is that the proposed building would have a highly dominating, visual impact which would not meet the test of 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.

The design approach and proposed materials, subject to the approval of satisfactory samples / details is supported in principle, however the siting of the building, being so visible and adjacent to the wall is the issue and for this reason the application is not supported on heritage grounds.

I note the comments from the Chichester Harbour Conservancy in that they are concerned with the location of the building and suggest it should be moved closer to the main house. This option would also address the issue raised and I am happy to comment on any revised plans which are forthcoming.

Conclusion – OBJECTION

Rachael McMurray

2/12/2020