



Hertsmere  
Borough Council

Civic Offices  
Elstree Way, Borehamwood  
Herts WD6 1WA  
Tel: 020 8207 2277  
DX45602 Borehamwood  
[www.hertsmere.gov.uk](http://www.hertsmere.gov.uk)

## Planning and Economic Development

Daniel Becker & Melanie Bresgall  
9 East Ridgeway  
Cuffley  
EN6 4AW

Your Ref:  
Our Ref: 20/0059/PA  
Contact: Georgia O'Brien  
**Extension:** 0208 207 2277  
Email: [georgia.o'brien@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:georgia.o'brien@hertsmere.gov.uk)  
Fax:  
Date: 11 June 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

### **TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**

**Application Number: 20/0059/PA**  
**Site Location: Cedar House**  
**73 Blanche Lane**  
**South Mimms**  
**Hertfordshire**  
**EN6 3PA**

**Description: Construction of new Orangery and internal & external repairs and alternations to the listed building (Pre-Application Advice).**

Please find attached a detailed report in response to your request for pre-application advice.

Yours faithfully

**Georgia O'Brien - Planning Officer**

## **Pre-Application Advice Report**

**Georgia O'Brien**

**Reference Number: 20/0059/PA**

**Site Address: Cedar House  
73 Blanche Lane  
South Mimms  
Hertfordshire  
EN6 3PA**

**DATE OF APPLICATION:** 18 May 2020

**WARD:** Shenley

**GREEN BELT:** Yes

**CONSERVATION AREA:** South Mimms

**LISTED BUILDING :** Yes – Grade II

**TREE PRES. ORDER:** Yes

**Proposal: Construction of new Orangery and internal & external repairs and alternations to the listed building (Pre-Application Advice).**

### **Application Site Description**

Cedar House is a large, two storey, Grade II listed dwelling with cellar, located within South Mimms Conservation Area and the Metropolitan Green Belt. The dwelling dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and has been significantly extended and altered in the centuries since. The dwelling is therefore finished in varying materials, including yellow and red brick with varied hipped and flat roof forms. The grounds of Cedar House comprise gardens, an outdoor pool, a tennis court and outbuildings. There are numerous mature trees within the curtilage; two trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

The property is accessed from New Road by a long gated driveway, leading to a large hard-surfaced courtyard beside the main entrance. There is a large detached garage with space to park multiple cars, in addition to a separate outbuilding last used as a chapel by the previous owners. The current main entrance is located on the southern end of the building, concealed from view of the road.

The dwelling sits on a corner plot, bordered to the east by Greyhound Lane and to the west by New Road, also known as Blanche Lane. The dwelling is visually prominent from Greyhound Lane where the original front elevation can be seen, with the additions of various extensions. The southern boundary of the site borders some woodland, and the western boundary borders neighbouring Cedar Cottage. To the north is another neighbouring dwelling, Georgian House.

South Mimms village is semi-rural and residential in nature, situated between the A1(M) and M25. Residential extensions and alterations are common.

### Relevant Planning History:

Reference number	Description	Outcome and date
TP/87/1245	NEW GARAGE BUILDING WITH FOUR VEHICLE SPACES AND NEW GARDEN STORE AND GAZEBO.	Approval 21 December 1987
TP/87/1246	NEW GARAGE, GARDEN STORE AND MINOR NEW AND MAINTENANCE WORKS WITHIN THE GROUNDS	Approval 21 December 1987
TP/92/0471	Erection of single storey extension following part demolition of existing and erection of balustrade over south entrance. Alterations to windows (Listed Building application)	Grants Consent 3 August 1992
TP/92/0470	Erection of single storey extension following part demolition of existing and erection of balustrade over south entrance. Erection of 1.75m high wall abutting highway.	Grant Permission 3 August 1992

### Policy Designation

Green Belt  
Statutory Listed Building  
South Mimms Conservation Area  
Tree Preservation Orders

### Planning Policy Context

#### National Policy/Guidance

- Listed Building and Conservation Area Act 1990
- National Planning Policy Framework 2019
- Planning Practice Guidance

#### The Development Plan

#### **Adopted Hertsmere Local Plan: Development Plan Document Core Strategy 2013**

- SP1 Creating sustainable development
- CS12 The Enhancement of the Natural Environment
- CS13 The Green Belt

- CS14 Protection or enhancement of heritage assets
- CS22 Securing a high quality and accessible environment
- CS25 Accessibility and parking

### **Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016**

- SADM26 – Development Standards in the Green Belt
- SADM29 – Heritage Assets
- SADM30 - Design Principles
- SADM40 - Highway and Access Criteria for New Development

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents**

- Guidelines for Residential Extensions & Alterations Part E
- Hertsmere Local Plan Parking Standards SPD (2014)

### **Key Issues**

The proposal raises the following Key Issues:

- Principle of Development
- Principle of Development in the Green Belt
- Impact on Visual Amenity & Heritage Assets (South Mimms Conservation Area, Grade II Listed Building)
- Impact on Residential Amenity
- Impact on Car Parking Provision and Highways Safety
- Trees, Landscape and Ecological Impact

### **Officer Comments**

#### Principle of Development

This application relates to Cedar House and its grounds, outlined in red on the submitted location plan. It is noted that Cedar Cottage, adjacent to the site, forms part of the wider site under the same ownership, though conversations with the applicant established that the two dwellings are under separate titles.

The submitted Planning and Heritage Statement provides some background on the history of Cedar House, including its use as a children's home, before being acquired by Christian Corps International as a UK base for their members. The planning history of the dwelling reveals that no change of use was ever sought, though some documentation indicates that the use was likely residential. Given the presence of numerous bedrooms and separate toilet rooms and shower cubicles for communal use, this residential use would not fit into the definition of C3 residential (up to six people living together as a single household, i.e. a family). The applicant believes the property has been vacant for a period of around 5 years, so it is possible that the property has a nil use.

It is recommended that the applicant submit a full application for planning permission to change the use to C3 residential. This would formalise the building's conversion back to a family home to avoid planning and enforcement complications in future. It is not thought that there would be any objection to this change of use and permission would be granted.

### Principle of Development in the Green Belt

The application site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Proposals within the Green Belt will be assessed against the guidance set out in Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) in addition to the Council's own Green Belt policies. The NPPF states that the fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. There is a strong emphasis on the presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which is by definition harmful. Any identified harm will be given substantial weight. Development should therefore not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy (2013) reiterates that any development in the Green Belt will be assessed in relation to the NPPF. In addition, SADM26 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016) states that development in the Green Belt should comply with a set of principles. When judging scale, the Council will make a comparison between existing and proposed development having regard to: changes in floorspace, volume, site coverage of building and hardstanding, changes in height and orientation, and change and intensity of use.

As such, when applying the relevant Green Belt policy it is necessary to assess the appropriateness of the development, its potential impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the impact on the visual amenity of the Green Belt. Should the development fail to meet any of the exceptions to inappropriate development defined in Paragraph 145 of the NPPF, very special circumstances would need to be put forward to justify its approval.

The proposal seeks numerous internal and external alterations. The internal alterations and repairs are subject to Listed Building consent only, and are therefore not assessed in regards to their impact on the Green Belt. The Green Belt assessment relates only to the construction of external alterations and extensions, which would be subject to planning permission in addition to Listed Building Consent.

### *Appropriateness*

Proposed works include the construction of a single storey rear orangery extension, the replacement of one window on the front elevation with an access door to the flat roof below for maintenance, insertion of a hatch to the roof for maintenance access, and the potential insertion of two windows to the rear elevation in place of the orangery extension as a second option. The latter was discussed at the pre-app meeting as a second option, should the orangery be deemed an inappropriate addition, and is included in this report for full clarity.

The proposed development is considered against the set of exceptions set out in Paragraph 145 of the NPPF. Of these, exceptions 145c, 145e and 145g are considered potentially applicable. The appropriateness of these exceptions is thus considered, from most to least appropriate:

- Exception 145c - the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building

This exception considers whether the proposed works would be disproportionate when compared to the original building, by taking account of the original, existing and proposed volume and floor space calculations. It is acknowledged that Cedar House has undergone a number of extensions and alterations in the past, though the proposed works would increase the amount of built form within the site by a minor amount. Therefore, this exception is likely to be the most appropriate.

Exceptions 145e and 145g were also considered as potential options for assessing Green Belt appropriateness;

- Exception 145e – limited infilling in villages

This exception allows some development within identified village envelopes. The application site sits within the South Mimms village envelope. However, limited infilling is defined as comprising the construction of new dwellings and therefore would not be applicable to this assessment.

- Exception 145g – limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings) which would;
  - o Not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development or;
  - o Not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

This exception would assess the proposed development as limited infilling within 'previously developed land' (PDL). The NPPF provides a definition of PDL, though states that it would exclude 'land in built-up areas such as residential gardens'. The officer acknowledges that a judgement can be made whether or not the application site gardens could be considered to exist in a 'built-up' area. Given that the site sits within the established South Mimms village envelope, it can be considered as part of a built-up settlement and therefore would not meet the definition of PDL.

This exception would not therefore be applicable to the proposed development.

The Green Belt assessment is therefore made under exception 145c in the following paragraphs.

In order to apply this assessment, it is necessary to take account of the original building's volume and footprint in comparison to that proposed. The NPPF defines the 'original' building as the 'building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.' The application dwelling dates to the 18<sup>th</sup> century with multiple extensions carried out in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the majority of which before 1 July 1948. After this date, some alterations were made in

the 1980's and 1990's including the construction of the detached garage, detached outbuilding (lately chapel), insertion of brick boundary walls and construction of a single storey rear extension. It is therefore acknowledged that the dwelling has been extended significantly since its first iteration, with some additions made to the 'original' dwelling; though the majority of built form added takes the form of detached outbuildings and boundary treatment.

The pre-application submitted did not provide scaled plans or volume and floorspace calculations. However, an indicative sketch was provided showing the approximate location and scale of the proposed orangery. The orangery would be modest in footprint with a single storey height, and would therefore constitute a minor addition of built form. Nonetheless, at application stage the applicant would be required to present original, existing and proposed floorspace and volume calculations to indicate the proposed increase in built form. This would then be assessed, together with the existing additions to the 'original' dwelling, whether the total additions would constitute disproportionate additions.

In addition to taking account of the increase in floorspace and volume, an assessment on impact to Green Belt openness would be made to determine whether the proposal would have a significant impact on openness. This assessment would be more pertinent to the actual potential harm to the Green Belt, given that the existing dwelling is much altered from its original form and numerous extensions and alterations have taken place over the course of its history. It is also noted that the other proposed works, including the roof hatch and replacement door at first floor, are minor alterations that would have little impact on Green Belt openness and would not increase built form within the site, so are unlikely to raise concerns.

The proposed orangery extension would be located adjacent to existing built form and, though the rear elevation is visible from greyhound lane, existing boundary treatments along the site boundary and the dwelling's location set back from the road means that the extension is likely to be concealed from view. The extension would therefore have only a minor impact on Green Belt openness.

In summary, the proposal at application stage is likely to be assessed under Green Belt exception 145c. Initial assessments of the proposal suggest that a small residential extension, such as the proposed orangery, would likely to be considered acceptable subject to submission of original, existing and proposed floorspace and volume calculations. The impact to Green Belt openness would be minor and unlikely to raise concerns. All other alterations proposed would be minor in scale and would not result in an increase in built form within the site, and would therefore also be acceptable on Green Belt terms.

#### Impact on Visual Amenity & Heritage Assets

The application site sits within South Mimms Conservation Area and is a Grade II listed building. Any proposed works have the potential to impact on these heritage assets. As such, advice has been sought from the Conservation Officer on the appropriateness of the proposed works. The following report has been received and is included verbatim:

Built Heritage Pre-Application Advice pertaining to alterations to a Grade II listed building (HE Ref: 1174600). This advice follows a site visit on the 8th June 2020 followed by a video conference on the 9th June 2020.

Pre-application advice is given on the assumption that all existing works are authorised.

For clarity, this consultation follows the order of discussion within the pre-application advice submission.

#### 1. Ground Floor of the House (Internal)

- a. The existing wood panelling is a later addition and is not of a high quality (with the exception of the lobby). Painting the panelling white will not diminish the significance of the listed building. The removal of panelling will be supported, particularly in key areas such the hall and principle reception rooms where earlier details are in conflict with the panelling. The exact nature of repairs required to these areas will not be known until an area of panelling is removed.
- b. The repair of a crack to the ceiling of the current dining room is acceptable assuming traditional techniques and materials are employed.
- c. The removal of wood panelling to the original hallway to allow the original front door to be uncovered and restored is welcomed. Again, the exact nature of remedial works required is not known at present.
- d. The analysis of the listed building provided indicates that the area now in use as a dining room and kitchen were added in the mid-late 1890s. Due to the present timber panelling within the dining room and kitchen units within the kitchen (which also has a lower ceiling) it is not possible to determine the exact significance of the wall between the two. On the assumption that no significant decorative features survive – or that any surviving decorative features are retained – there is not an in principle objection to enlarging the opening between the two rooms. To retain the legibility of the earlier floor plan, the entirety of the wall should not be removed (as suggested as an alternative by the applicant) and careful consideration given to the detailing of the aperture.
- e. The analysis of the listed building provided indicates that the area now in use as a kitchen was added in the mid-late 1890s and the main entrance lobby to the west was added in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The twentieth century panelling in the lobby is of a much high quality than that in the rest of the ground floor. Creating a new link between the kitchen and lobby is not unacceptable in principle though the exact significance of the fabric cannot yet be determined due to kitchen units and panelling.
- f. Reinstating doors within the ground floor is generally acceptable. These should be new, and in an appropriate style to the area they are being inserted within, rather than reclaimed.
- g. The insertion of ceiling lights throughout the property (not inset spot lights) is acceptable.

#### 2. Ground Floor of the House (External)



- a) The erection of an orangery to the original principle elevation is not favourable. As discussed in the video conference, once the panelling has been removed internally and the vegetation removed externally there may be an opportunity to insert a new window on the north-east facing elevation.
- b) General repointing to external brickwork is acceptable. Providing this matches the colour, mix and pointing profile of the adjacent pointing (which varies across the property on each phase) this is unlikely to require Listed Building Consent. If a schedule of repointing starts to go above 25% of an elevation this may need to be reconsidered.
- c) Repairing a vertical crack between the original C18th property and a C19th extension is acceptable. This is likely caused by the area of cementitious material which does not allow for gradual movement between the phases through the year. A lime mix in this area may allow for sufficient movement.

### 3. First Floor of the House (Internal)

- a) The removal of walls between the shower room, bathroom and toilet is acceptable in principle. There is a bulkhead over the bath which follows the direction of the original outside wall and it is not known if historic fabric survives in this area. Given there is a similar treatment of lowered ceilings above baths in other areas of the property it is possible that there is not historic fabric in this area. Careful consideration will need to be given to detailing and retention of joinery and doors, particularly on the corridor side.  
The existing window is not original and there are limited views of the brick upstand. As such, there is not an in-principle objection to inserting a door (or triple sash) in this area subject to appropriate detailing. The rooftop should not be used as a terrace and a condition would be imposed to this effect.
- b) The principle of repurposing an existing bedroom to provide ensembles is acceptable. The exact significance of the fabric between the rooms does require consideration, particularly where a doorway would be going through the outside wall of the original C18th property. The provision of services to this
- c) Reconfiguring the shower room, two toilets and landing area is acceptable in principle. Scaring on the ceiling suggests that the landing has been extended previously (which may be confirmed upon inspection of the floorboards). Again, careful consideration will need to be given to the joinery and doors which should respect the phase of this addition.
- d) Reconfiguring the bedroom to omit the corridor is acceptable in principle.
- e) The insertion of ceiling lights throughout the property (not inset spot lights) is acceptable.

### 4. Cellar

- a) Inserting a door is acceptable.

### 5. Roof/Loft Space

- a) Subject to it not being visible from ground level and being of an appropriate design the insertion of an access hatch is acceptable.

6. Other

- a) Altering the hallway doors position will need to be informed by an analysis of the fabric behind the existing panelling.

Next Steps:

The prospective owner has indicated that they have employed a Heritage Consultant to assist with the preparation of planning applications. It was also discussed that planning applications can be made prior to purchase to enable works to commence sooner.

A number of the proposed works rely upon an exploration of the existing fabric to improve our understanding of significance. As such, the prospective owner may wish to apply for Listed Building Consent to allow for opening up works and intrusive surveys, for example the removal of panelling to determine what is behind and what remedial works will be required for these areas. Submitting a Listed Building Consent application without this evidence base may cause delays to the determination and result in the imposition of numerous conditions.

If a change of use application is required, the owner should be aware that Building Control may class the property as a 'new dwelling'. There are, however, provisions for the relaxation of Building Regulations when they relate to a listed building.

In general, the owners ambitions for the building are consistent with the conservation of the heritage asset and will return it to a family home.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposal would be assessed on whether it would have a harmful impact on neighbouring residential amenity. This includes whether it would result in a significant loss of outlook, daylight and sunlight, or privacy.

The application dwelling is set back from the road and is surrounded by its own grounds. As such, neighbouring dwellings are located a good distance from the property reducing any potential impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

The proposed orangery or replacement windows would be located on the rear elevation facing Greyhound Lane. The nearest neighbouring dwelling, Georgian House, would be located some 40m away; therefore their residential amenity would not be impacted by the proposed extension works.

All other proposed external works would be minor in nature and unlikely to affect neighbouring dwellings – it is not likely that concerns would be raised on residential amenity grounds.

Impact on Car Parking Provision and Highways Safety

The proposal would be assessed in line with Hertsmere's car parking policies, including the Parking Standards SPD which outlines the residential parking requirements.

The proposal would not significantly alter the number of bedrooms at the dwelling. The submitted information indicates that Cedar House currently has 8 bedrooms, with proposed plans showing that one of these bedrooms would be lost as part of works to create two en-suite bathrooms and a cupboard. The parking requirement at the dwelling would therefore be reduced.

In line with Hertsmere's Parking Standards SPD, a 7-bedroom dwelling would require 6 car parking spaces. Given that there is a substantial detached garage at the property and a large driveway with space for multiple cars, it is thought that this requirement could comfortably be met by the existing arrangement.

It is not likely that any concerns would be raised on car parking or highways safety grounds.

#### Trees, Landscape and Ecological Impact

The proposal would be assessed on its potential impact on protected or mature trees, as well as its ecological impact on local protected species such as bats and some birds.

Policy SADM12 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan sets out the Council's requirements for trees and landscaping. Planning permission will be refused for development that would result in the loss or likely loss of healthy, high quality trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order; or otherwise any healthy, high quality trees and/or hedgerows that make a valuable contribution to the visual amenity or environment of their location. If any such loss would occur through approved development, replacement planting would be required. Additionally, Policy CS12 of the Hertsmere Local Plan Core Strategy states that all development proposals must conserve or enhance the natural environment of the Borough, including biodiversity, habitats, protected trees, landscape character, and sites of ecological and geological value.

Given that the application site sits within a Conservation Area, protection is afforded to all trees within the site. Additionally, there are two trees with Tree Preservation Orders to the rear of the site near Greyhound Lane. Any proposed extension work would therefore necessitate the submission of arboricultural documents to ensure that proposed works would not harm the protected trees within the site. The Tree Officer will be consulted on any submitted information.

The site also sits within the Green Belt and some works are proposed to the roof to insert a roof hatch for maintenance access. Therefore, a bat survey may be needed in order to establish whether there are any roosting bats or birds that may be affected by works to the property. Hertfordshire Ecology will be consulted on the application to assess the potential impact on protected species; they will advise at application stage whether a bat survey is required.

#### **Conclusion**

The proposal on the whole is likely to be considered acceptable at application stage, with the exception of the concerns raised by the Conservation Officer regarding the installation of an orangery to the rear elevation. Notwithstanding this, the proposed works on the whole are considered appropriate and the applicant is encouraged to proceed with an application for planning permission and associated Listed Building Consents. It is recommended that a full application for planning permission is made to formally change the use of the building back to C3 residential to prevent any planning and enforcement issues moving forward. It is unlikely that there would be any objections to this change. Planning permission would also be required for the proposed works to the roof and insertion of an access door to the front elevation at first floor, in addition to their associated Listed Building Consents. The Conservation Officer has suggested that initial LBC applications may be made for exploratory works in preparation for the proposed alterations; these are also welcomed. The submission of an application for planning permission should include arboricultural documents and original, existing and proposed floorspace and volume calculations if exterior extension works are being proposed, and may require a bat survey for proposed works to the roof or eaves.

### **LIST OF DOCUMENTS TO ACCOMPANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Supporting information for the validation of planning applications:

<https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/Planning--Building-Control/Planning-Applications/Apply-for-planning-permission.aspx>

A future application for planning permission must comprise the following:

- A completed application form (Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent as required);
- An Ordnance Survey style site location plan at a metric scale of 1:1250 showing the application site outlined in red and other land/ buildings in the ownership of the applicant outlined in blue, all neighbouring properties in full and two named roads;
- A set of metrically scaled (1:50 or 1:100) elevation plans (existing and proposed) (must include scale bars);
- A set of metrically scaled (1:50 or 1:100) floor plans (existing and proposed) (must include scale bars);
- A set of metrically scaled (1:20) plans of proposed windows/ doors (must include scale bars);
- Heritage Statement;
- Arboricultural documents (Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan) as needed
- Original, Existing and Proposed volume calculations
- Any other information that may be deemed relevant to this application (site photographs, details of materials etc.).

You should ensure that any future formal planning application meets these requirements in order to avoid unnecessary delays in the registration of the application.

### **SUBSEQUENT ADVICE & APPLICABLE FEES**

Refer to the revised published schedule of fees.

[http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/english\\_application\\_fees.pdf](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/english_application_fees.pdf)

### **STATUS OF THE ADVICE**

This pre-application advice does not constitute a formal response or decision of the Council and is therefore not binding. The views expressed by Council officers are given in good faith without prejudice to the formal determination of any subsequent planning application(s). Following the submission of a formal planning application, other matters and issues pertinent to the proposed development may be raised by further details, third parties, statutory and non-statutory consultees. Any fee paid to the Council is non-refundable and does not represent a legal contract with the Council. This advice is based on the available documentation submitted. If further documents and amended proposals are later provided in response to the concerns raised herein, this may incur an additional fee.

Case Officer Details

Georgia O'Brien - Email Address-georgia.o'brien@hertsmere.gov.uk