

COMMITTEE REPORT

Date: 16 September 2010 **Ward:** Guildhall
Team: West/Centre Area **Parish:** Guildhall Planning Panel

Reference: 10/00622/LBC
Application at: Stable Block Chapter House Street York
For: Conversion of coach house to provide a single dwellinghouse
By: Mr John Edwards
Application Type: Listed Building Consent
Target Date: 7 June 2010
Recommendation: Refuse

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 This application seeks listed building consent for the conversion of the former stable block within the grounds of Gray's Court to a single 4 bedroom dwellinghouse. The building and the adjacent garage is currently used as storage for Gray's Court. The Coach House can be accessed from the courtyard of Gray's Court by a garden driveway and from Monk Bar Court through a pair of double doors.

1.2 The Coach House/stable block is located in the north east corner of the "Minster Precinct" at the head of Monk Bar Court on the site of a former foundry built adjacent to the City Walls. The building was introduced in the second half of the C19th to serve Gray's Court, and its construction appears to have allowed the demolition of stabling previously attached to the east wing of the main house. This demolition enabled the new drive to be formed linking Gray's Court itself with the new Coach House. The entrance to the drive is marked by C18th gate piers which were relocated from Treasurer's House in 1902. The Coach House is a curtilage building for the purposes of Section 1(5) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and as such is subject to Listed buildings control. Gray's Court is a Grade 1 Listed Building. The whole site lies within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area. The ground around the Coach House and the adjacent City Walls are classified as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

1.3 Related planning application - LPA Ref. No. 10/00621/FUL Conversion of Coach House to provide a single dwellinghouse.

1.4 Pending applications- LPA Ref. Nos. 10/00619/FUL and 10/00620/LBC Conversion of Coach House to provide accommodation ancillary to Gray's Court.

1.5 The application is reported to Sub-Committee at the request of Councillor Brian Watson because of the sensitivity of the site.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

Areas of Archaeological Interest GMS Constraints: City Centre Area 0006

Conservation Area GMS Constraints: Central Historic Core CONF

Listed Buildings GMS Constraints: Grade 1; 1 Grays Court Chapter House Street York 0723

Listed Buildings GMS Constraints: Grade 2; 4 Chapter House Street York YO1 2JH 0726

Listed Buildings GMS Constraints: Grade 1; City Walls Bootham Bar To Monk Bar 0577

Listed Buildings GMS Constraints: Grade 2; 6 Chapter House Street York YO1 2JH 0725

Scheduled Ancient Monuments GMS Constraints: SMR 13280 York Minster Precinct Inc. Section Of City Walls

2.2 Policies:

CYHE4 Listed Buildings

CYHE11 Trees and landscape

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

Design, Conservation and Sustainable Development (Conservation Architect)

3.1 The floor plans appear to fit with the existing layout of the building although the level of detail is insufficient to determine the full impact of the proposals on the character of the interior. Object to the alterations to exterior openings which would reduce the utilitarian character of the building by introducing elements which are domestic in appearance such as the porch and remove characteristic features such as stable doors, taking-in hatches and the glazed and timbered screen at the bottom of the central stair. Object to the detail of the new windows and doors and the loss of the existing larger openings. The number and size of the rooflights should be reduced.

EXTERNAL CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS

Guildhall Planning Panel

3.2 Supports the planning application

Conservation Area Planning Panel

3.3 The Panel considers there should be no exterior alterations to building. The Panel has concerns about the lack of access and curtilage issues. The Panel also makes the point that should the storage and garaging facilities to the main house be lost that this could have a further impact on the area should more storage be required in the future.

York Civic Trust

3.4 Supports the proposal to restore and re-use neglected building to dwellinghouse, but would not support the increased use of the driveway through the garden of Gray's Court. The garden has not been used for this purpose; and its role in the settings of Gray's Court, the Minster, and its proximity to the City Walls would be harmed by the use for vehicular traffic. Access should be via Monk Bar Court.

Publicity

3.5 Two representations have been received from neighbours that raise the following points:

- Support the principle of the development
- Access through the grounds of Gray's Court should be used as Monk Bar Court is congested
- Concern about increased noise from parking
- Long term adverse impact on area
- Bat survey required as evidence of bats
- Proposed porch and solar panels would be incongruous with building and location, and prominent from the City Walls
- Lack of curtilage details does not allow proper assessment of impact of dwelling in sensitive, historic location
- Car parking should be restricted to use of existing garage
- Local Planning Authority should investigate the loss of the planting area adjacent to the City Walls that is being unlawfully used as a parking area
- Additional bat survey and sustainability required to assess the application

4.0 APPRAISAL

4.1 KEY ISSUES

- Impact on the special interests of the listed building

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

4.2 The relevant development plan is the City of York Council Draft Deposit Local Plan, which was placed on Deposit in 1998. Reflecting points made, two later sets of pre-inquiry changes (PICs) were published in 1999. The Public Local Inquiry started in 1999 but was suspended by the Inspector for further work to be done on the

Green Belt. A Third Set of Changes addressing this further work was placed on deposit in 2003. Subsequently a fourth set of changes have been drafted and approved by Full Council on 12th April 2005 for the purpose of making Development Control Decisions, on the advice of the GOYH.

4.3 Policy HE4 of the Local Plan states that consent will only be granted when there is no adverse effect on the character, appearance or setting of listed buildings. Policy HE11 seeks to ensure that trees and landscaping which are part of the setting of any heritage asset will not be harmed by new development.

4.4 Planning Policy Statement 5 " Planning for the Historic Environment " seeks to ensure that the special characteristics of listed buildings are not adversely affected by inappropriate developments. The PPS has a companion Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide (March 2010) that gives further guidance.

ASSESSMENT

4.5 Gray's Court is situated within a highly sensitive part of the Central Historic Core conservation area which contains heritage assets of the highest architectural, historic and archaeological value. The area forms part of the wider setting of the Minster. The extensive landscape gardens within which Gray's Court and Minster Court sit, provide a beautiful foreground to the City Walls (Grade 1 and Scheduled Ancient Monument) and they also enrich the experience of the City Wall Walk and views from it. Pevsner regarded this stretch of the walls as providing one of the most agreeable walks in York (Pevsner N & Neave D "Yorkshire: York and the East Riding").

4.6 The Coach House is a two storey structure situated remote from the main house. It is physically associated with the group of smaller scale residential buildings at Monk Bar Court and Gowland Court. The main aspect of the building faces towards the City Walls which are only 4-6m away. Architecturally the building is of its time, having a distinctive roof-form with pronounced gables and decorative barge-boards, though larger openings of a utilitarian nature have been formed in the ground floor external walls. The supporting statement for the proposals refers to the Coach House having housed the first privately owned car in York; so the building has been adapted to house cars although it currently appears to be in use for storage and it is in need of repair.

4.7 The area around the building is of poor quality concrete and tarmac and an adapted outbuilding forms the separate garage. Recently car parking arrangements at Gray's Court have been re-ordered and this has affected the area immediately to the north west of the Coach House where part of the green border/embankment has been grubbed up to provide a standing area for cars adjacent to the City Walls. There are no details of the proposed finish to this area.

4.8 Whilst the spatial configuration of the building would appear to suit the new use, other heritage impacts must be taken into account such as:- the direct effect of physical changes on the nature of the building; the effect of changes on the setting of the building; the contribution of the changed setting to the wider area; and the detachment of the new use from its historic role as a service area for Gray's Court.

PPS 5 and the companion Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide (March 2010) reinforce the importance of understanding these wider impacts.

IMPACT ON THE COACH HOUSE BUILDING

4.9 The floor plans appear to fit with the existing layout of the building. However, the level of detail submitted by the applicant is insufficient to determine the full impact of the proposals on the character of the interior so large scale details and schedules would be required by way of conditions if listed building consent is granted.

4.10 Some of the alterations to exterior openings reduce the utilitarian character of the building by introducing elements which are domestic in appearance, such as the addition of a porch. The new windows and doors would be vertical in emphasis and would cause the loss of the more generously proportioned openings. The proposed roof would introduce a number of rooflights that have not been clearly justified by the applicant. The distribution of the rooflights to the rear of the property makes sense practically though two rooflights have not been shown on the drawing of the rear elevation - one over the master bedroom and one over bedroom 3. The number, size and disposition of rooflights together with the proposed solar panels would give a cluttered appearance to the rear roofslope of the building.

4.11 In addition there would be the loss of the stable doors, taking-in hatches, and the glazed and timbered screen at the bottom of the central stair. It is important that these characteristic elements of the original building are retained even if glazing has to be introduced (paras. 185 & 186 of the Practice Guide).

IMPACT OF SEPARATE USE ON UNDERSTANDING OF THE LISTED BUILDING

4.12 Since it was constructed the Coach House has provided a service function ancillary to Gray's Court, first housing coaches and stabling and then private vehicles and storage. The building is not related architecturally or physically to the main house but the historical connection is important to our understanding of the use of the site over approximately 150 years. The building has particular connections with Edwin Gray, former Lord Mayor of York, and his pioneering relationship with the motor car. The proposed new use as an independent house would sever these connections and remove the building from the wider estate as a potential service resource. This would lessen our understanding of the heritage asset as a whole.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The proposed external alterations to the building would harm appearance and special interest of the building. As such the proposal fails to meet the objectives of Policies HE2, HE3, HE4, and HE11 of the Local Plan and policies HE 6.2, HE 7.2, HE 9.4 and 10.2 of Planning Policy Statement 5 " Planning for the Historic Environment ", by altering the character of the building.

COMMITTEE TO VISIT

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Refuse

1 The proposed external alterations to the building including the size and number of rooflights, the introduction of solar panels, the erection of a porch, the vertical emphasis of new windows and doors and consequential loss of the more generously proportioned openings, and the loss of characteristic features such as the stable doors and taking-in hatches would adversely affect the utilitarian character of the building and harm the appearance of the building. As such the proposals would not meet the objectives of policies HE4 of the Development Control Local Plan or of policies contained within Planning Policy Statement 5 "Planning for the Historic Environment".

7.0 INFORMATIVES:

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