
Application Number	13/0647/CAC	Agenda Item	
Date Received	28th May 2013	Officer	Mrs Angela Briggs
Target Date	23rd July 2013		
Ward	Trumpington		
Site	Gonville Hotel And Gresham House Gonville Place Cambridge CB1 1LY		
Proposal	Demolition of Gresham House, and refurbishment and extension of Gonville Hotel to provide an additional 43 bedrooms and new spa/treatment rooms, with internal and external remodelling of the existing hotel to create a new dining area and hotel entrance, and associated external works and landscaping		
Applicant	Mr c/o Agent		

SUMMARY	<p>The development does not accord with the Development Plan for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 The loss of Gresham House as a Heritage Asset would harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;2 The demolition of Gresham House is not justified by the public benefit that will derive from the re-development of the site for hotel accommodation as part of the wider Gonville Hotel refurbishment and re-configuration.
RECOMMENDATION	Refusal

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION/AREA CONTEXT

- 1.1 The application has been submitted in conjunction with a separate application for the re-development of the site and

refurbishment and reconfigurations of the Gonville Hotel, under Reference 13/0646/FUL.

- 1.2 The application site is located on the southern side of Gonville Place. It is directly opposite Parkers' Piece, which is a substantial area of protected open space. The Gonville Hotel has views across Parkers' Piece. Gresham House forms part of the north eastern boundary of the site. There are residential buildings on the opposite side of Gresham Road. Gresham Court (the former Owen Webb House) is a Grade II Listed Building. The properties on Drosier Road form the south eastern boundary of the site. There are residential properties adjacent to the south western boundary of the site on Gonville Place which are two to three storey Victorian terrace housing. The Gonville Hotel is a three storey building which was originally built as a house. The wings either side were constructed in the late 1970s and forms the main part of the hotel. There have been various additions to the rear of the hotel. Access to Gresham House is currently through the main hotel, although there is a gated access way from Gresham Road, which is not in use. Gresham House is a two storey detached Victorian Villa with quite an unusual, but attractive twin bay frontage. The house sits gable end to Gresham Road and fronts onto its landscaped setting. Gresham Road is predominantly residential. Gresham House is essentially split into two sections. The ground floor is used by the hotel for conferences/meetings and for the storage of surplus furniture and equipment. At first floor level, there are two residential flats which are accessed via a separate door from Gresham Road and up through an external metal staircase that wraps around the side and rear of Gresham House. Gresham House sits in a formal landscaped setting, both to the front of the property, and to the rear. The front boundary, along Gonville Place, is heavily landscaped with mature trees and other planting.
- 1.3 The application site falls within the Central Conservation Area and as such the New Town and Glisson Road Area Conservation Appraisal is relevant. The site crosses Conservation Area Appraisal boundaries, and as such the Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal is also relevant. Gresham House is not a Listed Building, nor a Building of Local Interest. The Roman Catholic Church on the junction of Lensfield Road and Hills Road is a Grade II listed Building, and is a dominant feature of this part of the Conservation Area.

Other Listed buildings within the vicinity include Gresham Court (Owen Webb House) and 3 and 3a Gresham Road, all of which are Grade II Listed. There are no buildings designated as Buildings of Interest adjacent to or within close proximity of the application site. However, the original Gonville Hotel building (former Georgian house) is locally listed as a Building of Local Interest.

- 1.4 The wider area falls within the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) and within the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Conservation Area Consent is sought for the demolition of Gresham House to facilitate the development of a new wing to the hotel which will accommodate 43 additional hotel bedrooms and a day spa/treatment facility.

- 2.2 The application is accompanied by the following supporting information:

- ☐ Design and Access Statement by Saunders Boston
- ☐ Heritage Statement by Donald Insall Associates
- ☐ Planning Statement by Januarys

3.0 SITE HISTORY

Reference	Description	Outcome
C/03/0346	Change of use of ground floor to conference/meeting rooms and conversion to the first floor to 3No. flats and demolition of garage/ store.	Approved
C/71/0218	Alterations to form dwelling units and conservatory on ground floor, plus two flats on first floor	Approved
C/81/0875	Erection of boundary wall	Approved

4.0 PUBLICITY

4.1	Advertisement:	Yes
	Adjoining Owners:	Yes
	Site Notice Displayed:	Yes
	Public Meeting/Exhibition:	No
	DC Forum:	No

5.0 POLICY

5.1 See Appendix 1 for full details of Central Government Guidance, Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policies, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations.

5.2 Relevant Development Plan policies

PLAN	POLICY NUMBER
Cambridge Local Plan 2006	4/11 4/12 4/13 8/2 9/9

5.3 Relevant Central Government Guidance, Supplementary Planning Documents and Material Considerations

Central Government Guidance	National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 Circular 11/95 Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010
Material Considerations	<u>Central Government:</u> Letter from Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (27 May 2010) Written Ministerial Statement: Planning for Growth (23 March 2011)
	<u>Citywide:</u>

	Air Quality in Cambridge – Developers Guide
	<u>Area Guidelines:</u> Conservation Area Appraisal: Cambridge Historic Core New Town and Glisson Road

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

Cambridgeshire County Council (Engineering)

6.1 No objection.

Head of Refuse and Environment

6.2 No objection to the demolition process, subject to conditions to control construction, demolition, delivery hours, noise/hours and dust.

Urban Design and Conservation Team

6.3 The comments of the Urban Design and Conservation Team are as follows:

Gresham House is indicated in the New Town and Glisson Road Conservation Area Appraisal as being a building which is important to the character of the area. Therefore it is seen as making a positive, rather than neutral contribution to the conservation area and under paragraph 4.40 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006, the same tests as for the demolition of a listed building should be applied: 'Works for the demolition of Listed Buildings will not be permitted unless:

- a. The building is structurally unsound for reasons other than deliberate damage or neglect; or
- b. It cannot continue in its current use and there are no viable alternative uses; and
- c. Wider public benefits will accrue from redevelopment.'

- 6.4 The information submitted does not adequately satisfy any of these tests and therefore the demolition of this building cannot be supported. The application documentation does not say that the building is structurally unsound. The current use of the building is residential and it could remain in use either as an HMO or as a single residence with little alteration. It is believed that a property such as this, in this location could be put on the open market for resale as a residence and would be expected to sell due to the character of the building and the pleasant garden and surroundings. The 'Cambridge Hotel Futures' study, commissioned by Cambridge City Council and published in April 2012, found that there is a need for more 4 star (as well as other large luxury) hotels in the city, which is what the Gonville Hotel is aiming for with the additional services they intend to provide. However this need does not outweigh the fact that the demolition of Gresham House and the erection of the proposed development, which is not considered to be of an appropriate design for this location, would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The character of Gresham Road, and the New Town and Glisson Road Conservation Area, especially where it narrows towards Gonville Place, would be considerably altered if the proposed building were constructed. This would be due to its size, articulation and the loss of Gresham House which is seen as a building important to the character of the area. Should further information come forward in order to meet any of the tests required to agree to the demolition of the building, the loss of Gresham House can only be supported if the proposed redevelopment preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the conservation area. As noted in the comments above, this application does not meet that criterion.
- 6.5 The Heritage Statement that accompanied the applications does not address the tests for demolition as it does not conclude that the building is of enough substance that its loss would cause any significant harm to the conservation area. However the New Town and Glisson Road Conservation Area Appraisal went through a public consultation exercise in 2011/12 and the highlighting of Gresham House as a Building Important to the Character was not contradicted at that time by any consultees or members of the public. It is agreed that the land on which the building sits is a positive contributor to the character of the area, but the City Council also believes that the house too is important.

- 6.6 In terms of the NPPF, paragraph 138 regarding a building making a positive contribution to a conservation area, it is argued that the period houses in this part of the conservation area (of which Gresham House appears to be one of the earliest) are important to the character of the area. Therefore the team consider the loss of Gresham House would cause substantial harm to the heritage asset. The road narrows here as it approaches/ exits from Parker's Piece. Either side of the road, 3/3A Gresham Road and Gresham House are of similar characteristics, help mark this point. The view of the Urban Design and Conservation team is that it has not been demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh such harm.

The principle of the demolition of Gresham House and the replacement building is not acceptable under the requirements of Policy 4/10 and 4/11.

- 6.7 ADDENDUM – Received 23rd August 2013:

The Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal.

In the section on Gonville Place, this states in considering that certain redevelopment opportunities (Queen Anne car park and YMCA) are unlikely to become available, that:

“More likely is the conversion and possible extension of the buildings either side of Gresham Road. Any redevelopment of these buildings would need to respect the form and setting of the buildings, the landscaping and trees and the potential impacts on Parkers Piece.”

Thus the Appraisal recognised that Gresham House itself (not just the landscape and trees) is of sufficient significance to warrant retention via conversion/extension.

Taken with the New Town & Glisson Road Conservation Area Appraisal map indicating Gresham House to be a “Building important to the character” (of the conservation area), there is a clear assignment of value to the building and expectation (in documents that were subject to extensive public consultation and which have been formally adopted by the Council) of its retention.

This is in contrast to the current development proposals.

English Heritage

- 6.8 These comments will be reported on the Amendment sheet.

Design and Conservation Panel (Meeting of 14 August 2013)

- 6.9 The minutes of the Panel meeting were as follows:

Gresham House: In the Panel's view, as the last remaining villa in the area not to be re-developed it could be argued that its very survival increases its value and can help to tell the story of how the area's architecture has evolved over time. The Panel were disappointed that alternative options to demolition did not seem to have been explored exhaustively and were not persuaded that Gresham House's retention and refurbishment, either as a whole or in part, had been examined as part of a thorough options appraisal of the development/redevelopment opportunities across the wider site.

New hotel accommodation and Spa within the Gresham House site: The Panel found the proposed building mass and elevational treatment to be unconvincing. The relationship between the single storey spa and the 3 storey hotel is rather awkward and fails to provide sufficient enhancement. Concern was also expressed as to the appropriateness of floor to ceiling windows at ground level within a hotel context and the appropriateness of the materials palette in the Conservation Area, specifically the choice of composite panelling.

Landscaping The retention of an area of green space and the existing trees to the northwest end of the Gresham House site and the existing boundary walls and tree screen along Gresham Road was welcomed. However, it was felt that the proposed re-modelling of the hotel's forecourt landscaping would benefit from further work so as to better project (along with the restored Georgian house entrance) a presence befitting of its prominent frontage within the Conservation Area and the aspirations of an enhanced star rating for the establishment. It was suggested that the tall trees screening along Gonville Place should be retained as part of the forecourt's enhancement.

Conclusion

Although not listed at a national or local level, the Panel would support the view that Gresham House has importance in the context of the Conservation Area and that all options for its retention should be vigorously explored. Overall, the quality of the new development and refurbishments were regarded as not being of a sufficient quality to compensate for the demolition of Gresham House and the resulting harm to the wider setting.

VERDICT – RED (3), AMBER (1)

7.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 7.1 The owners/occupiers of the following addresses have made representations about either or both of the applications:

Objecting:

1A(x2), 'Figtrees' 3(x2), 3A	Gresham Road
1(x3), 3, 4(x2), 5, 6(x2) 7, 8(x2), 11(x4)	Gresham Place
26	St. Barnabas Road
11(x2)	Harvey Road
26	Herbert Street
8(x2), 19, 36, 40, 44(x2), 61, 62, 65(x2)	Glisson Road
15, 25, 27	Lyndewode Road
57, 72, 104	Mawson Road
7, 18	Tenison Avenue
47(x2), 116	Tenison Road
15(x2), 18, 22, 27	Fenners Lawn, Gresham Road
7(x2), 8	Drosier Road

42	Devonshire Road
12	Rectory Farm, Little Wilbraham
9	Park Terrace
61(x2)	Highsett, Hills Road
15	Gainsborough Close
Gonville and Caius College (owners of 'Cobwebs' 4 Gresham Road)	

Supporting:

- ☐ Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce.

7.2 The representations can be summarised as follows:

Objecting:

- ☐ The loss of Gresham House as a Local Heritage Asset;
- ☐ The impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- ☐ Poor Design: Scale, mass, bulk, character;
- ☐ The impact on the residential amenities of nearby residents, from potential over-looking and noise and disturbance from hotel residents and plant;
- ☐ Traffic implications – from cars potentially using Gresham Road as a 'drop-off' rather than using the main entrance via Gonville Place;
- ☐ Potential impact on cyclists and pedestrians who regularly use Gresham Road.

Supporting:

- ☐ There is a need for further high quality hotel accommodation in the centre of Cambridge, as identified by the City Council's April 2012 Hotel Future Study. The expansion of the hotel will encourage our visitors to stay in the City rather than seek accommodation elsewhere.

- 7.3 A copy of an on-line petition with 541 local signatures has also been submitted objecting to the proposal. This accompanies the minutes of the DCF relating to Ref: 13/0646/FUL.
- 7.4 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations can be inspected on the application file.

8.0 ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from my inspection of the site and the surroundings, I consider that the main issues are:

1. Principle of demolition
2. Impact on Heritage Assets
3. Other environmental impacts
4. Third party representations

Principle of Demolition

- 8.2 Gresham House is not a Listed Building, nor a Building of Local Interest. It is, however, situated within a Conservation Area.
- 8.3 The Heritage Statement submitted with the application, by Donald Insall Associates concludes that Gresham House is not a building of architectural importance, nor of historical importance. The report recognises that the building contributes to the immediate local environment in that its scale responds to the two storey Cottages over the road (3 and 3A Gresham Road), but argues that the building is not typical or representative of the greater Conservation Area as a whole. Gresham House is indicated in the New Town and Glisson Road Conservation Area Appraisal as being a building which is important to the character of the area. Therefore it is seen as making a positive, rather than a neutral contribution to the Conservation Area. Paragraph 4.40 of the Local Plan is particularly relevant. It is a sub paragraph of policy 4/11 (Conservation Areas) and specifically states that when considering the demolition of buildings, which contribute positively to the character of a Conservation Area, the same tests that would apply to the demolition of a Listed Building will be applied (Policy 4/10 – Listed Buildings).

- 8.4 The Urban Design and Conservation Team have concluded that Gresham House makes a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, and therefore the aims and objectives of Policy 4/10 should be applied. Policy 4/10 is split into two sections. The first section (a, b, c and d) is not relevant as it specifically deals with Listed Buildings. The second section is relevant:

Works for the demolition of Listed Buildings will not be permitted unless:

- a) The building is structurally unsound for reasons other than deliberate damage or neglect; OR*
- b) It cannot continue in its current use and there are no viable alternative uses; AND*
- c) Wider public benefits will accrue from redevelopment.*

- 8.5 The Heritage Statement submitted with the application fails, in my view, to adequately satisfy any of the above tests because it does not consider the building to make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area and therefore the tests for demolition have not been addressed.
- 8.6 My view is that there is insufficient analysis and evidence to justify the demolition of Gresham House and therefore the application cannot be supported.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 8.7 In this section of my report I consider the submissions made by the applicant and make my assessment against the policy context. The applications for Conservation Area Consent and planning permission are supported by a Heritage Statement as required by paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Officers in the Urban Design and Conservation Team have raised concerns about the analysis and conclusions made and do not support the scheme for demolition and redevelopment of the site.

The relevant policy context and assessment

- 8.8 The advice in the NPPF, Paragraph 138, regarding a building making a positive contribution to a Conservation Area:

Not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less substantial under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

- 8.9 The Urban Design and Conservation Team consider that the loss of Gresham House would cause substantial harm to the heritage assess and as such paragraph 133 of the NPPF is relevant:

Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of a significance of a designated heritage assess, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated tha the substantial harm or loss if necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; AND*
- b) No viable use of the heritage assess itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; AND*
- c) Conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; AND*
- d) The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

- 8.10 Both the policy and the NPPF look to establish either a clear public benefit or compliance with a set of criteria. It is important to note that a justification for demolition does not need to establish both a public benefit argument and compliance with the criteria or test established by policy/guidance.

- 8.11 I share the Conservation Team's view that is has not been demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh such harm.

- 8.12 I am unconvinced that the new hotel extension will be a positive asset to the Conservation Area for the reasons set out in my

report on the planning application. The Design and Conservation Panel, and the Urban Design and Conservation Team share these views.

- 8.13 In my opinion the proposal fails to comply with Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 4/11 and 4/12 and guidance provided by the NPPF and the application is recommended for refusal.

Third Party Representations

- 8.14 I have addressed the issues raised in this report and in the related report on the planning application.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 In my view the demolition of Gresham House is not justified by the public benefit that will derive from the development of the site for hotel accommodation as part of the wider development of the Gonville Hotel. The assessment of Gresham House as a building which is important and significant to the character of the Conservation Area has not been carried out comprehensively and therefore the complete demolition of Gresham House is not supported by officers.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reasons:

1. The proposed demolition is contrary to policies 4/11 and 4/12 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2006) and paragraph 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 in that in the absence of an approved redevelopment scheme that has a contract for redevelopment and which preserves and enhances the character or appearance of the Conservation Area by faithfully reflecting its context or providing a contrast with it, the demolition of the building would result in the loss of a heritage asset in the form of a Building which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

2. The demolition of Gresham House is not justified by the public benefit that will derive from the development of the site for hotel accommodation as part of the wider development of the Gonville Hotel. As such the proposal to demolish Gresham House would be contrary to Policy 4/10 of the Cambridge Local Plan and paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.