

Name of Applicant Type of Certificate	Proposal	Map/Plan Policy	Plan Ref. Expiry Date
<b>Mr. D. Oliver 'A'</b>	New dementia care extension to existing care home including Listed Building alterations and alterations to existing car park - Listed Building Consent - The Lawns Residential Home, School Lane, Alvechurch, B48 7SB	RES CA LB	<b>11/1038-DK</b> 31.01.2012

**Councillor R. Hollingworth has requested that this application be considered by the Committee, rather than being determined under delegated powers.**

**RECOMMENDATION:** that Listed Building Consent be **REFUSED**.

### Consultations

WCC (CA) Consulted: 13.12.2011. Response received: 03.01.2012.

No objection subject to a condition requiring a programme of archaeological work to be carried out.

CO Consulted: 13.12.2011. Response received: 19.12.2011.

I note that these applications would appear to be identical to the previously submitted application, 11/0697 to which I objected. I therefore stand by my previous objection which is as follows:

The Lawns comprises a large detached former rectory, now a nursing home, constructed in 1855-6 to designs by William Butterfield and listed Grade II. It is typical of Butterfield's domestic work being constructed in a robust asymmetrical style. When the building was originally constructed it sat within extensive gardens with views across to the Church of St. Lawrence, listed Grade II\*, for which it was built. Large areas of the garden have been sold off over a number of years and more modern houses built on various plots, although these later houses are reasonably well screened from the listed building. The Lawns, although not in the Alvechurch Conservation Area, is located immediately adjacent to it.

The Lawns is considered particularly significant architecturally. Butterfield was influenced by AWN Pugin in expressing the importance of rooms externally. At The Lawns, on the south elevation, the functions of the main rooms were expressed by varying the designs of the vertical bays on the exterior beneath a continuous ridge. The bays increase in massiveness from west to east, from the library, via the drawing room to the dining room, although this is now partially hidden by the PVCu conservatory. Butterfield's 'L'-shaped plan at The Lawns is considered to have influenced later architects and the plan and other details from The Lawns were used by Philip Webb when designing Red House in Kent for William Morris.

In 2005 permission was granted for a large, poor quality, pastiche extension to be constructed, attached to the service wing of the house, despite objections from the then Conservation Officer and English Heritage. Permission was also granted for some detached apartments to the rear (east side) of the building. Both extensions have negatively impacted on the setting and character of the listed building and in particular the service wing extension, has obscured the link the house had with the neighbouring church.

Policy HE 9.1 of PPS5 states that there should be 'a presumption in favour of heritage assets', and then further states that 'significance can be harmed or lost through alterations or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting'. In addition HE10.1 states when considering applications for development that affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities should treat favourably applications that preserves those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset'.

In considering the importance of the setting to the significance of the Heritage asset, guidance is provided by the recently published English Heritage document 'The Setting of Heritage Assets'.

The setting of this house has already been compromised by the poor extension to the north, severing the old rectory from the church for which it was built, exacerbated by the poor quality of the design. In addition its sizeable gardens have also been lost to later 20<sup>th</sup> century housing. However in terms of setting The Lawns still benefits from views of the entrance and the 'L'-shaped plan when one approaches along the driveway, which is enhanced by the space at the west end which gives an indication of the original spacious setting of the property. The garden wall also clearly separates the entrance and service wing from the private areas beyond. Equally the views of the south elevation remain largely intact despite the addition of the poor quality uPVC conservatory.

The proposed extension is sited too close to the existing building compromising not only the view of the original building from the drive, but Butterfield's distinctive and influential 'L'-shaped plan which will be altered completely, by the creation of a courtyard arrangement. The proposal would therefore alter the character and significance of the listed building.

In terms of the impact on the south elevation, as mentioned above the building when originally constructed had clearly articulated service and garden frontages. The garden wall running from the south west corner of the house provides a distinctive feature clearly separating these two areas, the public and the private. The proposed extension will bridge this divide, replacing the simple garden wall with a complex mass of building. The result will be to blur the architectural 'lines of separation' between the public and private spaces as well as overwhelming the

original domestic scale of the property. Again this will cause harm to the character and significance of the listed building.

In respect of the south elevation, not only will the distinctive garden wall be lost but the views of the south elevation from the garden will also be further compromised.

I would accept that the recent modern extension to the service wing and the conservatory on the south front have damaged the significance and character of the listed building. However sufficient survives of the 'L'-shaped plan form and the elevational composition to make the original design legible in key views from the driveway and the garden to the south side. The latest proposed extensions will damage the surviving character and significance of this listed building's special architectural and historic interest, including its significance contrary to the guidance in PPS5. Being sited immediately adjacent to the Conservation Area it would also have a negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area, contrary to S72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

In addition I note from looking at the plans, although I could not see an existing drawing for the ground floor that it would appear that the link from the old building to the new is through the existing fireplace / chimney. This would result in the non reversible unacceptable loss of original historic fabric to which I must also object.

I would therefore have to object to these applications most strongly.

VS

Consulted: 13.12.2011. Response received 19.12.2011.

The Lawns (Listed Grade II) was designed by Butterfield at the same time as his rebuilding of St. Laurence's Church (Listed Grade II\*) in 1858. They made an important group but The Lawns already has large extensions which detract from the setting of the two buildings. These 2005 extensions are on three sides of the house.

The proposal to build another large unit on the only open side of the house would be unacceptable, being too large and too close, and would damage even more the setting of the two listed buildings. The Victorian Society therefore objects to this application.

EH

Consulted 13.12.2011. Response received: 17.01.2012.

The current submission does not appear to differ from that to which we objected in our letter to your council dated 8th November 2011. The response is as follows:

#### Summary

English Heritage objects to this proposal which will be harmful to the setting of the grade II listed building and cause harm to its significance.

It will also be damaging to the character and amenities of the Alvechurch conservation area.

#### English Heritage Advice

The Lawns dates from circa 1860 and is contemporary or near contemporary with the grade II\* listed St. Lawrence's Church to which it was originally the Vicarage. It was built to the designs of the eminent Victorian architect William Butterfield in the robust asymmetrical style he frequently employed for his domestic buildings with impressive red brick elevations, steep multi-gabled roofs, and a small element of half-timbering for contrasting effect. The building sat in a large landscaped garden part of which has now been sold off for housing development; much of the remainder has been overbuilt in recent years with extensions to the nursing home use of the historic house. The building has an imposing presence overlooking the Alvechurch conservation area.

The front forecourt to the listed building still retains something of its original open character unaltered despite the erection of a large extension to the north and its current use as a hard surfaced car park. English Heritage objects to the current proposal to encroach further development into this area which would effectively result in the original and imposing listed house being surrounded by new buildings on three sides further diminishing its original spacious open setting. You will recall English Heritage has objected to previous applications to extend the grade II listed house on the grounds that the proposals would harm its architectural and townscape significance as a large and distinctive house in open grounds. The current proposal would further compound and exacerbate the harm caused by those earlier developments which cumulatively would result in serious overcrowding of the plot. This would harm not only the setting of the listed house but also its contribution to the character of the conservation area.

Although the very modern design of the new wing attempts to create a separate identity from and deliberate contrast with the listed building we consider that overall its massing is disjointed and that the varied selection of walling fabric (including sheet materials) pays little respect to its setting. The shortcomings of the proposed design emphasise the arguments against developing in this proximity to the listed building.

#### Recommendation

English Heritage recommends that your Council refuse planning permission and listed building consent for this application on the grounds that it would cause substantial harm to the character and setting of the Alvechurch conservation area (S72(1) test), and also to the significance of the grade II listed building (HE9(ii) of PPS5).

#### Publicity

Site Notice posted: 21.12.2011. Expired 11.01.2012.

Press Notice posted: 22.12.2011. Expired 12.01.2012

No specific comments received on the Listed Building Consent

application. Members should note the comments received in respect of the planning application and reported on application (B/2011/1037).

### The site and its surroundings

The application site consists of an attractive, Grade 2 listed Victorian property dated 1856 and was originally the Rectory for St. Lawrence Parish Church. There are extensions of the building to the north east and north recently completed. There is an open arrangement from the access drive and the building is within an attractive setting with some mature trees. The site adjoins the Alvechurch Conservation Area and St Lawrence's Church to the north and the properties 'The Close' and 'The Cedars' lie to the south.

### Proposal

This is a listed building consent application for an extension to the existing care home including internal alterations. The proposal includes a covered link to between the new build and the existing listed building. The alterations to the listed building include:

- Increase in the width of a doorway by 300mm (Ground Floor Bedroom 2)
- Removal of internal door, partition, cupboard and en-suite
- Insertion of hatch into an existing sealed door
- Demolition of existing outbuilding
- New opening in gable wall to bedroom 1 to enable link to new extension

### Relevant Policies

WMSS	QE5
WCSP	CTC.19, CTC.20
BDLP	S38, S39
DCS2	CP16
Others	PPS1, PPS5

### Relevant Planning History

B/2011/0697	New dementia care extension to existing care home including Listed Building alterations and alterations to existing car park. Withdrawn 11.11.2011.
B/2004/1565	16 bedroom extension with ancillary accommodation to Residential Care Home Granted 09.03.2005.
B/6218/1979	Erection of living accommodation (As amended by plans received 19.07.79). Granted 13.08.1979.
BR/8/1965/A	Extensions Refused: 01.01.1965.

### Notes

Members should note that application B/2011/1037 for planning permission for the extension to the care home (also on this agenda) addresses the issues of the impact of

the proposal on the listed building and conservation area setting. The matters brought forward in this regard by the Conservation Officer and English Heritage in addition to the response of the applicant are discussed in detail in the application for planning permission.

### Assessment

The main issues in the consideration of the application are the following are impact of the proposal on the setting and special interest of the listed building.

In this respect, policy CTC.19 of the WCSP and policy S39 of the BDLP are most relevant.

### Listed Building

Policy S39 states that careful attention will be paid to any development affecting the character or setting of a listed building. Listed status covers a whole building, inside and out. In terms of assessing the Listed Building Consent application, Members must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting and those features which make it special.

### Listed Building Setting

In terms of the setting of the listed building, there are significant concerns raised by English Heritage and the Conservation Officer. The view is that the setting of the building has already been damaged by the previous extensions. There were strong objections raised by English Heritage and the Conservation Officer at the time of the consideration of B/2004/1565.

The current proposal will involve a large two storey block in the position of the existing car park. There is a linked single storey corridor proposed to the original house. Perpendicular to this, an additional single storey wing is proposed over an existing terrace. This structure would have similar detailing to the corridor. English Heritage have objected on the basis of listed building and conservation area setting through overcrowding of the plot. There is also criticism of the proposed design, which is distinctively modern but that the overall massing is disjointed with varied material treatment paying little attention to the setting of the structure. I consider that the proposal would have the effect of reducing the visibility and prominence of the original building. The proposed extension would alter the distinctive and influential 'L'-shaped plan of the original architect by the creation of a courtyard arrangement to the detriment of the character and significance of the listed building. Thereby, it fails to fulfil the policy requirements of development plan namely S38 and S39 of the BDLP. It would also conflict with the advice of PPS5. The issue of need for additional dementia care facilities is covered extensively in the application for planning permission and must be weighed against the negative impact on the listed building identified.

### Listed Building alterations

The proposed internal alterations are outlined above. Some of these changes affect modern structures which are not of historic significance. The outbuilding proposed for

demolition is not historic. However, it is clear that in order to create the link for the new extension an opening must be made through an existing fireplace/chimney. The Conservation Officer has objected to this loss of historic fabric.

### Conclusion

The setting of the listed building would be substantially harmed by the proposal and the internal alterations would result in the loss of some of the historic fabric of the building. Listed Building Consent should be refused.

**RECOMMENDATION:** that Listed Building Consent be **REFUSED** for the following reason:

1. The proposed development, by virtue of its design, scale and positioning would have a detrimental impact on the setting and fabric of the listed building. Thereby, the proposal is contrary to policy CTC.19 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan, policies S38 and S39 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and the advice of PPS5 (Planning for the Historic Environment).