

APPLICATION NOS: 15/01319/FUL & 15/01319/LBC		OFFICER: Miss Michelle Payne
DATE REGISTERED: 28th July 2015		DATE OF EXPIRY: 22nd September 2015
WARD: Park		PARISH: n/a
APPLICANT:	Mr J Hawtin	
AGENT:	Stanley Partnership Architects	
LOCATION:	Compass House Lypiatt Road Cheltenham	
PROPOSAL:	Extension to Compass House creating two storeys of additional office space at ground and first floor with car parking at lower ground floor, and replacement windows to existing modern rear extension (excluding penthouse) - revised scheme following withdrawal of application refs.15/00518/FUL & 15/00158/LBC	

RECOMMENDATION: Permit / Grant



This site map is for reference purposes only. OS Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Cheltenham Borough Council 100024384 2007

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This application is seeking planning permission and listed building consent for the erection of an extension to Compass House to provide approximately 430m² of additional office space at ground and first floor with car parking at lower ground floor level. The application also proposes replacement windows to the existing modern rear extension (excluding the penthouse). The application has been submitted following the withdrawal of previous application refs.15/00518/FUL and 15/00518/LBC for an alternative scheme.
- 1.2 Compass House is a large prominent Grade II listed villa, c1826-35, which forms a group with Burlington House and Carrick House on either side. The building is prominently located on the eastern side of Lypiatt Road and the site is wholly located within the Lansdown Character Area, one of 19 character areas that together form Cheltenham's Central Conservation Area. Lypiatt Terrace on the opposite side of Lypiatt Road is Grade II* listed.
- 1.3 The building is currently occupied by Charles Russell Speechlys and has been significantly extended to the rear in the past by way of a large 1960's four storey range with later penthouse addition. The buildings on either side of Compass House have also been extended to the rear. Land within the site slopes down gently from Lypiatt Road to Southwood Lane, an historic service lane, to the rear.
- 1.4 Southwood Lane has been developed over the years and is now largely residential. The character of the lane on its eastern side differs from that on the western side in that the buildings on the eastern side are mostly mews style dwellings, two storeys in height. The western side of the lane is more built-up with larger scale buildings situated at the edge of the highway.
- 1.5 The proposed extension would be located within the eastern corner of the site and would connect through to the existing modern extension by way of a glazed link. The extension is contemporary in appearance with planted living walls proposed to the external elevations and a planted sedum roof. To the rear of the site, at lower ground floor, a red brick boundary wall enclosure would be maintained albeit in increased in height. The existing vehicular access from Southwood Lane would also be retained in an altered form.
- 1.6 The current proposal has been the subject of pre-application consultations and discussion prior to submission.
- 1.7 The application is before Planning Committee at the request of Cllr Harman on behalf of the local residents. Members will visit the site on planning view.

2. CONSTRAINTS AND RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Constraints:

Conservation Area
Listed Building
Smoke Control Order

Relevant Planning History:

90/01091/GF Rebuilding of rear boundary wall	PERMIT	5th November 1990
99/50174/FUL Refurbishment of existing offices	PERMIT	14th October 1999

99/50175/LBC Refurbishment of existing offices	GRANT	30th October 2003
99/50176/FUL Penthouse offices and glazed cladding to staircase	PERMIT	30th October 2003
99/50177/LBC Penthouse offices and glazed cladding to staircase	GRANT	30th October 2003
00/00217/LBC Change in staircase enclosure from glass to masonry as revision to Listed Building Consent ref: 99/50177/LBC	GRANT	4th April 2000
00/00218/FUL Change in staircase enclosure from glass to masonry as revision to planning permission 99/50176/FUL	PERMIT	14th April 2000
01/00728/LBC Internal alterations to facilitate the change of use of the penthouse from offices to 1 no. residential unit	GRANT	26th July 2001
01/00730/LBC Construction of penthouse offices and masonry cladding to existing staircase - amendment previous proposal approved under Listed Building consent 99/50177/LBC as amended by Listed Building Consent 00/00217/LBC	GRANT	30th July 2001
01/00731/FUL Construction of penthouse offices and masonry enclosure to staircase - amendment to previously approved scheme ref 99/50176/FUL as amended by planning permission 00/00218/FUL	PERMIT	30th July 2001
01/01296/LBC Internal alterations in connection with internal refurbishment of existing offices to provide modular offices instead of open plan	GRANT	16th November 2001
15/00518/FUL Extension to Compass House creating two storeys of additional office space at ground and first floor with car parking at lower ground floor, and replacement windows to existing modern rear extension (excluding penthouse)	WITHDRAWN	3rd July 2015
15/00518/LBC Extension to Compass House creating two storeys of additional office space at ground and first floor with car parking at lower ground floor, and replacement windows to existing modern rear extension (excluding penthouse)	WITHDRAWN	3rd July 2015

3. POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Adopted Local Plan Policies

- CP 1 Sustainable development
- CP 3 Sustainable environment
- CP 4 Safe and sustainable living
- CP 7 Design
- BE 5 Boundary enclosures in conservation areas
- BE 6 Back lanes in conservation areas
- BE 9 Alteration of listed buildings
- BE 10 Boundary enclosures to listed buildings

EM 1 Employment uses
UI 2 Development and flooding
TP 1 Development and highway safety

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Lansdown Character Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2008)

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

4. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Building Control

14th August 2015

No comment.

Cheltenham Civic Society

14th August 2015

We think this is too large an infill, with adverse effects on the character and streetscape of Southwood Lane by removing the gaps between the buildings which contribute to its character. We think a preferable approach might be to add to the 1970s extension at the rear of the listed building.

GCC Highways Planning Liaison Officer

1st September 2015

The site fronts Lypiatt Road which is subject to a 30mph speed limit. The application seeks to provide an extension to form additional office space which will reduce the car parking spaces on site by three spaces.

Accessibility

The proposed site is centrally located and within walking distance to the town centre bus hub(s) where connections across the town are available as well as links to Gloucester and the railway and being less than 1km from the Cheltenham town centre with easy access to many local amenities and employment sites. There is a good standard of pedestrian footways to the Cheltenham town centre and adequate cycling accessibility. Having considered the central town centre locality of the site, I consider that the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up given the nature and location of the site in accordance with Paragraph 32 of the NPPF.

Parking

The design & access statement and covering letter sets out that there is a need to provide additional office space to support current demand and future growth. Further the application sets out that the numbers of existing parking spaces will be reduced by only three spaces. I have considered that as the business expands there is likely to be further demand for parking; having said this, the site is centrally located with on-street parking available in the surrounding area that can accommodate demand for short term and visitor parking. I therefore consider that the residual cumulative impacts of development with the loss of 3 parking spaces would not be severe on parking in the vicinity of the site

Cycle Parking

No detail has been submitted for provision of cycle parking. The site will benefit from the provision of cycle parking as a means to off-set the loss of the parking spaces and offer an alternative means of sustainable travel options for staff and visitors to the site.

In conclusion; there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Therefore having considered the application, the development plan, the NPPF and the needs of the applicant, balanced against that the residual cumulative impacts of development would not be severe.

I recommend that no highway objection be raised subject to the following condition(s);

The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until details of secure and covered cycle storage facilities for a minimum of two bicycles has been made available in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To ensure that adequate cycle parking is provided, to promote cycle use and to ensure that the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up in accordance with paragraph 35.

Heritage and Conservation

7th September 2015

1. The principle of extending Compass House is acceptable but any extension should be of an appropriate scale and design so as not to dominate the site or detract from the special architectural interest of Compass House or curtilage listed buildings on Southwood Lane (Nos.19 & 21) and the character of the conservation area.
2. Although the 1960s extension lacks architectural merit any addition to the building needs to at least acknowledge its presence.
3. One of the most interesting and significant architectural features of Compass House are the bow windows on the side of the building: any new development in the proposed location will form the backdrop to this feature and it should not detract from its simple elegant form.
4. The NE and the SE elevations of this proposal need to be equally successful as they are both prominent within their own streetscapes, which are very different in character: Lypiatt Road is characterised by Edward Jenkins' large villas on spacious plots and a wide tree lined road whilst Southwood Lane is a narrow back lane built to service the large villas on either side of the lane.
5. There is an absence of a strong architectural style in the lane and contemporary designs feature alongside more traditional coach house and mews type developments. Brick boundary walls are common and much of the development historic and recent along the west side of Southwood Lane is set back some distance behind boundary walls which is an effective arrangement for creating more width to this rather narrow service lane.
6. Southwood Lane has evolved into a predominantly residential lane with small scale dwellings but the Lypiatt Road villas still provide the context in which they are set.
7. The proposed contemporary design is considered to be sympathetic to the Compass House and the 1960s office extension: the clean lines and vertical emphasis of the proposal are compatible with both.
8. The applicant has presented two schemes for consideration with one clad with a 'living wall': it is important to see whether the scheme could be successful without the camouflaging greenery as they frequently fail over the long term.
9. In my opinion the Southwood Lane elevation is a more successful composition with more vertical divisions and shadow play adding interest, rhythm and elegance. This elevation works with or without the vegetation whilst the Lypiatt Road elevation looks especially bland without the vegetation.
10. A main concern with this proposal is its impact on Southwood Lane: due to its height, mass and positioning immediately adjacent to the lane the building will be an

overbearing and intimidating presence combined with the existing extension to Compass House.

11. The perceived height and bulk of the building when viewed and experienced from Southwood Lane could be improved significantly by setting back the upper floors echoing the relationship between the coach houses and their boundary walls on the E of the lane. This would reduce the impression of over development of the site but give continuity in the streetscape with the use of a brick boundary wall.
12. The recent development on the old sub-station site, on the other side of the 1960s Compass House extension uses this 'device' to lessen the impact of its bulk on the lane continuing the illusion of a wider street on Southwood Lane.
13. The loss of glimpses of Southwood Lane through the site from Lypiatt Road that will result from this development is unfortunate but not significant enough to resist development. Views through the site have only occurred as a result of the replacement of the garden with a car park. The reduction in the amount of car parking at the front and side of the building could be seen to be of benefit to the building and the wider conservation area.
14. The reinstatement of soft landscaping to the Lypiatt Road elevation would be a significant improvement that would introduce more greenery to the site without it being attached to the building.

Conservation and Heritage summary

Aspects of this scheme are supported but the overbearing presence of the NE elevation on Southwood Lane is not acceptable and cannot be supported. A revised scheme that addresses the relationship between the proposed building and Southwood Lane and reconsiders the Lypiatt Road elevation to include additional landscaping may be supported subject to appropriately detailed designs.

Architects Panel

9th September 2015

The proposed scheme represents an amendment to a previously reviewed scheme with many of the comments raised having been addressed. The panel felt this was a great improvement but had some minor concerns over the practicality of the detailing and look of the smaller areas of 'green wall' - they may even not be necessary on the SE elevation. The relationship of green cladding to 'green wall' also needs to be carefully considered as the similarity in colour may not be easy to achieve and may dilute the effect of the planting. However, the panel thought this was an interesting scheme and would therefore support it.

5. PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 Letters of notification were sent out to nine neighbouring properties. In addition, two site notices were posted adjacent to the site, one on Lypiatt Road and one in Southwood Lane; and an advert was published in the Gloucestershire Echo. In response to the publicity, objections have been received from the owner/occupiers of five neighbouring properties. The comments have been circulated in full to Members.
- 5.2 In brief, the main concerns relate to:
 - Access and highway safety
 - Impact on neighbouring amenity
 - Impact on conservation area / listed building
 - Overdevelopment
 - Design

6. OFFICER COMMENTS

Officer comments to follow in an update