

APPLICATION NO: 13/00691/COU	OFFICER: Mr Martin Chandler
DATE REGISTERED: 2nd May 2013	DATE OF EXPIRY: 27th June 2013
WARD: Benhall/The Reddings	PARISH: None
APPLICANT:	Manor By The Lake
AGENT:	Mr David Scott
LOCATION:	The Manor By The Lake Cheltenham, Film Studios, Hatherley Lane
PROPOSAL:	Proposed change of use from film studios and associated conference centre (use class B1) to wedding and function venue with overnight accommodation (use class Sui Generis) including extension and alterations to elevations and creation of studio accommodation within existing gate house

Update to Officer Report

1. OFFICER COMMENTS

1.1. Determining Issues

1.1.1. The key considerations in relation to these applications are the acceptability of the proposed use, including its potential impact on neighbouring amenity, the impact the proposals will have on the listed building and how the proposal may affect the protected trees on the site.

1.2. The site and its context

1.2.1. The application site is a grade II listed building set in spacious grounds. The site was previously used as film studios but this has also evolved into a venue for weddings and conferences. This use has never been formalised and with the building now in new ownership, this application seeks to establish the use.

1.2.2. The trees on the site are covered by a blanket tree preservation order and the site is accessed from Hatherley Lane.

1.3. The acceptability of the proposed use

1.3.1. As advised above, the recent history of the site has seen it used as a wedding and conference venue as an ancillary part of the wider film studio use.

1.3.2. It is apparent that this use does generate noise but members should note that the application has only given rise to three letters of representation (one of which relates to parking provision).

1.3.3. Impact on neighbouring amenity will be considered in the following section of this report but subject to this being adequately controlled, the use would be appear to be appropriate in this location.

1.4. Impact on neighbouring property

1.4.1. Local plan policy CP4 considers impact on neighbouring amenity and advises that permission will only be granted where development does not have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity. In light of the comments received by neighbours the applicant has provided the following comments in response:

We do not agree that the proposed change of use will result in any increase in noise or anti-social behaviour.

A designated smoking area has been created which is significantly further away from the main entrance to the Manor and adjacent to the planned ballroom. Smoking is no longer permitted outside the front door, a rule which is enforced by staff during (and at the end of) weddings and other events as well as at other times.

Similarly, there is a tarmac area in front of the proposed ballroom which will be the main entrance/exit for guests attending functions and which provides adequate room for taxis to collect guests at the end of an evening. The vast majority of evening functions will take place in the ballroom, with guests using the facilities in that area of the building which is located further away from neighbouring properties than the existing function rooms and bar/evening suite. Consequently we anticipate a reduction for neighbours in the level of audible noise created by evening functions, not an increase.

Accordingly the main front door entrance to the Manor will be closed in future during the evening and be unavailable for normal use by guests. Use of the car park in front of this entrance for parking, or for use by taxis, will not be permitted and will be prevented by a suitable barrier between the stone piers at the entrance to this area. As already stated, smoking will not be permitted underneath the arches at the front of the building.

Whilst we cannot comment on the experience of neighbours whilst under the previous ownership of the Manor, we will ensure that our staff possess a suitable level of experience and training to enforce these arrangements with regard to smoking, parking, taxi pick-ups and, where necessary, the behaviour and noise level of guests generally. We have a clear organisational structure with accountabilities and operating procedures to support this (based upon our successful experience of running a similar event venue for several years).

We are anxious to avoid any repetition of problems local residents may have experienced in the past and maintain good relations with all our neighbours by avoiding unwarranted noise or disturbance. We are confident that our proposals and supporting arrangements will achieve this.

1.4.2. The Council's Environmental Health team have considered the proposals and subject to the two suggested conditions (relating to noise spillage and kitchen extraction equipment) no objection has been raised.

1.4.3. Officers do not consider that the change of use to a wedding and function venue will unacceptably harm amenity. The use has already been taking place as an ancillary aspect to the film studios; this application allows matters to be formalised and gives the LPA a greater level of control over how the site is managed. Subject to the conditions suggested by Environmental Health, it is considered that the proposal is fully compliant with the provisions of local plan policy CP4.

1.5. Listed building considerations

1.5.1. At the time of writing this report, the consultation response from the conservation officer had not yet been received. The conservation team were fully involved at pre-application stage but comments on this application are necessary before the committee can make a decision. Upon receipt of the comments, members will be updated.

1.6. Trees

- 1.6.1. Members will be aware from the initial officer report that the tree officer has raised concern in relation to car parking, with the suggestion that a driveway through the woodland was being considered. Members should note that this does not form part of this application; this proposal purely relates to the use of the building and some internal alterations. A driveway of this nature would require planning permission in its own right and if an application is made, the impact on the trees would be a material consideration at this point.
- 1.6.2. The general comment about car parking, whilst not a tree specific issue, is something that the applicant is giving consideration to, and it is anticipated that a parking strategy with a greater level of detail will be received in advance of the committee meeting. Members will be updated regarding this matter by way of update.

1.7. Access and highway issues

- 1.7.1. It is not anticipated that the use will result in significantly greater levels of traffic than is currently generated by the site. Members are aware that the premises are currently used for similar purposes (albeit without the formal issuing of planning permission) and whilst this has generated concerns from a noise perspective, the access road has performed in a perfectly acceptable manner. Officers have requested additional information to clarify car parking arrangements but the site does benefit from 30 spaces. Subject to this clarification being acceptable, no objection will be raised relating to highway considerations.

2. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. To conclude, it is considered that the proposed use is acceptable subject to the final comments being received from the Council's conservation and heritage manager – these will be issued by way of an update to this report.
- 2.2. The use will not compromise neighbouring amenity to an unacceptable degree (subject to the restrictive conditions suggested by Environmental Health) and the trees will not be affected. Furthermore, subject to clarification over parking arrangements, the proposal is acceptable in highway terms.