

3rd JUNE 2020 PLANNING COMMITTEE

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PLAN/2020/0402

WARD: MH

LOCATION: Lynton House, Station Approach, Woking, Surrey, GU22 7PT

PROPOSAL: Prior Approval for the demolition of Lynton House.

APPLICANT: Woking Borough Council **CASE OFFICER:** Tanveer Rahman

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

Woking Borough Council is the applicant. The application therefore falls outside of the scheme of delegated powers.

RECOMMENDATION

Prior Approval not required.

PLANNING STATUS

- Urban Area
- Woking Town Centre
- Shopping Parade
- Major Highway Improvement Scheme
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA Zone B (400m-5km)

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site relates to Lynton House which is a 1960s office building in a triangular island site. The triangle slopes up from west to east and is bounded by Guildford Road to the west, Station Approach to the east and Victoria Road to the north. To the west of the site is the New Central development, to the east is Woking Police Station & HM Coroner's Court and to the north is the Centrium building.

Lynton House fronts onto Station Approach and given the slope of the site it is a part 4-storey/part 3-storey building. There is also a plant room on the roof. The property contains a carpark at ground floor level (as taken from Station Approach level) which is partially an undercroft and partially open. There is also a basement carpark underneath this. Both these carparks are accessed by ramps that lead off Victoria Road.

To the north west of the site is RSP House which is a 2-storey office building. To the west of the site are 1-11 Guildford Road which are locally listed 2-3 storey terraced properties with retail at ground floor level and residential/office space above. To the south of the site is Jubilee House which is a 3-storey office building with a basement carpark.

PLANNING HISTORY

Lynton House

PLAN/2011/0740: Erection of 2 x double sided PVC banners - Permitted 20.12.2011.

PLAN/1996/0217: Installation of equipment and plant room extension on the roof enclosed by 2.5 m high cladding - Permitted 09.05.1996.

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- 77/0108:** ERECTION BRIDGE - Permitted 01.03.1977.
- 76/1314:** ALTERATION ADDITION(S) ALTNS ADDNS - Permitted 01.12.1976.
- 76/1217:** EREC OF 2ND FLOOR EXT TO EXISTING OFFICE BLD - Permitted 17.11.1976
- 76/0215:** ERECTION COVER OVER - Permitted 01.03.1976.
- 75/1236:** WNDOWS - Permitted 01.11.1975.
- 23975:** DISP ALLUM SIGN - Permitted 04.02.1969
- 23417:** USE BY MIN OF SOC SEC - Permitted 01.08.1968.
- 23195:** DISP 2 ALLUM SIGNS - Permitted 11.06.1968.
- 23215:** CLADDING TO FLOOR LEVEL - Permitted 01.06.1968.
- 22640:** EREC OF OFFICE BLOCK/AMMENDMENT TO VET SURGERY AND WINDOWS - Permitted 16.01.1968.
- 22564:** DETAILS OF FACING BRICKS WINDOWS - Permitted 28.12.1967.
- 21541:** BUILDING & CAR PK BUILDING - Permitted 01.02.1967.
- 22330:** EREC OF BLD CONSISTING OF OFFICES, SHOWROOMS, VET SURGERY AND CAR PK - Permitted 10.10.1967.

Wider triangle site

PLAN/2020/0178: Prior Approval for the demolition of Southern House and Jubilee House - Prior Approval Not required 18.03.2020.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks Prior Approval for the demolition Lynton House under the provisions of, Class B (demolition of buildings) Part 11, Article 3, Schedule 2 of *The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015* (as amended).

The application was received on 11th May 2020 and the Local Planning Authority (LPA) has 28 days in which to make a decision as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the method of demolition and any proposed restoration of the site. If the LPA fails to make a determination within the 28 day period then the applicant will be entitled to proceed with the demolition.

CONSULTATIONS

No consultations are required for this type of application. However, in order to be thorough the following consultations were made in any case:

County Highway Authority (SCC): No response received at the time of writing. The Committee will be updated verbally with any future response.

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Council Senior Environmental Health Officer: No response received at the time of writing. The Committee will be updated verbally with any future response.

Surrey Wildlife Trust: No response received at the time of writing. The Committee will be updated verbally with any future response.

NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS

The LPA is not required to notify neighbours as part of this type of application. However, it does require the developer to display a site notice for a minimum period of 21 days of the 28 days beginning with the date on which the application was submitted to the LPA.

PLANNING ISSUES

1. Under the provisions of Class B (demolition of buildings), Part 11, Article 3, Schedule 2 of *The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015* (as amended), the LPA has 28 days to determine as to whether prior approval will be required for (1) the method of demolition and (2) any proposed restoration of the site. Under Class B these are the only two matters which can be considered. No other planning considerations such as the principle of demolition or impact on parking provision can be undertaken. The applicant is only required to submit a written description of the proposed demolition works and confirmation that a notice has been displayed at the site. There is no requirement for the LPA to undertake any public consultation.
2. The agent has submitted a statement confirming that a site notice has been displayed.
3. A Structural Report and Demolition Specification for the building also been submitted. The report states that due to COVID-19 it was not possible to do a visual inspection of the building. However, it goes on to describe the assumed existing structure based on previous drawings. It also goes on to describe a potential demolition method but caveats it by stating that a visual inspection would be required after a strip out and prior to demolition of the main structural elements which could alter the outlined method.
4. The report states that the main building has a concrete frame with the floors above the upper carpark being reinforced concrete beam and slab construction. Its upper floors are served by a central staircase and a further staircase to the south. The report states that it assumed that the building has had a lift installed to comply with Building Regulations. It also assumes that the upper floors are open plan with suspended ceilings and some lightweight partitions. External elevations are assumed to be clad in masonry cavity wall panels, built off RC beams and between RC columns. Above the masonry panels are glazing panels. Steel clad flashing is at parapet roof level. The report states that there does not appear to be a concrete core so it is assumed that stability of the structure against lateral loads is via concrete frame action and possibly large masonry panels on the elevations. A reinforced concrete retaining wall exists around the perimeter of the site.
5. The report states that depending on the phasing of demolition consideration may need to be paid to the potential undermining of foundations of Jubilee House. It states that that determination if the most effective method of demolition would need to involve specialists. However, it outlines the following potential method: internal soft strip, followed by stripping the elevations but leaving masonry panels which may provide stability, followed by removal of RC frame upper floors and then other walls floor by floor. These works may be done by small machinery on each floor, depending on their

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availability and the strength of the floors. Removal of the large retaining wall would be dependant on highway works to Station Approach as it needs to be in place as long as the road is in use. Further structural analysis will be required to determine if the wall needs to be retained while the rest of the building is demolished and whether temporary support will be required.

6. The report states that in the period between the demolition and redevelopment of the wider triangle the site would be bound by timber hoarding, cleared areas finished to 150mm demolition rubble or imported granular material to protect subsoils and provide a temporary working surface and elements of existing basement and ground floor structures retained temporarily to support adjacent road/footways and services and then demolished during further demolition phases.
7. It is noted that the submitted statements makes a number of assumptions about the structures of the existing building and is not definite about the exact methodology for demolition. However, overall the submitted details relating to the method of demolition and the restoration of the site are considered acceptable and the submission of further details is not required. Prior Approval is not therefore considered to be required.

OTHER MATTERS

8. The impact of noise emission, dust emission and working hours would be covered by Environmental Health legislation. In the event of asbestos being present then its removal would be covered by the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.
9. The Bat Survey Report submitted with this application states that *“very limited bat activity was recorded across the two surveys: two soprano pipistrelles Pipistrellus pygmaeus were recorded on Guildford Road during the survey of B1-11. However, the bat calls were faint and short and thus the bats were not seen”*. It goes on to state that *“Based on the results of the bat surveys it is considered unlikely that the Site would support roosting bats and therefore the Site is currently of negligible value to roosting bats”*
10. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was also submitted with this application. The report assessed the ecological potential of a number of buildings within the wider triangle site and while the assessment of Lynton House is considered to be brief it does state that it has low ecological value and potential.
11. No objections are raised and the prior approval of further details is not required in this instance.

RECOMMENDATION

Prior approval not required.

Informatives

1. The documents considered as part of this application are listed below:
 - Agent’s covering letter Ref: SCC1001 (received by the LPA on 11.05.2020)
 - 1:200 block plan Drwg no. 002 Rev.1 (received by the LPA on 11.05.2020)
 - Copy of the agent’s site notice (received by the LPA on 11.05.2020)
 - STRUCTURAL REPORT DEMOLITION PHASE LYNTON HOUSE (received by the LPA on 11.05.2020)

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- Bat Survey Report Ref: WIE16360-101-R-2-1-3-BAT (received by the LPA on 11.05.2020)
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Ref: WIE16360-100-R-1-1-2-PEA (received by the LPA on 11.05.2020)
 - Agent's e-mail re: demolition machinery (received by the LPA on 15.05.2020)
2. The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, works which will be audible at the site boundary will be restricted to the following hours:-
- 8.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m. Monday to Friday
8.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m. Saturday
and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
3. The developer is reminded that it is an offence to allow materials to be carried from the site and deposited on or damage the highway from uncleaned wheels or badly loaded vehicles. The Highway Authority will seek, wherever possible, to recover any expenses incurred in clearing, cleaning or repairing highway surfaces and prosecutes persistent offenders. (Highways Act 1980 Sections 131, 148, 149).
4. The developer is advised that the County Highway Authority's consultation response advised that they would like the opportunity to review a Demolition Transport Management Plan once the confirmed contractor has been appointed.
5. The developer is advised that according to the Council's records the site may be at risk of contamination and that any demolition would need to mitigate against any spread of contamination and harm to human health.