

18 June 2020

**Ewell Court House, Lakehurst Road, Ewell, Surrey, KT19 0EB**

Rebuild part of central arch of freestanding wall of Ewell Court House Grotto

<b>Ward:</b>	<b>Ewell Court</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Euan Cheyne</b>

**1 Plans and Representations**

- 1.1 The Council now holds this information electronically. Please click on the following link to access the plans and representations relating to this application via the Council's website, which is provided by way of background information to the report. Please note that the link is current at the time of publication, and will not be updated.

Link: <http://eplanning.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

**2 Summary**

- 2.1 The application seeks planning permission to rebuild part of the central freestanding wall of Ewell Court House Grotto. The proposal would reuse all saveable materials, carefully rebuilding with lime mortar to match the existing, to make the failing elements sound and capable of continuing to fulfil their intended functions. The proposal would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Grade II Listed Building.
- 2.2 The property is owned by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and as such is referred to the Planning Committee.
- 2.3 A separate application for listed building consent has been submitted alongside this case, reference 20/00220/LBA.

**3 Site Description**

- 3.1 The site comprises a predominantly two storey building with an extensive garden located to the south of Lakehurst Road. The building is Grade II listed.
- 3.2 The site is not located within a Conservation Area.
- 3.3 Historic England List Entry Number 1392614:

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*II Formerly house, later public library and function rooms. Mainly built in 1879, architect J Alick Thomas for John Henry Bridges on his marriage to Edith Tritton, but incorporating parts of a 1690 house called Avenue House in the kitchen wing. Jacobean style house built of red brick in Flemish bond with sandstone window dressings, some timberframing to the gables and renewed tiled roof with tall brick chimneystacks. The windows are mainly mullioned and transomed windows with leaded lights. Irregular-shaped building with only the garden front symmetrical.*

#### **4 Proposal**

- 4.1 The application proposes to rebuild part of the central freestanding wall of Ewell Court House Grotto.

#### **5 Comments from Third Parties**

- 5.1 Two neighbouring properties were consulted and no representations have been received to date.

#### **6 Consultations**

- 6.1 **Surrey County Council Highway Authority:** No objections.

- 6.2 **EEBC Conservation & Design Officer:** No objections, subject to a number of planning conditions. The proposed works are completely justified and the method statement provided shows a conscientious approach to the historic fabric of the structure.

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**7 Relevant Planning History**

<b>Application Number</b>	<b>Decision Date</b>	<b>Application Detail</b>	<b>Decision</b>
08/00070/LBA	27/05/2008	Refurbishment of Grotto	Grant Listed Building Consent
14/00715/FUL	22/10/2014	Reconstruction of part of the property following fire damage including reconstruction of roofs and chimneys, alteration and upgrade of fire escape, new paved area to property frontage	Application Permitted
14/00766/LBA	22/10/2014	Proposed external and internal works	Grant Listed Building Consent

**8 Planning Policy**National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) February 2019Core Strategy July 2007

Policy CS5 – The Built Environment

Development Management Policies Document September 2015

Policy DM8 – Heritage Assets

Policy DM9 – Townscape Character and Local Distinctiveness

Policy DM10 – Design Requirements for New Developments (including House Extensions)

**9 Planning Considerations**

- 9.1 The main issues for consideration in relation to this application are as follows:

**The design of the proposals and their impact upon the special architectural or historic character of the Grade II Listed Building.**

- 9.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Paragraph 130 states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

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- 9.3 Paragraph 3.7.5 of the Council's Core Strategy (2007) sets out that new development should enhance and complement local character, and be capable of integrating well into existing neighbourhoods. Paragraph 3.7.6 states that the Council will expect developments to be of a high quality, creating a safe environment which enhances the public realm and which positively contributes to the townscape.
- 9.4 Policy DM8 (Heritage Assets) of the Council's Development Management Policies Document (2015) states [inter alia] that development proposals that involve, or have an effect upon Heritage Assets must establish the individual significance of the Asset as part of the application or consent process. As part of the assessment process the significance of the Asset will be taken into account when determining whether the impact of any proposed development is acceptable.
- 9.5 Policy DM10 (Design Requirements for New Developments (including House Extensions)) of the Council's Development Management Policies Document (2015) states that development proposals will be required to incorporate good design. The most essential elements identified as contributing to the character and local distinctiveness of a street or an area which should be respected, maintained or enhanced include, but are not limited, to the following:
- Prevailing development typology, including house type, sizes, and occupancy;
  - Prevailing density of the surrounding area;
  - Scale, layout, height, form, massing;
  - Plot width and format which includes spaces between buildings;
  - Building line build up, set back, and front boundary; and
  - Typical details and key features such as roof forms, window format, building materials and design detailing of elevations, existence of grass verges etc.
- 9.6 The site comprises a Grade II Listed Building. There is no principle objection to internal or external works or extensions to Listed Buildings, subject to the works and extensions preserving or enhancing the established character and architectural interest of a heritage asset, its fabric or its setting.
- 9.7 The extent of any repair should typically be limited to what is reasonably necessary to make the failing elements sound and capable of continuing to fulfil their intended functions.

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- 9.8 Ewell Court House Grotto consists of a free standing wall built in red clay brick. It has a height of approximately three metres. The Grotto's central arch is the only one open and has suffered from some structural movement and large vertical cracks are evident at both the left hand side pier and the top of the left hand side of the arch resulting in the wall becoming unstable.
- 9.9 The proposed rebuilding of part of the central arch of the freestanding wall would improve both its stability and appearance and is considered to be essential repair works. The proposal would comprise of reusing all saveable materials and to carefully rebuild using lime mortar to match the existing as well as supplying and installing additional bed reinforcement to effected courses and further wall ties screwed back into the stonework. An application for Listed Building Consent (ref. 20/00220/LBA) has been submitted in tandem with this application and should be read alongside this application.
- 9.10 In addition to design and heritage considerations, there is not held to be a material impact to other parties by view of the limited scope of the work and the spatial distance between the works and other properties.
- 9.11 As such, it is considered that the proposal would comply with the NPPF, Policy CS5 (The Built Environment) of the Council's LDF Core Strategy (2007) and Policies DM8 (Heritage Assets), DM9 (Townscape Character and Local Distinctiveness) and DM10 (Design Requirements for New Developments (including House Extensions)) of the Council's Development Management Policies Document (2015).

## 10 Conclusion

- 10.1 The application is not considered to have any harmful impact and would preserve and enhance the special architectural and historical character of the heritage asset and is recommended for approval of planning permission subject to conditions.

## 11 Recommendation

Approve planning permission subject to the following **CONDITION(S)**:

- (1) The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

**Reason:** To comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- (2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Block Plan [1:500] (Received 10/02/2020)

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GRP001/1 Rev 2 Grotto Front Elevation and Extent of Works (Received 10/02/2020)

GRP001/2 Rev 2 Grotto Front Elevation and Extent of Works (Received 10/02/2020)

GRP001/3 Rev 2 Grotto Front Elevation and Extent of Works (Received 10/02/2020)

GRP001/4 Rev 2 Grotto Front Elevation and Extent of Works (Received 10/02/2020)

GRP001/5 Rev 2 Grotto Front Elevation and Extent of Works (Received 10/02/2020)

Heritage Design and Access Statement [February 2020] (Received 10/02/2020)

Ewell Court House Grotto Repairs Specification of Works [January 2020] (Received 10/02/2020)

**Reason:** For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- (3) All works of making good and repair associated with these proposed works shall match the existing adjacent fabric in material details, finish and design detail, unless otherwise agreed in the approved plans or in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** In order that the special architectural and historic character of the Grade II Listed Building is safeguarded in accordance with Policy CS5 (The Built Environment) of the Council's LDF Core Strategy (2007) and Policies DM8 (Heritage Assets), DM9 (Townscape Character and Local Distinctiveness) and DM10 (Design Requirements for New Developments (including House Extensions)) of the Council's Development Management Policies Document (2015).

**INFORMATIVE(S):**

- (1) In dealing with the application the Council has implemented the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way. We have made available detailed advice in the form of our statutory policies in the Core Strategy, Supplementary Planning Documents, Planning Briefs and other informal written guidance, as well as offering a full pre-application advice service, in order to ensure that the applicant has been given every opportunity to submit an application which is likely to be considered favourably.