

Planning Committee
23 May 2024

Planning Application
Number: 24/00064/LBA

24/00064/LBA- Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell, Surrey, KT17 1UD

Application Number	24/00064/LBA
Application Type	Listed Building Consent
Address	Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell KT17 1UD
Ward	Ewell Village
Proposal	Installation of Solar PV to the south facing section of the perimeter flat roof.
Expiry Date	24 May 2024
Recommendation	Approval, subject to conditions and informatives
Number of Submissions	None
Reason for Committee	Council is the applicant. Major Development.
Case Officer	George Smale, Planning Officer
Contact Officer	Simon Taylor, Interim Manager
Plans, Documents and Submissions	Available here: Bourne Hall
Glossary of Terms	Found at the following link: Glossary of Terms



SUMMARY

1. Summary and Recommendation

- 1.1. This application is before the committee as the site is located on council owned land and the applicant is a representative on behalf of the council. It is recommended for approval.
- 1.2. This is a proposal for the installation of a Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Panel system on the existing perimeter flat roof of the Grade II Listed Bourne Hall. A full planning application (app ref: 24/00419/FUL) accompanies this application as a separate application which is also recommended for approval.
- 1.3. The site is owned by the council and enables several leisure, parkland and open space, and community uses. The site is also located in the Ewell Village Conservation Area. Bourne Hall comprises of a 1960s library, social centre, and museum with modernist architectural merit.
- 1.4. There is an extensive planning history to the wider site and parkland. However, the only recent history for the hall itself has involved permitted works to doors and light fittings (under consideration).
- 1.5. No neighbour submissions have been received during the consultation phase of the application.
- 1.6. The Council's Conservation Officer is supportive of the proposals and officers are satisfied that the development will result in less than substantial harm to the designated heritage asset. The environmental, social, and economic benefits of the scheme outweigh such harm.
- 1.7. The development does not require works or alterations to the external roof surface and therefore is not foreseen to adversely impact the protected species of bats. A precautionary informative has been added to the decision notice to advise the applicant if protected species are found during the works.
- 1.8. As such, the recommendation before the committee is that the application should be approved subject to conditions.

PROPOSAL

2. Description of Proposal

- 2.1. The proposal involves:
 - The installation of a Photovoltaic Solar System and ancillary equipment to the south facing section of the perimeter flat roof of Bourne Hall.

- A mounting system of 120 solar panels stabilised by concrete ballistic weights (i.e., not physically fixed to the roof).

SITE

3. Description

- 3.1. Bourne Hall is a large dome-shaped building of a distinctive and striking architectural style, serving as Library and Social Centre since 1970. The building is Grade II Listed, council owned, and centred within Bourne Hall Park. The entire site has important local community value.
- 3.2. The exterior of the building is a curving volume with a continuous band of aluminium windows at first and second floor level. The upper floor slopes inward and the structure is surmounted by a broad copper dome, resembling the appearance of a flying saucer. A circular layout is planned within the building that expands over three level which includes a main hall, open-plan library, mezzanine museum, and studio spaces.
- 3.3. The surrounding area comprises a large open parkland with a number of large redwood trees, green spaces, and water courses. The entire site area is located in the Ewell Village Conservation Area, a historic area encompassing Bourne Hall, the commercial village centre, and outlying residential areas.
- 3.4. The site is accessed by vehicle from spring street, and pedestrian routes can be found through the park to the north and from the High Street to the East. The nearest residential properties are located on the western side of Spring Street, approximately 36m from the outer edge of Bourne Hall.

4. Constraints

- Built Up Area
- Grade II Listed Building
- Ewell Village Conservation Area
- Article 4 Directive
- Locally Listed Building
- SSSI Impact Risk Zones
- Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
- Tree Inspections
- Source Protection Zones

5. History

- 5.1. The following are the more recent applications on the site.

App No.	Description	Status
24/00419/FUL	Installation of Solar PV to the south facing section of the perimeter flat roof.	Pending decision
24/00066/LBA	Replacement of 13 internal fire doors to meet BS guidelines.	Pending decision
18/01247/LBA	Replacement of 6 internal doors.	Permitted 15 February 2019
17/00445/LBA	Replacement of existing light fittings with LED light fittings in Museum and Library areas	Permitted 15 September 2017

CONSULTATIONS

Consultee	Comments
Internal Consultees	
Conservation Officer	No objection subject to a condition.
External Consultees	
Historic England	No advice offered, but suggested the council seek the views of their own specialist conservation adviser.
Public Consultation	
Neighbours	No comments were received.

PLANNING LEGISLATION, POLICY, AND GUIDANCE

6. Legislation and Regulations

- 6.1. Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- 6.2. Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

7. Planning Policy

7.1. National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF)

- Section 2: Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

7.2. Epsom and Ewell Core Strategy 2007 (CS)

- Policy CS1: Sustainable Development
- Policy CS5: The Built Environment

7.3. Epsom and Ewell Development Management Policies Document 2015 (DMPD)

- Policy DM8: Heritage Assets

8. Supporting Guidance

8.1. National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

- Historic Environment
- Use of Planning Conditions

8.2. Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

- Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document 2016

8.3. Other Documentation

- Ewell Village Character Appraisal
- Historic England Official List

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

9. Listed Significance

9.1. Bourne Hall has been Grade II Listed by national government since 30 April 2015. The principal justifications for the listing of the building are taken from the official Historic England Listing:

- Bourne Hall Library and Social Centre of 1967-1970 A. G. Sheppard Fidler and Associates
- Architectural interest: a striking design, notable for its space-age flair and the generous, top-lit principal interior space.
- Plan form: the circular layout is well-organised, legible, and flexible.
- Historic interest: as an ambitious example of the expansion of the library service and the integration of community facilities and disabled access.

9.2. The following paragraphs from the list description are also relevant:

9.3. *“MATERIALS / STRUCTURE: the structure is of reinforced and pre-cast concrete, with aluminium windows, green Cumbrian slate copings and mosaic external finishes to the perimeter wall. The copper-clad dome with its central glassfibre rooflight is 42.6m (140') in diameter and 11.2m (37') at its highest point. 20 vertical pre-cast concrete ribs form a corona. The knuckles of the ribs are held in position by an in-situ pre-stressed, post-tensioned concrete ring beam which forms both the gutter and the eaves for the main dome. The roof construction is a sandwich of materials: the outer layer is sheet copper bonded to felt and wood wool panels on steel joints spanning between the frame. Towards the outer edges of the roof the wood wool panels are replaced by a band of lightweight 'Gunite' concrete sprayed onto permanent formwork.”*

9.4. *EXTERIOR: the exterior is a curving volume with a continuous band of aluminium windows at ground and first floor. The upper floor slopes inward and is surmounted by a broad copper dome, from which emerges a corona of pre-stressed, post-tensioned concrete ribs. Single-storey volumes of varying widths project forward of the circular footprint. The windows are separated by load-bearing pre-cast white concrete mullions*

running between a floating plinth and fascia, and some windows have Cumbrian slate panels beneath. The elevations are designed to a 4" (c.10cm) module enabling standardised pre-cast components. The result resembles a flying saucer, and was designed to sit low within the existing mature landscape. The ribbed concrete boiler chimney is 12.8m (42') high and provides a vertical counterpart to the library's dome.

10. Impact on the Heritage Asset

- 10.1. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that development must ensure the preservation of any nearby listed building, including its setting.
- 10.2. Paragraphs 203-208 of the NPPF 2023 requires consideration of the harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset. Paragraph 195 says heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generation.
- 10.3. Paragraph 206 requires clear and convincing justification where there is harm to or the loss of a designated heritage asset. Paragraph 202 states that where there is less than substantial harm, the harm must be weighed against the public benefits.
- 10.4. Policy CS5 of the CS and Policy DM8 of the DMPD seek to protect and enhance heritage assets and their setting.
- 10.5. The EEBC Conservation Officer has been consulted on the application and has issued the following response:
- 10.6. "The roof forms of Bourne Hall contribute to the intrinsic character and historical and architectural significance of Listed Asset. The original form and materials have been retained and have not been extended or altered since construction.
- 10.7. On the main building, a central clear dome is surrounded by a ring of concrete posts resembling a crown. Around this, a copper clad roof gently curves over the remainder of the circular form of the building's first floor and is separated from the ground floor by an array of windows. The ground floor rooms extend out beyond the line of the first floor and are covered by flat roofs that are not visible from the ground. These perimeter roofs facing south/south-westwards are the proposed location for the solar panels as displayed on the submitted block plan.
- 10.8. The Design & Access Statement states that the proposed mounted solar panels will not be fixed to the roof but will be weighed down with concrete ballistic weights.
- 10.9. Each panel measures 1678 mm long and will be 250 mm high at the upper end. The solar panels will be angled towards the south meaning

their lowest point will be nearest the edge of the southern roof. A panel structure was put onto the roof, close to the southern edge, as a mock-up for discussions prior to this application and it could not be seen from the ground level.

- 10.10. Following further discussions with the applicant, some of the panels on the western side of the perimeter roof were requested to be set further away from the edge, so they could also not be seen at ground level. A revised block plan showing the position of the solar panels was submitted on 30 April 2024 to demonstrate this.
- 10.11. Cabling will be clipped to existing cables and follow existing routes into the building by the rear exit where the existing electrical rooms are situated. No issues are raised in this regard.”
- 10.12. As a substantial number of solar panels are proposed to sit on the existing roof surface, there will be some visual impact of the proposals both from aerial view and from first floor level. The panels will be partially observable from the mezzanine first-floor museum from within Bourne Hall itself.
- 10.13. However, as the Solar PV system is not visible from any public vantage point outside of Bourne Hall and is well proportioned across the roof slope, the development will result in less than substantial harm to the Grade II Listed Asset and to the Ewell Village Conservation Area.
- 10.14. It is therefore necessary to weigh the scheme against the public benefits of the proposal which include a significant infrastructure contribution to decarbonise the operations of Bourne Hall, the promotion of sustainable energy consumption patterns to benefit the local community, and ensuring cost-effective electricity expenditure, allowing redistribution into more appropriate areas.
- 10.15. As such, the significant environmental impact, modest social, and minor economic impacts of the proposal would outweigh the less than substantial harm to the Grade II Listed Asset and Ewell Village Conservation Area, and the development is acceptable in this regard.

11. Design and Character

- 11.1. Paragraphs 129, 135 and 139 of the NPPF 2023 refer to the need for functional and visually attractive development that is sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS5 of the CS requires high quality design that is attractive, relates to local distinctiveness and complements the attractive characteristics of the area. Policy DM9 of the DMPD requires a positive contribution to and compatibility with the local character and the historic and natural environment and Policy DM10 requires good design that respects, maintains or enhances the prevailing house types and sizes, density, scale, layout, height, form and massing, plot width and building separation, building lines and key features.

- 11.2. The submitted block plans displays the 120 individual solar panels on the western and southern side of the perimeter flat roof. The panels are well-proportioned to one another and do not extend further than the outer edge of the roof. The solar system will not be visible from the streetscene or the immediate vantage points within the site. There are also no proposed works or alterations to the existing roof.
- 11.3. As such, there are no design or visual amenity concerns from the proposed development.

12. Accessibility and Equality

- 12.1. The Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010, including protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, or belief. There would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

CONCLUSION

13. Planning Balance

- 13.1. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that development must ensure the preservation of any nearby listed building, including its setting.
- 13.2. The proposed mounted PV solar system will result in less than substantial harm to the Grade II Listed Asset and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. However, this harm is demonstrably outweighed by the significant public benefits of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions and informatives:

Conditions

1) Timescale

The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: To comply with Section 18 (1) (a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by Section 52 (4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2) Approved Plans

Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans numbered below and received by the local planning authority and no others.

- A200/BH/001;
- Bourne Hall – SOLAR PV Side Elevation dated 11/01/2024;
- Bourne Hall – SOLAR PV BLOCK PLAN dated 30/04/2024;
- Location plan;
- Fact sheet for Tiger Neo N-type 54HL4R-(V) 425-445 Watt Mono-Facial Module;
- Fact sheet – SunMount. The modular mounting system for all types of flat roof;
- Solar PV Method Statement from Titan Eco.

Reason: For avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and to ensure a satisfactory external appearance in accordance with Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy 2007 and Policies DM8, DM9 and DM10 of the Development Management Policies Document 2015.

3) No Longer in Use

The development as approved shall be removed no longer than one month after the use and operations of the PV Solar Panel system ceases.

Reason: To safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and character and appearance of the conservation area in accordance with Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy (2007) and Policies DM8, DM9 and DM10 of the Development Management Policies 2015.

Informatives

1) Positive and Proactive Discussion

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.

2) Conservation of the Listed Buildings

You are reminded that all works to a listed building must be carried out with the utmost care and to the highest standards of quality and workmanship. Any damage to the listed building shall be immediately made good using materials to match the originals. Unauthorised works that harm the listed building constitute a criminal offence and will be liable to fines of up to £20,000 per offence.

3) Protected Species

Planning Committee
23 May 2024

Planning Application
Number: 24/00064/LBA

The applicant is reminded that it is an offence to disturb protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Should a protected species be found during the works, the applicant should stop work and contact Natural England for further advice on 0845 600 3078.

4) Planning Permission

This permission does not grant planning permission for the works, for which separate consent is required under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).