

Planning Committee
29 January 2026

Planning Application
Number: 25/01359/LBA

Library, Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell, Surrey, KT17 1UF

Application Number	25/01359/LBA
Application Type	Listed Building Consent
Address	Library, Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell, Surrey, KT17 1UF
Ward	Ewell Village Ward
Proposal	Installation of additional vertical balustrades to interior staircase
Expiry Date	30 January 2026
Recommendation	Approval, subject to conditions and informatics
Number of Submissions	None
Reason for Committee	Council is the Applicant
Case Officer	Virginia Palmer
Contact Officer	Simon Taylor, Head of Development Management and Planning Enforcement
Plans, Documents and Submissions	Available here
Glossary of Terms	Available here



SUMMARY

1. Summary and Recommendation

- 1.1. This Application is presented to Planning Committee, as Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is the Applicant.
- 1.2. The Site comprises Bourne Hall, a Grade II Listed Building. The building sits adjacent to its car park, both within a landscaped setting. Internally, the building provides a range of community spaces and facilities, including a library, café, exhibition area, and a museum at first floor.
- 1.3. There is a considerable planning history for the Site, which is detailed within this Report.
- 1.4. The proposal seeks to install 84 additional balustrades along the existing staircase. These would ensure a safer staircase for use by the public, ensuring it achieves compliance with current Health and Safety, and Building Regulations standards.
- 1.5. The Council's Conservation Officer confirms no objection to the proposal, and the proposal is recommended for approval.

PROPOSAL

2. Description of Proposal

- 2.1. The proposal seeks to install 84 additional balustrades along the existing staircase. These would be introduced to reduce spacing between the existing balustrades, to achieve compliance with current Health and Safety, and Building Regulations standards.
- 2.2. The proposed additional balustrades would match the existing balustrades in both material and profile. Each balustrade would be fabricated from the same metal specification as the existing balustrades, to ensure visual and structural consistency.
- 2.3. Installation would be carried out using Sapele timber packers, which are precisely cut pieces of hardwood used for levelling, spacing and alignment. This would reflect the existing fixing methodology to preserve uniform aesthetics.

SITE

3. Description

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- 3.1. The Site comprises Bourne Hall, a Grade II Listed Building constructed between 1967 - 1970 by A.G. Sheppard Fidler and Associates. The building sits adjacent to its car park, both within a landscaped setting.
- 3.2. The Site is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:
 - 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; and
 - Historic interest: as an ambitious example of the expansion of the library service and the integration of community facilities and disabled access.
- 3.3. The Site is surrounded by a mix of uses, including residential houses, a nursery school, and a health centre. Ewell High Street is within walking distance to the Site, comprising shops and cafes/restaurants.

4. Constraints

- Grade II Listed Building
- Locally Listed Building
- Ewell Village Conservation Area
- Built Up Area
- Bat Survey Area
- Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone
- Archaeology Site
- SSSI Impact Risk Zone
- Gatwick Consultation Area
- Heathrow Consultation Area
- Council Managed Trees.

5. History

- 5.1. The below table sets out the planning history relating to the wider Site, within the last five years.

App No.	Description	Status
25/01512/FUL	Single storey timber outbuilding to accommodate the storage of items for the Library of Things	Invalid
25/01399/FUL	Installation of a poly-roof liquid membrane and roofing system to the high-level area of Bourne Hall to create a waterproofing layer and thermal upgrade. The finished roof will replicate the appearance of the existing green oxidized copper and will be raised by approximately 150mm.	Pending consideration

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App No.	Description	Status
25/01400/LBA	Listed Building Consent: Installation of a poly-roof liquid membrane and roofing system to the high-level area of Bourne Hall to create a waterproofing layer and thermal upgrade. The finished roof will replicate the appearance of the existing green oxidized copper and will be raised by approximately 150mm.	Pending consideration
25/00257/COND	Confirmation of Compliance with Condition(s): 3 (Materials), 4 (Pivot Plates) of planning permission 24/01091/LBA	Granted 24 April 2025
24/01091/LBA	Listed Building Consent: Alterations to fenestration	Granted 4 October 2024
24/01015/LBA	Installation of Solar PV to flat roofs and Tesla Powerwall batteries for power storage	Granted 4 October 2024
24/01013/FUL	Installation of Solar PV to flat roofs and Tesla Powerwall batteries for power storage	Granted 4 October 2024
24/00618/LBA	Listed Building Consent: Install a new layer of roof felt to the existing felt roof. (Retrospective).	Granted 4 October 2024
24/00419/FUL	Install Solar PV to the south facing section of the perimeter flat roof	Granted 13 June 2024
24/00066/LBA	Listed Building Consent: Replacement of 13 internal fire doors to meet BS guidelines	Granted 13 June 2024
24/00064/LBA	Listed Building Consent: Install Solar PV to the south facing section of the perimeter flat roof	Granted 13 June 2024
19/00323/COND	Discharge of Condition 3 (Details) of Listed Building Consent ref: 18/01247/LBA, granted 15.02.2019	Granted 16 May 2019
18/01247/LBA	Replacement of 6 internal doors	Granted 15 February 2019
17/00445/LBA	Listed Building Consent for proposed replacement of existing light fittings with LED light fittings in Museum and Library areas of Grade II listed building	Granted 14 September 2017

CONSULTATIONS

Consultee	Comments
EEBC Conservation Officer	Supports the proposal, subject to Conditions
Public Consultation	
Neighbours	The application was advertised by means of a site notice and press notice. The Site Notice was displayed on 25.11.2025. 0 submissions 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 12: Achieving Well-Designed and Beautiful Places
- 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
- Policy DM9: Townscape Character and Local Distinctiveness
- Policy DM10: Design Requirements for New Developments

8. Supporting Guidance

8.1. National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

- Historic Environment

8.2. Other Documentation

- Ewell Village Character Appraisal.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

9. Design, Heritage and Conservation

- 9.1. Bourne Hall Library and Social Centre is Grade II Listed. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that development should ensure the preservation of Listed Building or their setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess, including the structures within their curtilage (Section 16 and 66).

- 9.2. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also requires special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. The Site is within Ewell Village Conservation Area.

- 9.3. Section 16 of the NPPF 2024 requires the conservation of heritage assets. Paragraph 202 correct 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.
- 9.4. Paragraph 212 correct states that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and paragraph 213 says that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 215 correct states that where there is less than substantial harm, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits.
- 9.5. 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.
- 9.6. Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM8 of the DMPD seek to protect and enhance heritage assets and their setting.
- 9.7. 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.
- 9.8. The proposed additional balustrades would match the existing balustrades in both material and profile. Each balustrade would be fabricated from the same metal specification as the existing balustrades, to ensure visual and structural consistency. Installation would be carried out using Sapele timber packers, which are precisely cut pieces of hardwood used for levelling, spacing and alignment. This would reflect the existing fixing methodology to preserve uniform aesthetics.
- 9.9. Accompanying this application is a Heritage Statement, which contains an Impact Assessment. This sets out that given the matching design and materials, the proposal represents a minimal and sympathetic intervention. The works do not alter the original design intent, do not introduce any new or intrusive aesthetic elements, preserve the staircases' visual and historic character, and enhance safety without compromising architectural significance. As such, the proposal would have no adverse impact on the significance of the Heritage Asset.
- 9.10. Accompanying this application is a Design and Access Statement, which sets out that the primary purpose of this proposal is to ensure the staircase fully complies with Approved Document K of the Building Regulations, specifically with respect to balustrade spacing and fall protection. It sets out the benefits of the proposal, which include enhanced safety for all building users, particularly children, vulnerable people and

large groups, reduction of risk of accidents associated with excessive balustrade gaps, the long-term preservation of the staircase by using matching materials and construction methods and supporting the continued public use of Bourne Hall as a safe and accessible community facility.

9.11. The Council's Design and Conservation Officer formally commented on this application. Her comments are summarised below:

Bourne Hall is a Grade II Listed Building that was designed by architects, A.G. Filder and Associates in 1964 and built between 1967-1970 as a library and community facility. It is an important modern building built in concrete, to a circular design that is striking both externally and internally. The internal layout is open to the domed and glazed roof so that the library is a large undivided, bright, and airy space.

The stair to be altered is original and a key feature of the interior leading from the entrance up to the museum on the open mezzanine. It is built to a helical (winding) form, in concrete with exotic African hardwood (probably teak) treads, handrail and middle rail. These are supported on square-sectioned aluminium balusters that are widely spaced. These materials (concrete, hardwood, and aluminium) are used throughout the building and are part of the original unified scheme of interior design. The open design of the stair is part of the open character of the interior space.

Fears of children slipping between the widely spaced balusters have recently been raised and it is proposed to add extra balusters to reduce the gap so that this cannot happen.

The additional balusters will be made of square sectioned aluminium and match the originals exactly. They will be fixed using sapele packers (pieces of exotic wood to mimic the original fixings). These will not be visible, and a Condition should be included on the Decision Notice to require that the minimum number of fixings shall be made into the original fabric.

Other options have been considered, such as plexi glass, which would still be visible, but would get dirty and eventually have a cheap and ugly appearance. This solution is therefore the most sympathetic solution, which will resolve the problem whilst conserving the appearance and heritage significance of the stair and Listed Building.

9.12. As the proposal relates to the staircase within the building, there is no impact on the Ewell Village Conservation Area.

9.13. There is no heritage objection. The 84 additional balustrades along the existing staircase would ensure a safer staircase for use by the public,

ensuring it achieves compliance with current Health and Safety and Building Regulations standards.

10. Conclusion

10.1. The proposal is recommended for approval by Officers. The 84 additional balustrades along the existing staircase would ensure a safer staircase for use by the public, ensuring it achieves compliance with current Health and Safety, and Building Regulations standards.

RECOMMENDATION

To grant Listed Building Consent 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:

Location Plan – dated 01.12.2024

Additional Staircase Balustrade Location Plan – dated 15.01.2026

Block Plan – dated 18.11.2025

Proposed Balustrade BIM Model – received 18.11.2025

S-05-01 – New Staircase Raillings – dated 03.11.2025

S-05-02 – Proposed Look new Staircase Balustrades – dated 03.11.2025

S-05-02 – Balustrade Fixing Detail – dated 03.11.2025

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) Aluminium materials

The aluminium used shall match the original aluminium balustrades exactly in terms of the aluminium metal, its finish, appearance, and dimensions.

Reason: To safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building in accordance with Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy (2007) and Policies DM8, DM9 and DM10 of the Development Management Policies 2015.

Informatics

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) Fixings

To safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building, the minimum number of fixings necessary to secure the new balustrades shall be used and no more.

3) Protection of Stair

The existing original stair shall be protected during the works and care must be taken not to damage any parts of the stair.