

UTT/14/1887/FUL (STANSTED)

(Referred to Committee by Cllr Rich if recommended for approval – concerns over scale of development / impact on residential amenity/parking)

PROPOSAL: **Proposed two storey extension to existing offices with associated car parking and new vehicular access and minor internal/external changes to the existing listed building.**

LOCATION: **Bentfield Place, Bentfield Road, Stansted.**

APPLICANT: **City & Country Group.**

EXPIRY DATE: **22 August 2014.**

CASE OFFICER: **Clive Theobald**

1. NOTATION

1.1 Outside Development Limits / Within Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB) / within Conservation Area / Grade II Listed Building.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

2.1 Bentfield Place lies on the south-west side of Bentfield Road and comprises a large C17 listed two storey farmhouse converted to offices for City & Country Ltd (the applicant) with a two storey 1980s office extension that stands in enclosed landscaped grounds consisting of 0.64ha with staff car park to the front of the site. The listed Bentfield Barns residential barn complex exists onto the site's NW boundary separated by a dividing courtyard, whilst a bungalow (The Garden House) exists onto the site's SW boundary. A garage converted to an office and an adjacent tiled and timber-framed gazebo stand alongside the end of the office extension within the curtilage of the site on its SW side.

3. PROPOSAL

3.1 This revised application relates to the erection of a further office extension to the existing office accommodation at the site for City & Country Limited (applicant), the creation of 13 new staff car parking spaces and provision of new (additional) vehicular access into Bentfield Place from Bentfield Road. The proposal also involves minor alterations to the existing listed building. This revised submission follows the decision by the Council's Planning Committee on 14 May 2014 to refuse planning permission for a similar extension proposal on residential amenity and highway access grounds.

3.2 The new office extension would be two storeys in height and would extend off the end of the existing 1980s extension at right angles to form an internal courtyard. The extension would now have a reduced overall length of 32 metres and a maximum width of 11 metres where the western linking end would have a narrower width of 6 metres. The extension would have a ridge height of 7.5 metres at its linking end and 8 metres at its outer end where the extension would be stepped due to a gradual slope across the site and would have connecting gabled roofs with an extended sloping eaves line along the long south-west facing elevation with The Garden House. The extension would be externally clad in plain tiles, red brick and infill weatherboarding.

- 3.3 Details are also shown of the creation of a new “in-only” second entrance into the site from Bentfield Road for use by City & Country office staff in association with the new office extension and also by commercial vehicles in association with its business interests, which now forms part of the planning description where this was not included for the previously refused application for the office extension scheme.
- 3.4 The proposal also includes minor changes to the rear elevation of the existing 1980’s extension where the existing pitched roofed dormers would be changed to flat lead effect dormers and the existing render to the lower half of the elevation changed from to weatherboarding to match the upper part.

4. APPLICANT'S CASE

4.1 The application is accompanied by a Design & Access Statement (revised June 2014) and Heritage Statement. The D & A Statement sets out the site’s planning history, the commercial justification for the proposed extension and revised design rationale to reflect the previously refused scheme under UTT/14/0243/FUL. The conclusions of the updated D & A Statement are stated as follows:

- The revised proposal has taken the reasons for refusal for the previous application and the Planning Committee’s comments into consideration. This has led to a scheme that:
 - reduces the issues of overbearing on The Garden House through design alterations, including stepping the building back from the boundary, reducing the eaves heights, removing all windows on this elevation and raising the cill height of the roof lights to 1.9m and in the majority of cases to 2.6m;
 - reduces the conflict of commercial and residential vehicles through the creation of a new vehicular entrance, which provides a commercial vehicle one way system.
- City & Country is a prestigious local company with strong community links, which is well established at Bentfield Place;
- The company needs to expand to continue its work, which includes restoring listed buildings across the UK;
- The existing accommodation is well suited to its needs, but the existing floorspace is now fully utilised with the level of growth predicted. We need additional space and our preferred option is to stay in Stansted Mountfitchet and at Bentfield Place;
- This scheme would meet the company’s needs, whilst not harming the aims of the Green Belt;
- The design provides for the enhancement of the setting of the listed building by recreating the partially enclosed rose garden within the historical group of buildings;
- The proposal satisfies Government advice on sustainability and meets its aims for economic growth involving small firms;
- The proposal would be in line with District Council policy making the best use of previously-developed land;
- There are no other suitable sites in the locality which could satisfactorily accommodate the company;
- The proposal would be good for other Stansted businesses as well as providing more local job opportunities;
- Bentfield Place has been an area of significant change over the years;
- City & Country is an employer of 101 people and was included in the 2013 Investec Hot100 Fastest Growing Privately Owned Businesses which covers the whole of the United Kingdom;
- We are not building beyond the perceived development boundary;
- The design sympathetically responds to the Conservation Area Designation, listed

buildings and previous neighbours' concerns.

- 4.2 The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement dated 23 July 2014 submitted by Waterman Transport & Development Ltd which set out details of the new vehicular access arrangements.

5.0 RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

- 5.1 Change of use of Bentfield Place from residential to office use approved in 1986. Two storey office extension approved in 1989. New vehicular access from Bentfield Road to serve Bentfield Place approved in 2001 (UTT/0663/01/FUL). This permission has been implemented by the creation of an associated extension of the staff car park, although a new access for this scheme from Bentfield Road has never been formed.

- 5.2 A two storey extension to Bentfield Place with associated car parking was refused by Members of the Council's Planning Committee on 16 May 2014 contrary to officer recommendation for approval for the following stated reasons as these appear on the Council's issued refusal notice for application UTT/14/0243/FUL:

- 1 The proposed development would lead to an intensification of use of the existing shared vehicular access point onto Bentfield Road where this is likely to give rise to an exacerbation of existing traffic conflict experienced between commercial and residential users of Bentfield Place/Bentfield Barns contrary to ULP Policy GEN1 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).
- 2 The proposed development by reason of its size, scale and close proximity onto the rear (south-west) boundary with the residential property known as The Garden House would have a significant overbearing effect on this property and as such would have a materially adverse effect on the reasonable occupation and enjoyment of its occupants contrary to ULP Policy GEN2 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

- 5.3 It should be noted that no objections were raised by Members at the meeting regarding the demonstrated commercial need for the office extension or the impact of the proposal on the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt where these issues were considered in the officer report for that application, although these issues are included again for this report as set out below to reflect this revised scheme.

6.0 POLICIES

6.1 National Policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

6.2 Uttlesford District Local Plan 2005

- ULP Policy GEN1 – Access
- ULP Policy GEN2 – Design
- ULP Policy GEN4 – Good Neighbourliness
- ULP Policy GEN7 – Nature Conservation
- ULP Policy GEN8 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- ULP Policy ENV1 – Design of development within Conservation Areas
- ULP Policy ENV2 – Development affecting Listed Buildings

6.3 Uttlesford District DRAFT Local Plan (Pre-submission Consultation, April 2014)

- Policy SP1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy SP3 - Employment Strategy
- Policy SP10 - Protecting the Historic Environment
- Policy SP12 - Accessible Development
- Policy EMP1 – Existing and Proposed Employment Areas
- Policy DES1 – Design
- Policy HE1 - Design of Development within Conservation Areas
- Policy HE2 - Development affecting Listed Buildings
- Policy TA1 - Vehicle Parking Standards

6.4 Other material considerations

- Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Plan (2011).
- Stansted Mountfitchet Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals document (2007).

7.0 PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

7.1 No comments.

8.0 CONSULTATIONS

Essex County Council Highways

8.1 No objections.

Essex County Council Ecology

8.2 The bat survey found no evidence of bats in any building on the site. Therefore, no further surveys are recommended. No objections subject to informative should any bats or evidence of bats be found on site prior to or during development.

Specialist Advice on Historic Buildings and Conservation

8.3 Bentfield Place is a timber-framed and plastered farmhouse which has been much altered and extended and converted to office use some years ago. The proposal subject of this application is to form an additional two storey range which would in part replace a summerhouse all for further office use. In general, extensions to listed buildings should be in keeping with their architectural character and the level of new build should not have an overpowering effect on the historic parts of the original structure. In this instance, however, the listed building has already been substantially extended in an unremarkable manner. The previous 1980s extension was justified by the possible improvement to the economic well-being of the area. Similar justification is being put forward now.

8.4 I consider that on balance the character of the original listed building would not be impaired in much greater degree by the now proposed development, which has been revised since the previous refusal of permission to reduce its overall bulk and scale in response to concerns expressed by the Planning Committee and local residents. In design terms, I feel that the new range is interesting by successfully uniting traditional architectural forms with imaginative elevational treatment. Also, it is likely to screen the less inspired additions of the past. Its 1½ to 2 storey vertical proportions would unlikely

have an overbearing effect on the converted listed barns as these buildings are of very imposing proportions. The fenestration and external material changes to the existing buildings would represent a visual improvement providing more uniformity.

- 8.5 Whilst this revised proposal now includes a new vehicular access point from Bentfield Road, I consider that the new opening that would be created would not have such a damaging effect on the character and appearance as to warrant refusal of this part of the revised scheme.
- 8.6 In conclusion, and should there be no planning objections, I suggest approval as before subject to the following conditions.
- All new roofs to be hand made plain clay tiles to LA approval
 - The flat roof dormers to be finished in lead or similar to LA approval
 - All new roof lights to be conservation range to LA approval
 - All external joinery to be painted timber
 - All brickwork to be in hand made soft clay bricks laid in Flemish bond to LA approval
 - All weatherboarding to the existing 1980's extension to match existing
 - Any new timber fencing to be screened by hedge planting on the public side of the fence

9.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 9.1 6 representations received. Neighbour notification expired 24 July 2014. Advertisement expired 31 July 2014. Site notice expired 1 August 2014.

The Hall Barn Residents, Bentfield Road, Stansted, CM24 8JW:

- Although we opposed the previous application (UTT/14/0243/FUL) for an extension at Bentfield Place, since then City and Country have been in negotiations with the residents of The Hall Barns and The Garden House in the aim of resolving the points of objections to the original design. We have now agreed on some points which will help provide some separation and privacy from the business world of Bentfield Place, and with these changes in place we would support this application. By supporting this application City and Country have agreed to carry out the following:-
 - (i) To modify the extension plans and step the building line back from The Garden House boundary;
 - (ii) To maintain the "garage office" as a single storey and reduce any overlooking windows;
 - (ii) To divide the rear "compound" by erecting a dividing fence and segregating the commercial car parking of Bentfield Place from the residents' parking;
 - (iv) The installation of a second entrance to be used as an entrance for all Bentfield Place traffic,(not the residents) and for this traffic to exit out of the original gateway. This original gateway is to remain the entrance and exit for residents only and this is essential and we would very much welcome this alternative arrangement.

3 The Hall Barns, Bentfield Road Stansted, CM24 8JW:

- City and Country have gone some way to alleviate the differences between the Residents of The Hall Barns, although there are still concerns with the intensification of use of shared vehicular access and the impact on my residential amenity;
- The Residents asked for a complete division of commercial and residential by way of a separate entrance (planning permission, now lapsed, was already granted to City and Country for this). The new plan submitted by City and Country has asked for a new entrance, but this will be for commercial vehicle entrance only and the existing entrance will be for commercial exit only. City and Country have assured us that this will not affect the residents, who will still use the new 'exit' (the current shared) entrance for both entrance and exit. Although this is certainly not our preferred option, we would support this plan;
- Should permission be granted on this new plan, we have to insist that there is a condition allowing us to access our own properties through the new 'exit' (the current shared entrance). The Residents cannot be forced to enter our properties via a commercial building and in front of a commercial building.
- City and Country have agreed that in return for our support, they will screen the new exit by way of planting and we would ask that a further condition to this effect be placed on this permission if it were to be granted.
- Should Highways and Uttlesford choose not to agree to this plan, the residents' preferred option would be a complete separation of residential and commercial traffic by way of one entrance/exit for City and Country and one entrance/exit for Residents.

Other representations (mainly re-submitted from UTT/14/0243/FUL):

- The tenants of City & Country should be required to vacate Bentfield Place which in turn would free up floorspace for additional accommodation where existing premises exist in Stansted for them to move into;
- The new entrance proposed into the City & Country car park would require the removal of the existing frontage boundary tree line and construction of 10 metre wide gap within the conservation area which would be detrimental to its character and appearance;
- The residential area around Bentfield Place should not suffer increased commercialisation and traffic. The proposed extension would add to this;
- Existing tenants for C & C still use floorspace at Bentfield Place and should be required to vacate to free up space;
- Nearby commercial premises are still being advertised for rent of more commercial premises are needed;
- Are the additional parking spaces adequate for the additional staff that will be working at this site. Inadequate parking spaces would result in over-spill onto Bentfield Road, which is not a suitable road for long term parking throughout the day. If this were to be the case then Bentfield Road will become an extension to the ad hoc parking problem that already exists on Cambridge Road. Consideration also needs to be provided for the residential element of Bentfield Place;
- Encouraging to see that alternative access arrangements are being explored, although question highway safety along Bentfield Road if the new vehicular access is used for both access and egress;

10.0 APPRAISAL

The issues to consider in the determination of the application (as with the previously submitted and refused planning application) are:

- A Impact of proposed development on the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB) (NPPF);
- B Whether the proposal represents a sustainable form of development (NPPF);
- C Design / whether the proposal would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area / setting of a Grade 2 Listed Building (ULP Policies GEN2/ENV1/ENV2);
- D Impact of proposal on residential amenity (ULP Policies GEN2 and GEN4);
- E Whether the indicated vehicular access arrangements would be satisfactory (ULP Policy GEN1);
- F Whether parking arrangements would be satisfactory (ULP Policy GEN8);
- G Other matters: Ecology (ULP Policy GEN7).

A Impact of proposed development on the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB) (NPPF)

- 10.1 The NPPF replaces previous national guidance on green belts where it states at paragraph 79 that the fundamental aim of green belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open where the essential characteristics of green belts are their openness and their permanence. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the green belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The NPPF advises that when considering any application for planning permission that LPAs should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm which may be caused to the green belt. "Very special circumstances" will not exist unless the potential harm to the green belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. An LPA should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in green belts except where exemptions apply. These exceptions include *"the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building"*. The current proposal for a further office extension therefore has to be considered against this assessment as to whether the proposal amounts to inappropriate development.
- 10.2 The existing gross office floorspace of Bentfield Place (original house and the 1980s extension) is stated as being 930sqm and would as a result of the development involve a net additional gross internal office floorspace of 400sqm. Whilst the extension therefore represents a significant building element in terms of the creation of new volume at the site, the revised scheme as submitted is now 40sqm less than the previously refused scheme and the extension would "square off" the site to form an attractive courtyard setting. Bentfield Place, Bentfield Barns and other dwellings/barn conversions around them together form a building grouping on the south-western side of Bentfield Road where the settlement boundary for Stansted runs to the north of the site along the southern edge of Bentfield Road. The site itself is enclosed to all site boundaries where long views into the site from the south are limited and where the imposing adjacent barns form a physical barrier on the north side. The impact of the development on the openness of the MGB at this edge of village location is therefore reduced compared to if say the site was situated within a more exposed location beyond the village perimeter.
- 10.3 It is therefore considered that the proposed extension by reason of the site's location on the edge of the green belt boundary, its massing and scale and the site's sustainable location (see below) would not amount to an inappropriate form of development when assessed against green belt criteria where it is further considered

that very special circumstances have been put forward by the applicant. No objections are therefore raised to the proposal on this basis.

B Whether the proposal represents a sustainable form of development (NPPF).

10.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which comprises three strands, an *economic* role, a *social* role and an *environmental* role. The applicant states that it contributes to the local economy in terms of its core business interests and also provides staff patronage to local lunchtime traders etc. The building of the extension would also in some way likely to benefit some local construction firms. The site is physically located within a sustainable position within the village immediately outside development limits some 200 metres from Cambridge Road on its western side. Whilst it is the case that some employees working for City & Country at Bentfield Place commute over a distance to work at the site rather than living more locally, the applicant has stated that two thirds of staff live within a 15 mile radius and that several live in Stansted itself and so walk or cycle to work. In terms of the environmental strand, the site is relatively enclosed as previously mentioned in consideration of potential harm caused by the development to the green belt at this location. In consideration of these three strands taken together, the proposal is considered to represent a form of sustainable development at this location in compliance with the NPPF.

C Design / whether the proposal would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area / setting of a Grade 2 Listed Building (ULP Policies (ULP Policies GEN2/ENV1/ENV2)

10.5 The main design changes to the revised scheme as submitted compared to the previously refused scheme under UTT/14/0243/FUL are as follows:

- The reduction in bulk and scale of the extension onto the rear boundary with The Garden House (west elevation) where the extension would now be set back further from this boundary and would incorporate a lower eaves line onto this boundary;
- The removal of the long rear dormer to the rear elevation and its replacement with rooflights at higher roof level and inclusion of additional rooflights at lower roof level;
- The removal of the section of extension element nearest to Bentfield Barns where the existing garage office would be retained resulting in a reduction of overall extension volume from 440sqm as previously proposed to 400sqm;
- Fenestration changes to the east (courtyard elevation)
- External material changes to the existing office block through the introduction of flat roofed dormers and new weatherboarding to lower sections

An appreciation of the design changes compared to the previous extension scheme in terms of footprint and scale can be seen on drawing S289-14.

10.6 The proposed extension would as before have a two storey scale at split level ridge heights using a mixture of external materials, namely, tile/slate, brick, render and weatherboarding. The design principle of the extension remains broadly the same as the refused scheme where the mass of the extension would be broken up by this variation in ridge height levels and contrasting use of materials and is considered to represent a subservient and appropriate office extension design where it would have more architectural merit than the rather uninspiring 1980's extension previously granted. It is also considered that the revised roof design for the west elevation of the

extension where this now incorporates a low eaves line represents a design improvement on the previous submission in terms of built form.

- 10.7 As stated in the officer report for the previous application, the proposed office extension takes a local vernacular in approach and use of materials where it would form a courtyard to Bentfield Place and would not materially harm either the character or appearance of the conservation area or the setting of the host Grade II listed building or adjacent listed buildings where the Council's Conservation Officer has not raised any specialist objections in her detailed assessment to this revised design proposal. The proposal would therefore comply with ULP Policies GEN2, ENV1 and ENV2.

D Impact of proposal on residential amenity (ULP Policy GEN2)

- 10.8 The second reason for refusal for UTT/14/0243/FUL was the significant overbearing effect that the extension was considered to have on the residential amenities of The Garden House situated to the immediate south-west by reason of its size, scale and close positioning onto the boundary with that property. Members will recall that this property was pointed out to them by officers at the Members site visit for that application.
- 10.9 It is considered that the design changes made by the applicant in this revised application to address the previous amenity reason for refusal has sufficiently overcome these impact concerns in terms of the overbearing effect of the extension on The Garden House to the extent that the proposal is now considered acceptable where the set-back from the boundary would vary from between 0.5 of a metre to 2.75 metres and where the main part of the building to the front of The Garden House has now been set back the most with a minimum of 1metre distance from the boundary. The slab level for the extension would remain the same and the ridge would be no higher and be now lower in parts, whilst the scale of the lower section nearest to Bentfield has been lowered by just under a metre. Furthermore, the rooflights on this side would be set at a minimum cill height level of 1.9 metres from internal floor level and where many would be set at 2.6 metres. Additional measures have been included to further reduce the amenity impact of the proposal on this property, including suitable landscaping screening measures.
- 10.10 An overall appreciation of the differences in the set-back positioning of the new extension between the revised scheme as submitted and the previous scheme can be seen on Images 3, 4 and 5 of the applicant's revised Design & Access Statement.
- 10.11 The revised proposal has now removed the extension element closest to Bentfield Barns where concerns had also previously been raised by the nearest occupier at No.5 The Barns. The removal of this extension element and retention of the garage now means that consideration of this amenity issue no longer requires to be considered. It is therefore considered that the proposal now complies with ULP Policy GEN2 in terms of amenity harm to neighbours.

E Whether parking arrangements would be satisfactory (ULP Policy GEN8);

- 10.12 The proposed scheme would provide an extra 17 No. parking spaces at the rear of the existing staff parking area for Bentfield House as previously indicated where this would take the form of additional rows of parking into the lawned area of the site. However, three of these would be lost as a result of the new vehicular access proposed into the existing car park at the top of the site (see below) and through another loss of a space between the two car parking areas. This would result in a net increase of 13 spaces over and above the existing parking provision at the site where this increase would still

meet and exceed the car parking standards for B1 business use when existing parking allocation at the site is taken into account and where parking for a B1 use is a maximum and not a minimum standard.

- 10.13 As highlighted in the previously refused application, car parking has historically been a problem at the adjacent Bentfield Barns where vehicles belonging to staff of City & Country and sub-contractors for the company have been parked on areas around the barns, including along Pond Lane and to the rear of the barns within a parking compound area. The Council has previously investigated alleged unauthorised parking within these areas, although enforcement action has not been formally taken to date against the applicant in relation to this parking as it has been considered by the Council that the alleged activities have not been sufficiently within the public interest for it to be expedient to take enforcement action. This remains the case, although it is considered that the reduction in additional parking spaces from 17 to 13 would still alleviate some of the pressure at this site location. No objections are therefore raised under Policy GEN8.

F Whether the indicated vehicular access arrangements would be satisfactory (ULP Policy GEN1).

- 10.14 Members will recall from the previous application scheme that local residents were concerned about the impact that the additional staff movements associated with the proposed office extension would have on the use of the existing shared vehicular entrance at the corner of Bentfield Road used by both residents and City & Country where this could possibly lead to traffic conflict. This concern was reflected in the first reason for refusal of the Council's decision notice for UTT/14/0243/FUL.
- 10.15 In an attempt to alleviate these highlighted concerns and to overcome the reason for refusal, the applicant has provided details on a revised site layout drawing showing a second point of vehicular access into the existing City & Country car park from Bentfield Road 20 metres east of the existing shared access point where further details of the access, included estimated vehicle trips, are provided within an accompanying transport statement and on a swept path analysis showing how vehicles would be able to be safely manoeuvred into the new access from Bentfield Road. It is proposed that the new access point would be used as an "in" access only by office staff of City & Country and for commercial vehicles and not used as an exit point where the existing shared access would be used for egress by City & Country and as an "in-out" access by Bentfield Barn residents as is the case now.
- 10.16 The new access would break through into the existing car park at the point where the applicant has maintained that it is lawfully entitled by way of an extant permission granted under UTT/0663/01/FUL to create a new vehicular access in connection with the construction of the new car park and reserves this right as a fall-back position. Whilst this may be the case, the Council has requested the applicant to provide the access details on the current application so that its impact can be properly considered. ECC Highways have considered this new element of the proposal and have not raised any objections on highway grounds where visibility along Bentfield Road in both directions to the corner is considered to be good and where traffic speeds are expected to be low at this point.
- 10.17 It is noted that the residents of Bentfield Barns, who would be most affected by the change have welcomed this change, albeit that they still have some reservations as to how this would work in practice and would have preferred total traffic separation between them and City & Country where Members also discussed this possibility in consideration of UTT/14/0243/FUL. However, the applicant has advised that complete

separation of the mixed uses would mean that this would limit access for emergency vehicles, refuse lorries and delivery vehicles and a compromise situation has therefore been adopted by the applicant.

- 10.18 Given the fact that ECC Highways have not objected to the new access point and that the applicant has sought to negotiate a workable solution with local residents to the issue of traffic conflict regarding the new extension, it is considered that the applicant has gone as far as reasonably practical to overcome this issue and no objections are therefore raised to this new access provision under ULP Policy GEN1. The entrance removal of a section of frontage hedgerow to facilitate the new access point would not in the opinion of officers have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area at this location under ULP Policy ENV1.

F Other matters: Ecology (ULP Policy GEN7)

- 10.19 The proposal would involve the demolition of the existing 1920's summer house "gazebo". The applicant has submitted a bat survey report which has confirmed that no bats are present in either building and that there is no evidence to suggest that bats use the buildings as a roosting place. ECC Ecology has been consulted on the proposal and has not objected on this basis. As such, it is considered that the proposal would not be harmful to protected species and would not be contrary to ULP Policy GEN7.

11 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 It is considered that the inclusion of an additional vehicular access point into the site for commercial traffic for the applicant to divide this traffic from existing residential traffic overcomes the highway reason for refusal as reflected in refusal reason 1 for UTT/14/0243/FUL, whilst the cumulative design changes made to the office extension now overcome amenity reason 2 for this application to the extent that the proposal is now considered acceptable in both respects.

The following is a summary of the main reasons for the recommendation:

- A The proposal would not amount to inappropriate development within the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB) (NPPF)
- B The proposal would amount to a sustainable form of development in terms of the site's location (NPPF)
- C The proposal is now acceptable in terms of design and would not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area or the setting of Bentfield House and adjacent barns (ULP Policies GEN2, ENV1 and ENV2)
- D The proposal would not have a significant impact on residential amenity (ULP Policy GEN2)
- E The proposal would comply with car parking standards (ULP Policy GEN8)
- F The proposal would not have a harmful effect on ecology (ULP Policy GEN7)

RECOMMENDATION – CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

Conditions/reasons

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this decision.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Samples of materials to be used in the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA prior to commencement and shall thereafter be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interests of the appearance of the development in accordance with Policy GEN2 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

3. Prior to the erection of the development hereby approved (not including footings and foundations) full details of both hard and soft landscape works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. These details shall include [for example]:-
 - i. proposed finished levels or contours;
 - ii. means of enclosure;
 - iii. car parking layouts;
 - iv. other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas;
 - v. hard surfacing materials;
 - vi. minor artefacts and structures (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting, etc.);
 - vii. proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage power,
 - viii. communications cables, pipelines etc. indicating lines, manholes, supports.);
 - ix. retained historic landscape features and proposals for restoration, where relevant.Soft landscape works shall include [planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate; implementation programme].

REASON: The landscaping of this site is required in order to protect and enhance the existing visual character of the area and to reduce the visual and environmental impacts of the development hereby permitted, in accordance with Policies GEN2, GEN8, GEN7, ENV3 and ENV8 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

4. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out before any part of the development is occupied or in accordance with the programme agreed with the local planning authority.

REASON: In the interests of the appearance of the site and area in accordance with Policies GEN2, GEN7, ENV3 and ENV8 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

5. The approved parking area as shown on drawing CC289-16 shall be properly laid out prior to first occupation of the extension hereby permitted and shall not thereafter be

used for any purpose other than the parking of staff and visitor vehicles associated with the B1 use of the site.

REASON: To ensure that sufficient parking is provided at the site in connection with the development hereby permitted and in the interests of adjacent residential amenity in accordance with ULP Policy GEN8 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

6. The new vehicular access into the site from Bentfield Road as shown on drawings CC289-16 and CC S289-17 shall be constructed and completed prior to first occupation of the extension hereby permitted and shall be used solely as an "entrance only" access by staff and visitors to Bentfield Place and by commercial vehicles used in association with the existing B1 use of the site and not for any exit purposes.

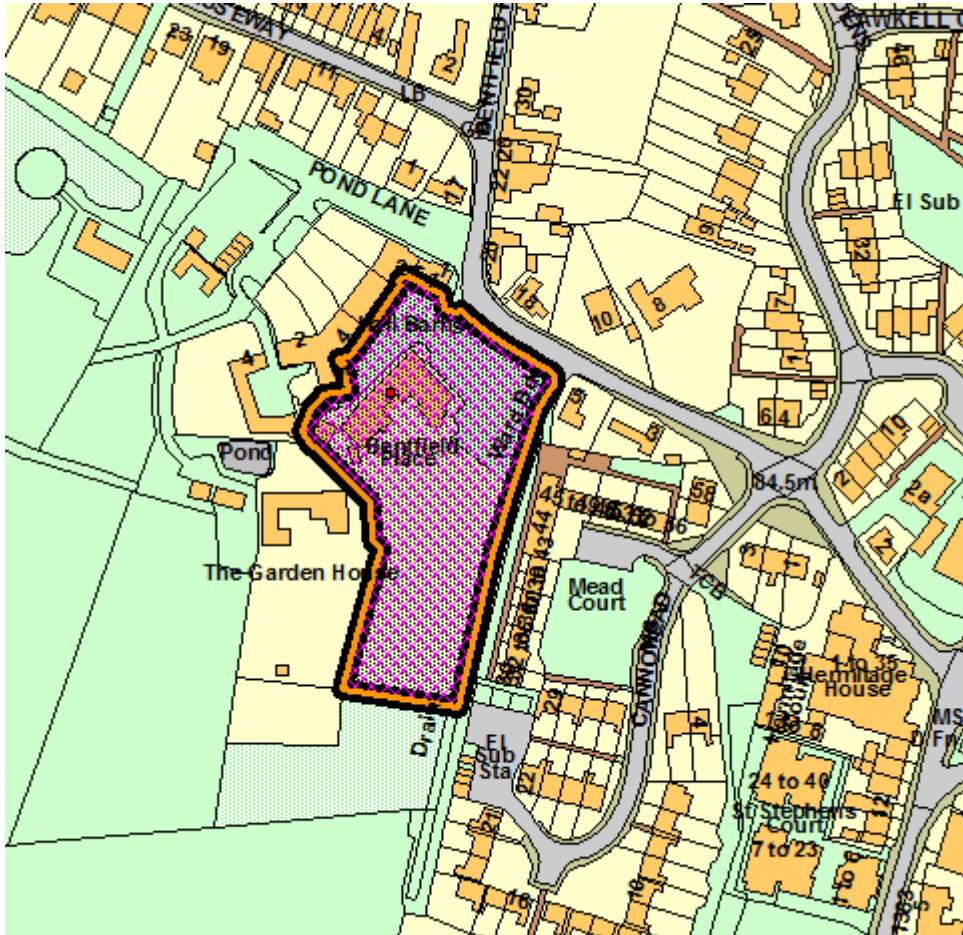
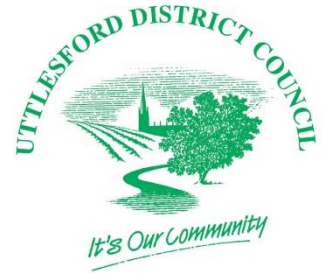
REASON: To ensure that traffic conflict does not arise between the B1 use of the site and the adjacent residential use of Bentfield Barns as a result of the development hereby permitted in accordance with ULP Policy GEN1 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

7. No further windows shall be inserted into the west elevation of the development hereby permitted without the prior written approval of the local planning authority.

REASON: In the interests of the protection of residential amenity in accordance with ULP Policy GEN2 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

Application No. : UTT/14/1887/FUL

Address: Bentfield Place
Bentfield Road
Stansted



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Organisation: Utlesford District Council

Department: Planning

Date: 4 September 2014

SLA Number: 100018688