

## UTT/14/1726/FUL (TAKELEY)

(Referred to Committee by Cllr Cheetham Reason: Concerns re the entrance onto the B1256 and airport related car parking)

**PROPOSAL:** Change of use from African Cultural Centre to guest house and conference centre

**LOCATION:** Takeley House, Brewers End Dunmow Road, Takeley,

**APPLICANT:** Mr M Girolami

**EXPIRY DATE:** 25<sup>th</sup> October 2014

**CASE OFFICER:** Madeleine Jones

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### 1. NOTATION

1.1 Within Development Limits

### 2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE

2.1 The application site consists of a large detached building, which has a substantial curtilage. To the west of the site is a village hall with parking to its frontage and to the east is a youth centre and the village cricket club. Opposite the site are modern residential properties. The property is vacant at present.

### 3. PROPOSAL

3.1 The proposal is for change of use from African Cultural Centre to guest house and conference centre

3.2 There would be eight bedrooms for guest use and three bedrooms for staff use. The proposed conference room would also be used as a lounge for the guest house.

3.3 The conference facilities would only be available during the day time between the hours of 9.00 and 17.00

3.4 The conference room is approximately 75m<sup>2</sup>

### 4. APPLICANT'S CASE

#### Design and Access Statement:

Takeley House formerly known as 'Aklowa' was run as an African cultural centre for the past 30 years until the demise of the previous owner in 2007.

This Victorian house of immense character and charm was seriously neglected and was left to deteriorate; it has since been greatly and dramatically restored and returned to its original glory, keeping a historical building for the enjoyment of all.

The change of use is to provide accommodation purely for overnight stays servicing Stansted Airport, and use as a conference centre servicing local businesses.

#### Design

There are no exterior alterations and only minor alterations to the interior. The property will still have the appearance of an impressive Victorian House.

The new garage block which was built in its new location adjacent to the main house which is in place of the previous stable block that was taken down through dis-repair some years ago. The garages have been built sympathetically in keeping with the main house and incorporate a drive through to the rear garden and parking area.

There will be no social impact as the property is sited between the cricket ground to the east and the social club to the west. Even the designated car parking area will be obscured by the gated garage block and existing shrubbery and will not be visible from the road.

The proposal will add to the local economy by employing staff from the surrounding area and by purchasing fresh provisions from the local farmers.

#### Access

Access to the site remains as existing, the only changes are the provision of more parking spaces, of which the previous owners had insufficient. Local research indicates that on many occasions visitors to 'Aklowa' were forced to park in the neighbouring streets causing a nuisance and also in the adjacent social club car park much to their annoyance, as coaches were a prevalent occupier of the limited on-site parking, forcing car users to park on the road.

The new proposal will be restricted to cars only which will mainly be parked to the rear of the property and will be secluded between the existing hedge rows bordering the social club and a 1.5m high Box hedge (which is believed to be in excess of 100 years old) between the parking area and formal garden.

#### Conclusion

This proposal will have a greatly reduced impact on the local environment; in contrast to its previous use and feedback from the local residents, as well as the parish council have given their full approval.

The applicant has verbally stated that the conference centre would only be available during the daytime and would be happy to have a condition stating this.

It is anticipated that there would be a maximum of three events per week.

The maximum number of people attending the conference centre would be restricted by the size of the conference room.

Only the lounge area of the ground floor would be used in relation to the conference centre.

## 5. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

DUN/0134/73- Demolition of existing dwelling and site for residential development.  
Refused

UTT/0819/77 – Part change of use for some weekends for residential courses, maximum about 10 people. Conditionally Approval.

UTT/0234/80 – Continued use as a cultural centre. Conditional Approval

UTT/0793/09/FUL – Two storey front and rear extensions. Conditional Approval.

UTT/1440/91 – Continuation of use as a cultural centre. Conditional Approval.

## 6. POLICIES

### 6.1 National Policies

- National Planning Policy Framework

### 6.2 Uttlesford District Local Plan 2005

- LC5 - Hotels and Bed and Breakfast accommodation
- S2 Other Settlement Boundaries
- GEN2 Design
- GEN8 Vehicle Parking Standards
- GEN1 Access
- GEN5 Light Pollution
- E3 Access to Workplaces
- RS1 Access to retailing and services
- T3 Car parking associated with development at Stansted Airport

Uttlesford Local Parking Standards

EDG - Essex Design Guide

ECP - ECC Parking Standards (Design & Good Practice) September 2009

### 6.3 Uttlesford District DRAFT Local Plan

- SP2 Development within Development Limits
- DES1 Design
- SP12 Accessible Development
- SP11 Protecting the Natural Environment
- TA1 Vehicle Parking standards
- ENV1 Pollutants
- TA2 Car parking Associated with Stansted Airport

## 7. PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

- 7.1 Takeley PC has no objection providing that all vehicles associated with the business are accommodated within the site.

## 8. CONSULTATIONS

### Access and Equalities Officer

- 8.1 In view of accommodation for an overnight stay an accessible bedroom has been identified which will need to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations. However, the Conference use appears to relate to an Executive Suite on the first floor, there is no access for a disabled user, particularly a wheelchair user to this floor, nor is there any other WC provision other than in the accessible bedroom.

### Essex County Council Highways

- 8.2 No objection subject to condition.

### Natural England

- 8.1 No objection

### Thames Water

- 8.2 No objection

## 9. REPRESENTATIONS

9.1 53 neighbours have been consulted and no representations have been received. Expiry date 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2014

## **10. APPRAISAL**

The issues to consider in the determination of the application are:

A Whether the proposal is appropriate for the site (NPPF & ULP Policies S3, LC5 AND GEN2)

B Impact to neighbours amenity (ULP Policies GEN2, GEN4 and GEN5)

C Highway safety (ULP policies GEN1, T3 and GEN8 and SPD Parking Standards)

D Impact on biodiversity (ULP policy GEN7)

### **A Whether the proposal is appropriate for the site (NPPF & ULP Policies S3, LC5 AND GEN2)**

10.1 The development of tourism is supported to increase the economic benefits to the district provided this is done in a sustainable way.

The site is located within the development limits of Takeley and therefore the proposal is acceptable in principle. The site is adjacent to a village hall and Takeley cricket club. The site has recently been the subject of refurbishment and new extensions built. The current proposal does not involve any external alterations apart from additional parking spaces. The parking is predominantly out of site from the street scene as it is screened from view by two garage buildings. The development would protect the character of the countryside and not result in significant increase in noise levels so as to warrant a refusal of the application.

10.2 Policy LC5 states that new building or extension to existing accommodation will be permitted within development limits if the development would not harm the character or amenities of the surrounding area. As such the proposal complies with policy.

10.3 The Access and Equalities Officers comments have been noted, however, the WC on the ground floor is sufficient dimensions to be used as a unisex WC.

### **B Impact to neighbours amenity (ULP Policies GEN2, GEN4 and GEN5)**

11 The main considerations in respect of impact on neighbour's amenity are in respect of noise, light pollution, and whether any intensification would cause material disturbance or nuisance. Policy GEN4 states that development will not be permitted where noise generated would cause material disturbance or nuisance of surrounding properties. Additionally this additional noise needs to be compared against existing noise levels. It is acknowledged that the proposed use could lead to some degree of extra disturbance to neighbouring residents. The site is adjacent to a main road and opposite residential properties, however, it is not considered that the proposed use would result in sufficient extra noise nuisance to warrant refusal. Any extra external lighting needs to be strictly controlled; however this can be achieved by an appropriate condition. It is necessary to protect residential amenity and as such the conference use is to be restricted to day time events which can be controlled by a relevant condition.

### **C Highway safety (ULP policies GEN1, T3 and GEN8 and SPD Parking Standards)**

The highway authority has no objections to the proposal. The parking standards for guest house/conference accommodation use are maximum standards and it is considered that the proposed parking provision would be adequate to meet the needs of the proposed guest house use and conference use. In view of the sites proximity to Stansted Airport there is the potential for airport parking which would be contrary to policy T3. This can be controlled by an appropriate condition. It is not considered that the development would place unacceptable pressures on the surrounding rural road network. In view of the limited number of bedrooms and the size of the room to be used for conferences, it is not likely that the proposed use would have any impact on highway safety.

**D Impact on biodiversity (ULP policy GEN7)**

The proposal is for change of use to the property and does not include any exterior alterations to the building. There would be more parking spaces provided, however, the site has been the subject to extensive building works and it is therefore considered that the proposed parking would not have any detrimental impact to biodiversity.

**11. CONCLUSION**

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

- A The site is appropriate for the proposed use.
- B There would not be any material detrimental impact to neighbours amenity caused by the proposal.
- C Access to the site is acceptable. Adequate parking provision would be provided.
- D There would be no material impact on biodiversity.

**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. The proposed development shall not be occupied until such time as the vehicle parking area indicated on the approved plans, including any parking spaces for the mobility impaired, has been hard surfaced, sealed and marked out in parking bays. The vehicle parking area shall be retained in this form at all times. The vehicle parking shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles that are related to the use of the development unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that on street parking of vehicles in the adjoining streets does not occur in the interests of highway safety and that appropriate parking is provided in accordance with policy GEN8 of the Uttlesford Local Plan( adopted 2005)

- 3. The parking spaces shown on drawing MG 007 dated May 2014 shall not be used other than for the parking of vehicles in association with the use of the guest

house/conference accommodation hereby permitted. No vehicle shall be parked in the approved parking spaces unless it belongs to or was driven there by a person who is resident at or working at the guest house/conference centre hereby permitted. No vehicle parked at the site by or on behalf of a person visiting the guest house/conference centre as a resident shall remain on the site overnight unless that person is staying as a resident at the guest house on the night that the vehicle is parked.

REASON: To ensure adequate car parking spaces are provided to serve the guesthouse/conference centre accommodation in the interests of highway safety. Furthermore, it is the policy of the Council that all parking required for Stansted Airport should be accommodated within the airport boundary, in order to protect the appearance of the countryside in accordance with policy T3 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005)

4. Prior to first use of the building hereby permitted full details of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority and shall be implemented in accordance with those approved details.

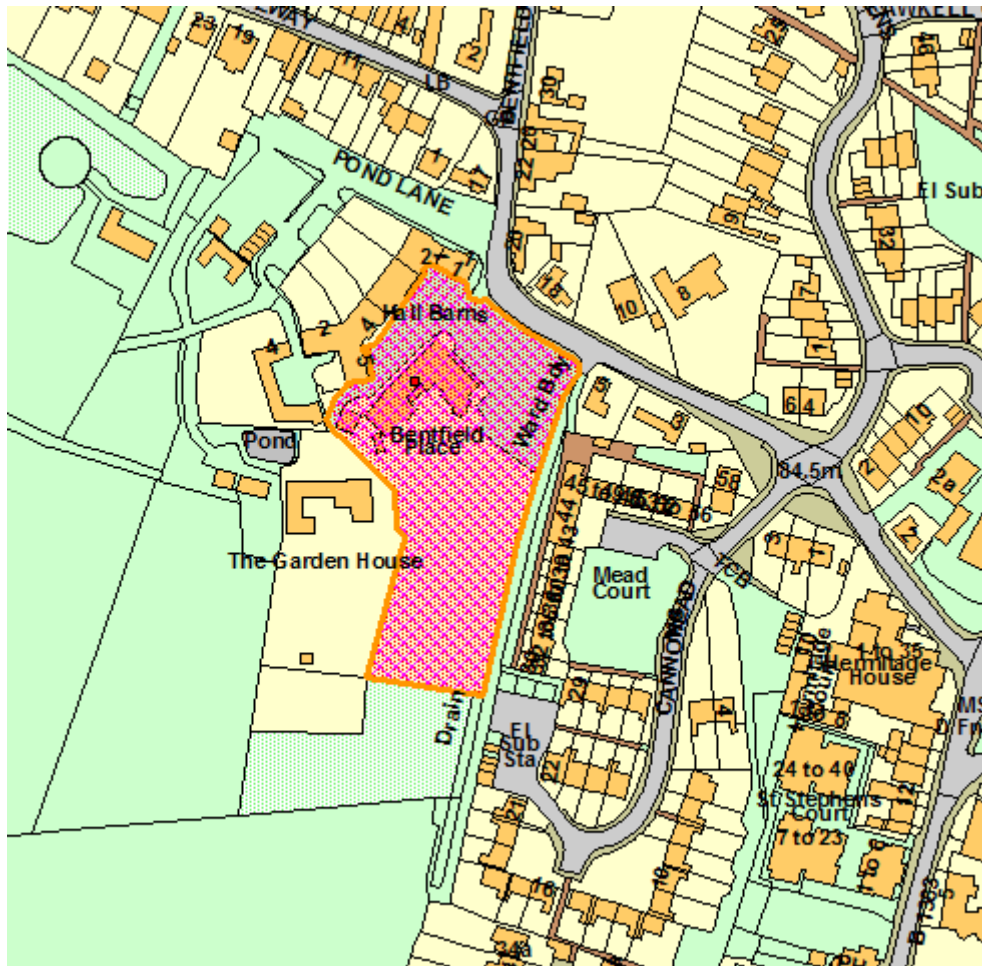
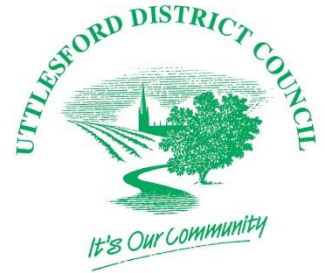
REASON: In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with policy GEN5 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005)

5. The conference /events centre hereby permitted shall not be open to the public other than between the hours of 09:00 hours to 17:00 hours.

REASON: In the interests of the amenity of the area in accordance with Policies GEN2 and GEN4 of the Uttlesford Local plan (adopted 2005)

Application No. : UTT/14/1726/FUL

Address: Takeley House, Brewers End  
Dunmow Road,  
Takeley, Bishops Stortford



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Organisation: Uttlesford District Council

Department: Planning

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