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| <b>Application No:</b><br>11/00806/LB | <b>Ward: Caversfield</b>                               | <b>Date Valid: 26/5/2011</b> |
| <b>Applicant:</b>                     | City and Country Bicester Ltd                          |                              |
| <b>Site Address:</b>                  | Former DLO Caversfield, Skimmingdish Lane, Caversfield |                              |

**Proposal: Alterations to building 22 to provide 3 dwellings**

### **1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The site was formally part of RAF Bicester and is located to the south of Caversfield and north of Bicester and consists of what is referred to as the domestic site. The domestic site has close historic links to the technical site and airfield which are located on the west side of Buckingham Road.
- 1.2 The site is a significant part of the Conservation Area and contains many listed buildings. The site includes buildings such as Officer's mess and quarters, barrack blocks, ration stores, decontamination chambers and central heating stations.
- 1.3 The RAF first used the site in 1918 but no buildings were retained from this time. However some buildings do date back to the 1920's and 30's. The site has been described by English Heritage as comprising the best preserved and most strongly representative of the bomber stations built as part of Sir Hugh Trenchard's 1920's Home Defence Expansion Scheme.
- 1.4 This application deals only with works to building 22, the central heating plant building, a listed building. Works to convert it into one single dwelling are covered in 11/00153/LB, along with all the other listed building proposals for the site. This application seeks listed building consent for alternative works to convert the main element of the building into one dwelling and construct two additional single storey dwellings within the original walls of the external and covered fuel storage yard.

### **2. Application Publicity**

- 2.1 The application was advertised by way of a site notice and press notice. The final date for comment was 14 July 2011.
- 2.2 No letters of objection have been received from neighbouring residents specifically in relation to this application.

### **3. Consultations**

- 3.1 A summary of consultation responses is set out below (see electronic file for full details)
- 3.2 **Caversfield Parish Council** has not commented directly on this application but has expressed general support for the scheme.
- 3.3 **Bicester Town Council** has not commented on this application.
- 3.4 **English Heritage** did not want to comment in detail in relation to this application but state that it supports the concept of conversion of this building to residential use, the proposed internal arrangements and the proposal to remove and replace the later

buildings in the boiler house yard.

- 3.5 The Council's **Conservation Team** does not consider that the special significance of the listed building would be harmed by the original conversion proposal and the proposed revision is similarly sympathetic, sitting entirely within the retained walls. No objections are raised to the principle of the proposal. Detailed comments were provided relating to the treatment of the building and suggested conditions.

#### **4. Relevant Planning Policies**

- 4.1 Central Government Guidance  
Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5 – Planning for the Historic Environment
- 4.2 South East Plan Policies  
BE6 Management of the Historic Environment
- 4.3 Adopted Cherwell Local Plan  
C18 Applications for listed building consent
- 4.4 Non Statutory Cherwell Local Plan  
EN39 Preservation of listed buildings

#### **5. Appraisal**

- 5.1 Main Considerations
- 5.1.1 The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are as follows –
- Impact on the listed building
  - Implications of approving this application in isolation from the other applications.

Each of the above points will be considered in turn.

- 5.2 Impact on listed building
- 5.2.1 The main element of this building consists of the boiler room which measures 14 metres wide by 11 metres long and has a flat roof with an 8 metre high parapet wall. There is a water tower attached to the building which is 18 metres tall. Attached to the building is a yard area enclosed by 2.5 metre high brick walls. Elements of the yard have been enclosed and doubled in height to provide additional storage space associated with the boiler house. The more modern elements tend to have shallow pitched corrugated metal roofs.
- 5.2.2 The planning application proposal (11/00805/F) seeks to convert the main element of the building into one residential unit and create two further dwellings within the walls of the yard. In terms of listed building consent the main alterations involve the removal of the covered areas within the yard, alterations to the yard wall including changes to the south western section of the wall, partial demolition and partial rebuild of walls internal to the courtyard, minor alterations to some openings and the construction of new walls to create two new dwellings and separate gardens.
- 5.2.3 The main element of the building is sympathetically converted into a four bedroom property with the living accommodation and three bedrooms at ground floor and a

galleried master suite and library/study at first floor. The water tower is currently inaccessible but the scheme includes the construction of a spiral staircase and insertion of viewing platforms within the tower. The staircase provides access to the tower and also serves as a secondary access to the first floor accommodation. Whilst there is no particular use allocated to the water tower, due to its size and original function it will be a significant feature of the property and by allowing access to it as part of the residential property it will assist with future maintenance of it. Existing openings are retained and remodelled and there are limited new interventions by way of windows and doors.

- 5.2.4 The yard wall is largely going to be retained but past interventions along the south western elevation of the wall will be rectified by a replacement wall with only three openings to provide access to the new gardens.
- 5.2.5 Either side of the boiler house, within the yard walls new dwellings are proposed. These will utilise existing walls along two sides of the proposed properties. However the walls will be heightened by 0.7 metres to provide additional head room within the living accommodation. Flat sedum roofs are proposed as well as flat roof lights. The properties are proposed to be single storey structures that with the exception of the 0.7 metre increase in height and two new openings to form entrance doors will not materially alter the appearance of the building and structure. Natural light will be obtained from the substantial glass frontages that are proposed. However these elevations will not be visible as they are contained within the enclosed yard.
- 5.2.6 In general terms the alterations to the building are sympathetic and do not alter features of particular historic interest. The elements being removed are unsympathetic additions that occurred as a result of the nature of the use of the building when it was in military use. Their removal brings the structure back more in line with its original appearance.
- 5.2.7 Whilst the alterations required to convert the building into residential use may appear significant the proposals are sympathetic to the main features of historic interest, those generally being the main structure, water tower, the external yard walls and existing openings. The principle of the conversion to residential use will be covered more thoroughly in the full planning applications but in terms of the long term preservation of the listed building this form of use, whilst unusual, appears to be appropriate.
- 5.3 Implications of approving this application in isolation from the other applications
- 5.3.1 Whilst the detail of the proposal for listed building consent is considered appropriate it is recommended that this application is considered in conjunction with the full planning application (11/00805/F). If the application was approved in isolation from the full application the physical works to the building could be implemented resulting in buildings capable of being used as residential accommodation, without actually benefiting from a change of use consent. This may be detrimental in the event of full planning permission being refused and there being no long term plan for the reuse of the buildings.
- 5.4 Conclusion  
As a result of the above assessment it is considered that the proposed works to the listed building are sympathetic to the historic fabric and features of the building and

therefore the proposal complies with guidance set out in PPS5 and policies BE6 of the South East Plan, C18 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan and EN34 of the Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan. Furthermore, it is considered that by developing within the existing walls the campus layout is retained and the proposal contributes to the overall scheme to secure the future of the whole site. It is therefore recommended that this application be approved subject to the conditions set out below.

## **6. Recommendation**

**Approval**, subject to the following conditions;

1. SC1.5A Listed Building: Duration Limit (3 years) (RC3)
2. Plans condition
3. That the external walls and roofs of the new dwellings shall be constructed in accordance with a detailed schedule and specification of materials and finishes which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the works hereby approved.  
Reason - To ensure the completed development is compatible with the listed building and to comply with Policy BE6 of the South East Plan 2009 and Policy C18 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan.
4. SC 5.7C Making Good in Materials to Match (RC27AA)
5. SC 5.1AB Safeguard Existing Buildings (RC24AA)
6. SC 5.2AB Hand Demolition and Safeguard Existing Buildings (RC24AA)
7. SC 5.3AA Demolition of Buildings (RC25A)
8. SC 5.3C No Other Works Except as Plans (RC27AA)
9. SC 5.13AB Building Recording (RC63AA)
10. That all new or replacement windows, doors and openings in the original building and new structures shall be in accordance with details to no less than 1:10 (including cross section, plan, elevation, glazing and colour/finish) which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the works hereby approved. (RC79A)
11. SC 5.16B Details of damp proof course (RC27AA)
12. SC 5.5AB Submit New Design Details (RC27AA) – flooring, ceiling, wall treatments
13. The use of cement in the retained building is not permitted unless for the purposes of repairing similar or otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. (RC27AA)
14. The use of modern plaster in the retained building is not permitted unless for the purposes of replacing or repairing similar or on approved partition walls or otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. (RC27AA)

### **SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF LISTED BUILDING CONSENT AND RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES**

The Council, as local planning authority, has determined this application in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Government advice contained within PPS5 and the development plan unless material considerations indicated otherwise. The development is considered to be acceptable on its merits as the proposal preserves the character and appearance of the listed building. As such the proposal is in accordance with Policy BE6 of the South East Plan 2009 and Policy C18 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters

raised, the Council considers that the application should be approved and listed building consent granted subject to appropriate conditions, as set out above.

**CONTACT OFFICER: Caroline Roche**

**TELEPHONE NO: 01295 221816**