Outlook

Re: DC/24/1667 and DC/24/1668 - Lock House, Lock Lane, Partridge Green

From Nick Sutton [redacted]
Date Mon 13/01/2025 06:56
To Tamara.Dale [redacted]

Tamara

As you are aware minor amendment plans have been submitted at 1436 on 10 January 2025 which address the conservation officers holding objection. These plans by moving a demountable partition line between house 2 and 3 mean the surviving service elements of the country house become part of house 2 with the remainder of the 1905 fabric of the building and the re-worked Maple & Co interiors to enable an appreciation of the social hierarchy, albeit fossilised, to be appreciated within house 2. In terms of the number of units, this does not harm setting and all residential paraphernalia has been designed into the scheme or dealt with by legal restriction. The number of units - 5 in a property of over 20,000 in 14 acres of gardens is not over development. These units are formed by the split off of later additions to the building but still forming large units of over 1,500 sqft each. The existing use of Lock House is as a single dwelling, and it has been demonstrated through 13 years of marketing that this use is not viable. If less than substantial harm to the heritage asset is created by the proposals, which is not accepted (our expert states harm falls off the bottom of the scale), this harm is outweighed by the public benefit of achieving the optimum viable use for Lock House and thereby ensuring its future preservation in line with local and national policy as well as providing much needed housing for Horsham who cannot demonstrate sufficient housing supply.

In terms of the water neutrality statement because the water supply at Lock House is not metered, a Part G flow survey with occupancy levels has been used to determine baseline water consumption as submitted with this and the previous application. This is permitted by and in accordance with HDC's policy on water neutrality statements updated 13 July 2023. The occupancy levels have been based on the actual occupancy of the property - Mr&Mrs, 5 Children, Partners, Mother in Law, domestic staff, work staff. The swimming pool is the indoor pool to become unit 5. By passing the water neutrality statement to your specialist ecology consultant the Council considers that the statement is sufficiently precise, credible and deliverable to deliver water neutrality in terms of your policy and accordingly at this point this cannot be grounds for refusal.

In conclusion, a holding objection was received from the conservation officer and amended plans within 24 hours, which do not require re-consultation save with the conservation officer, were provided and these plans do not include substantive change to the scheme or its description. Clarification has now been provided in terms of water neutrality but the Council have accepted the precision, credibility and deliverability of the statement already.

Accordingly, I sincerely hope as echoed by our Heritage consultant that common sense will prevail and the public interest will be served by preserving a building of special architectural and historic importance.

kind regards

Nick

From: Tamara.Dale [redacted]
Sent: 09 January 2025 17:02
To: Nick Sutton [redacted]
Subject: DC/24/1667 and DC/24/1668 - Lock House, Lock Lane, Partridge Green

Dear Mr Sutton,

Following our telephone conversation yesterday, I have now received the consultation response from the Design and Conservation Officer. Please find this attached for your convenience.

In summary, it is considered that the conversion of the dwelling to 5no. units would result in harm to the significance of the Listed Building. The optimum use of the property is as a single dwelling, where the property was built and designed as such, and the function and layout of the rooms supports its character as a large mansion house. Specifically, the proposal when considered cumulatively, would result in the dilution and erosion of the understanding and appreciation of the designated heritage asset, with the level of activity, parking, and paraphernalia associated with daily living having a detrimental impact on the cohesiveness of the Listed Building. While it is recognised that there may be reasons why the conversion to small units is necessary, it is not considered that the public benefits arising from such development would outweigh the harm as identified to the significance and interest of the Grade II Listed Building.

It is considered that the number of units would need to be reduced in order to limit the impact on the Listed Building. It is noted that amended plans have been received that has reduced the number of units to 3. I have yet to discuss the merits of this with Nicky, but will provide an update once I have had the opportunity to discuss this. It should however be noted that such an amendment would be considered substantive and could not therefore be accepted under the current application. Should this be pursued, the current application would need to be withdrawn and resubmitted.

I am still awaiting chasing a formal response from Natural England, however at this stage there are concerns about the proposed water strategy, particularly given the lack of evidence to demonstrate the existing baseline as given within the Statement. While the existing baseline for the main dwelling has been calculated through an Existing Flow Survey, the occupancy level as given has not been properly evidenced. In addition, no water bills have been provided to demonstrate this demand as suggested. Furthermore, the average occupancy figure has been used for the 1-bed flat. The use of average occupancy figures to demonstrate an existing baseline is not an accepted methodology, where actual occupancy numbers should be used. As such, there is uncertainty whether the figure as calculated reflects actual consumption. As for the main dwelling, no water bills have been provided to demonstrate the suggested demand. It is also noted that the existing baseline has referenced the swimming pool, but it is unclear whether this relates to the indoor or outdoor swimming pool. It is however assumed that this relates to the indoor swimming pool given that the outdoor swimming pool has not appeared full during previous site visits. Overall, the Water Neutrality Statement relies on an existing baseline calculated using occupancy levels that haven't been evidenced or demonstrated. As such, it is considered that insufficient information has been provided to establish the necessary degree of certainty of the existing baseline, where it cannot be confirmed that sufficient mitigation/offsetting measures have been proposed to make the development water neutral. It cannot therefore be concluded that the development would not have a likely significant effect on the Arun Valley protected sites.

Given the above matters, which would require substantive amendments to both the proposal and the water strategy, the current application could not be amended in line with the Council's amendment guidance. As such, it is suggested that the current application be withdrawn and a revised application submitted once the above matters have been addressed. Alternatively the application will be determined on the basis of the current information.

I would be grateful if you could confirm withdrawal of the application by return email. Alternatively the application will be determined on the basis of the current information.

I hope this is of assistance,

Kind regards,

Tamara

Tamara Dale
Principal Planning Officer

Telephone: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]





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