



19/10/20

Application: Change of Use from Conference Centre (D2) to Residential (C3) to provide 21 flats with associated single and two-storey extensions to the east wing, parking, bin and cycle stores, landscaping and alterations to fenestration following removal of the existing external staircase in association with the application for listed building consent. Three-storey rear extension to create eight flats (C3) with associated parking and bin and cycle stores. Two pairs of semi-detached houses with associated access road, parking and bin and cycle stores. Terrace of 3 two-storey houses with associated access road, parking, bin and cycle stores following demolition of existing buildings.

LPA IDs: 2020/0437, 2020/0567, 2020/0568, 2020/0438, 2020/0440, 2020/0439

Address: Esher Place, 30 Esher Place Avenue, Esher, Surrey, KT10 8PZ

Dear Dana Nickson,

The Group have been notified of the above applications. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining this application.

Significance of Asset

Esher Place is a grade II designated heritage asset. Esher Place sits on the grounds of the former 15th century home of the Bishop of Winchester which was altered and extended in the early 18th-century by William Kent - this house was demolished when ownership of the land was acquired by John Spicer, a London Stockbroker. Edward Lapidge designed the new house for Spicer which was complete in the early 19th-century. The house was enlarged considerably in the late 19th-century by the first Viscount D'Abernon, the works were undertaken by G.T. Robinson and Duchene. The house possesses considerable architectural and artistic interest due to the various design styles associated with the external and internal aspects of the house, additionally a degree of historic interest due to the architects involved with the design of different elements of Esher Place and surrounding landscape.

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Proposal

The applicant has submitted four separate applications which relate to proposed works at Esher Place. These are all in association with the change of use from the current conference centre to residential use and the construction of additional dwellings within the setting of Esher Place. A full description of the works can be found at the head of this letter.

The Georgian Group Advice

The Group recommends your Local Authority requires the applicant to submit one application for the proposed works to Esher Place and surrounding landscape. The applicant has separated the works into four applications, with them all overlapping in their proposed works. Without the submission of one overriding application, an assessment of harm cannot be adequately undertaken, to allow for this assessment to be undertaken, one application should be submitted.

Due to the proposed works being separated into four applications it has meant the applicant has not adequately assessed the significance of Esher Place and the contribution made by the surrounding landscape. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF requires an applicant to 'describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting', the applicant has not met this requirement and subsequently, the works do not meet the requirements set out within paragraph 193 and 194 of the NPPF.

Furthermore, the following advice from the section of the PPG accompanying the NPPF entitled '*What is the setting of a heritage asset and how can it be taken into account?*' is directly relevant: 'When assessing any application which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change'. Additionally, Historic England's guidance on the setting of heritage assets states: 'Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, to accord with NPPF policies consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset. Negative change could include severing the last link between an asset and its original setting'.



Recommendation

The Georgian Group objects to this application on heritage grounds. The applicant has not fully described the significance of Esher Place and the contribution made by its setting, therefore not meeting the requirement set out in paragraph 189 of the NPPF. Additionally, the applications do not meet the requirements set out in 193 and 194 of the NPPF.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Your Authority should take these representations into account in determining the application

Yours sincerely,

Edward Waller (Conservation Advisor for South East England and London)