

LOCATION: Holcombe House, The Ridgeway, London, NW7 4HY

REFERENCE: H/01745/12 **Received:** 23 April 2012
Accepted: 23 April 2012

WARD(S): Mill Hill **Expiry:** 18 June 2012

Final Revisions:

APPLICANT: Quinn Developments Ltd

PROPOSAL: Change of use and refurbishment of Holcombe House to provide a single family dwelling house together with the conversion of the MIL Building into 15 self-contained residential units, including removal of the link structure between the buildings, associated alterations , car-parking and landscaping.
(LISTED BUILDING CONSENT)

RECOMMENDATION: Approve Subject to Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PL-200 Rev B; PL-201 Rev B; PL-202 Rev B; PL-203 Rev A; PL- 204 Rev A; PL-205 Rev B; PL-206 Rev A; PL-210 Rev A; PL-211 Rev B; PL-212 Rev B; PL-213 Rev B; PL-214 Rev B; PL-215 Rev B; PL-216 Rev B; PL-217 Rev A; PL-218 Rev A; PL-219 Rev B.

Reason:

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

2. This work must be begun not later than three years from the date of this consent.

Reason:

To comply with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

3. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced a gazetteer identifying historic features of interest of Holcombe House shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the Listed Building.

4. Before the development of Holcombe House hereby permitted is commenced details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority;
Any replacement timber windows at a scale of 1:10, including sections, with 1:1 glazing bar details,

Iron grilles to the reinstated basement lightwells,
Any replacement internal doors at a scale of 1:10,
Boundary treatment, including gates / railings / walls / fences,
Any kitchen, bathroom or sauna air vents / terminals or other flues,
Refuse and recycling storage enclosures.

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the details approved.

Reason:

In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the Listed Building.

5. Before the development of the MIL buildings hereby permitted is commenced details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority;

New communal conservatory,
New entrance doors and windows / window surrounds,
New entrance door canopies,
Any kitchen and bathroom air vents / terminals and boiler flues,
Conservation rooflights,
New internal or external doors at a scale of 1:10,
Boundary treatment, including gates / railings / walls / fences,
Disabled persons platform lift.

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the details approved.

Reason:

In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the Listed Building.

6. Before the development hereby permitted commences, samples of the materials to be used for the external surfaces of the building(s), including new brickwork, new natural slate to the former gym building, and hard surfaced areas, and samples of the new windows (to the MIL building), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with such details as approved.

Reason:

In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the Listed Building.

7. All new external and internal works and finishes and works of making good to the retained fabric, shall match the existing adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material, colour, texture and profile, unless shown

otherwise on the drawings or other documentation hereby approved or required by any condition(s) attached to this consent.

Reason:

In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the Listed Building.

8. Before the development hereby permitted commences on site details of all extraction and ventilation equipment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and implemented in accordance with agreed details before the use is commenced.

Reason:

To ensure that the proposed development does not prejudice the enjoyment or amenities of occupiers of adjoining residential properties.

INFORMATIVE(S):

1. The reasons for this grant of Listed Building Consent or other planning related decision are as follows: -

i) The proposed development accords with strategic planning guidance and policies as set out in The Mayor's London Plan: July 2011 and the Adopted Barnet Unitary Development Plan (2006).

In particular the following policies are relevant:

Adopted Barnet Unitary Development Plan (2006):

GSD, GBEnv1, GBEnv2, GBEnv3, GBEnv4, GRoadNet, GParking, GWaste, D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, D11, D12, D13, HC1, O1, O2, O3, O6, O17, M1, M7, M14, H5, H8, H16, H17, H18, H20, H24, CS2, CS8, CS13, IMP1 and IMP2.

Barnet SPD: Contributions to Health Facilities from Development (July 2009)

Barnet SPD: Contributions to Education from Development (February 2008)

Barnet SPD: Contributions to Library Services from Development (February 2008)

Barnet SPD: Sustainable Design and Construction (June 2007)

Barnet SPD: Affordable Housing (February 2007)

Barnet SPD: Planning Obligations (Section 106) (September 2006)

Mill Hill Conservation Area Character Appraisal Statement

Local Plan Core Strategy: CS4, CS5, CS7, CS11, CS13, CS15.

Local Plan Development Management Policies: DM01, DM02, DM03, DM04, DM06, DM08, DM10, DM15, DM16, DM17

ii) The proposal is acceptable for the following reason(s): - The proposed development would not detract from the openness of the Green Belt and would not harm the character and appearance of the Mill Hill Conservation

Area. It would repair a listed building and would provide suitable accommodation for future residents. There would be no undue impacts on the amenities of the neighbouring occupiers and the proposal complies with all relevant council policy and design guidance.

1. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy Framework

The Mayor's London Plan: July 2011

Policy 5.3 Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy 5.7 Renewable Energy

Policy 7.2 An Inclusive Environment

Policy 7.4 Local Character

Policy 7.6 Architecture

Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology

Policy 7.16 Green Belt

Policy 7.21 Trees and Woodland

Strategic Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

Mayor of London: Accessible London - Achieving an Inclusive Environment SPG (April 2004)

Mayor of London: Sustainable Design and Construction SPG (May 2006)

Relevant Unitary Development Plan Policies:

GSD, GBEnv1, GBEnv2, GBEnv4, D1, D2, D3, HC1 .

Barnet Local Plan

A Local Plan for Barnet, which will be made up of a suite of documents including a Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD), is at an advanced stage. The Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD were adopted by the Council on 11 September 2012. They are now subject to a 6 week period of legal challenge which ends on 30 October 2012. Very significant weight can be given to the policies within the documents, however until the end of this challenge period UDP Policies "saved" by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in May 2009 remain.

Relevant Core Strategy Policies: CSNPPF, CS5.

Relevant Development Management Policies: DM01, DM06.

Barnet Supplementary Planning Documents:

Barnet SPD: Sustainable Design and Construction (June 2007)

Mill Hill Conservation Area Character Appraisal Statement

Relevant Planning History:

H/00602/10 – Demolition of existing link structure between Holcombe House & MIL building – Planning permission granted 1 April 2010 subject to conditions.

H/00603/12 – Demolition of existing link structure between Holcombe House & MIL building – Conservation Area Consent granted 1 April 2010 subject to conditions.

H/00440/12 – Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion (proposal to use Holcombe House as a single dwelling and conversion of MIL building to 15 residential units – Environmental Statement not required 8 March 2012.

Date of Site Notice: 24 May 2012

Views Expressed:

The concerns raised can be summarised as follows:

- External drainage pipes and overflows are currently painted black and this makes them very visible against the white of the building. The pipes on the north elevation should be finished in the same colour as the walls.

Responses from external consultees

English Heritage - authorise the Local Planning Authority to determine the application for Listed Building Consent "as seen fit" (in accordance with national and local policy guidance and on the basis of the Council's specialist conservation advice). This authorisation has been endorsed by the Secretary of State.

2. PLANNING APPRAISAL

The site and history

The site, which has an area of approximately 1.54 hectares, contains a number of buildings, all of which lie close to The Ridgeway at the high point of the site, which descends westwards through landscaped gardens and woodland to the base of the site which is bounded by Lawrence Street. To the south the site adjoins the Mill Field public open space.

There are two main buildings, Holcombe House and the MIL (Missionaries Institute London) building, each served by their own access from The Ridgeway.

Over the 17th and 18th centuries the manorial holdings along The Ridgeway were developed with large country houses. Holcombe House, which was completed in 1778, was one such property. During the 19th century many of the family estates were acquired by religious and educational institutions. The shift from private house to educational institution resulted in the construction of a variety of buildings around and attached to Holcombe House, however it has been retained as an obviously

domestic villa property and the interiors survive, even though they have undergone various alterations that have reduced their interest.

The MIL building (completed in 1896) was constructed from the outset for institutional purposes. It has been the subject of various alterations.

From 1904 Holcombe House and the MIL building became a single senior boarding and day school, known as St Mary's Abbey School.

The Gym building (completed in 1983) and the Link building (completed in 1988) remain as their primary construction intended.

Holcombe House, which was constructed between 1775-8 to the designs and direction of the architect John Johnson, is a Grade II* listed building. It is a two storey stuccoed building, rectangular in shape, with basement and rooms in the roof space. Until the 1870's Holcombe House was used as a private dwelling. It was then acquired by the Franciscan Sisters from Hackney and became a convent and school. When the site passed to the Missionary Institute of London in 1977 Holcombe House operated as the residential and administrative centre for the Mill Hill Missionaries.

The MIL building was constructed to the south of Holcombe House in 1896 to house the two schools initially set up and run by the Franciscan Sisters. It is a three storey red brick building of a "Tudoresque" style, with a "C" shaped plan, forming a courtyard to the south. It is also a listed building as a result of its connection to Holcombe House. The building originally contained dormitory accommodation on the upper floors with teaching space below. When the building passed to the Missionary Institute of London in 1977 the Mill Hill Missionaries used the building, together with Holcombe House for training purposes.

The Gym building, which incorporated a raised hall, with offices and teaching spaces on the lower floor, was opened in 1983.

The Link building between Holcombe House and the MIL building contains mainly circulation areas and WC's. It was built in 1988 after the demolition of the earlier Victorian link between the two buildings.

Parking spaces for 20 cars were available adjacent to the MIL building with further space for parking to the front of Holcombe House.

The grounds contain a number of trees, together with two tennis courts and a cemetery with a mausoleum. The cemetery is located on the south western boundary and can be accessed from St Mary's which lies immediately to the north west of Holcombe House. To the front of Holcombe House are two Horse Chestnuts. The garden behind the buildings is an original planned landscape but it has undergone random changes and new planting.

Holcombe House and the MIL building have been vacant (apart from some recent temporary occupation) since their sale at the end of 2007. Their former use was considered to fall within the C2 Use Class (Residential Institutions)

The site lies within the Mill Hill Conservation Area and is also within an area designated as Green Belt.

The proposal

The application seeks Listed Building Consent to comprehensively redevelop the Holcombe House / MIL site. Holcombe House will be renovated and refurbished to provide a large single dwelling and the MIL buildings will be altered and converted to provide 15 flats (12 x two bedroom units, 3 x three bedroom units). An existing link structure between Holcombe House and the MIL building is to be demolished. Whilst this is the subject of a separate application for Listed Building Consent, the demolition has been granted previously under application references H/00602/10 & H/00603/10. The existing glazed corridor link between the main MIL building and the former gym will be replaced by a new link of a reduced size, and a toilet block on the garden elevation of the MIL building and an external staircase on the south elevation of the gym building will be removed.

The original plan form of Holcombe House and its principal features remain largely intact and the return to its original use as a dwelling requires few alterations. The works will involve;

- reinstatement of basement light wells to the front of the building within historic openings,
- insertion of new bathroom/wc facilities within the basement,
- repair and restoration of decorative features where necessary,
- removal of kitchen features and fixtures and replacement, respecting historic features such as fireplaces,
- removal of inserted services such as small personal sinks within rooms,
- repairs and conservation of surviving historic windows and shutters and replacement of uPVC units with timber windows.

The conversion of the 1983 "gym" building into 6 flats will involve;

- the subdivision of the building into three floors, with 2 flats on each floor, subdivision on an north / south axis, with a central access and lift shaft to the eastern side,
- the re-fenestration of the building to reflect the new floor levels,
- removal of the non structural vertical piers on the exterior to provide a flatter elevation.

The conversion of the MIL building into 9 units will involve;

- the subdivision of the large rooms on all levels to create smaller bedrooms, living rooms and bathrooms,
- the insertion of kitchen and bathroom facilities, and associated drainage,
- upgrading of heating systems, insulation and windows, drylining of walls, provision of secondary glazing,
- insertion of two communal lifts,
- new entrance doors within window opening, creation of an entrance lobby,
- lowering of windows to provide a more domestic fenestration from the interiors. Windows facing towards The Ridgeway and Holcombe House will not be changed. Mullions and transoms will be in stone to match the original and all

windows will be in leaded casements. All surrounds will be made good in matching brick.

All of the units in the MIL building will be designed to Lifetime Homes Standards, and two of the units will be designed to be adaptable to provide wheelchair access.

Holcombe House could not be designed to Lifetime Homes Standard due to its Listed status.

The dwellings within the MIL buildings would be generously proportioned 2 or 3 bedroomed units. The Holcombe House conversion would provide a substantial dwelling comprising potentially 10 bedrooms.

The character and appearance of the Listed Building

Holcombe House is a two storey stuccoed building, square in plan, made up of basement, ground, first and second floors. A later service wing is positioned to the south of the main building.

Despite its institutional use in recent times, the plan form of Holcombe House remains much as was originally designed, as do most of the principal internal features of interest, including a grand staircase, period fire surrounds, moulded plaster work walls and ceilings and painted mural panels. The Design and Access Statement details the specific proposals for the restoration of the house on a floor by floor basis and a Heritage Statement analyses the different historic elements of the building and identifies the key features of significance, set out by floor and indicated as either, high, moderate and lower.

It is proposed to reinstate the basement lights on the front elevation and this will involve inserting new iron grilles to cover the two lightwells. The existing UPVC basement windows on the front elevation are to be replaced by timber windows, which should match the detailing of the historic sash windows on the floors above. The front forecourt is proposed to be re-landscaped in a style similar to that of Woolverstone Hall in Suffolk, also designed by John Johnson. In the rear garden, the tennis court will be restored and otherwise the gardens will be brought back to their former condition. Only minor alterations are proposed to the interior of Holcombe House, mostly involving the removal of non-original partitions and kitchen/bathroom fittings, which will help restore the original plan.

A historic features gazeteer is to be prepared by the applicant and this will provide an inventory of all features considered to be of historic interest in the building and which are proposed to be retained in-situ, including, doors, fire surrounds, window shutters, panelling, staircases, etc.

In summary, the proposed works are considered to be beneficial to the heritage asset's conservation and no objection is raised to the conversion of this important grade II* listed building into its former use as a single family dwelling (10 bedrooms), subject to conditions requiring further information if permission / consent is granted.

The MIL building dates from 1896. Although considered to be listed by virtue of its annexation to Holcombe House, it is of less historic and architectural significance. The gym is a modern structure of little architectural merit, although it is intended to make alterations to the exterior in an attempt to improve its appearance.

It is proposed to convert the MIL building into 9 self-contained residential apartments, with 3 large units on each floor. A number of unattractive external features are proposed to be removed, including a glazed corridor link, a toilet block and an external fire escape staircase to the gym. The removal of these features is welcomed.

Other proposed alterations include, the subdivision of large rooms to create bedrooms and living spaces. The insertion of two communal lifts will allow access between the floors. A number of windows looking west and into the courtyard will have their high level sills lowered to provide improved light and views. Details of the window alterations should be required by condition if permission / consent is granted.

The gym will be retained and converted into 3 equal floors providing 6 units. The fenestration will be re-ordered with new windows inserted to provide a better relationship to the MIL building and a new roof covering will match the natural slate roof of its neighbour. The detailing of the new gym windows and their surrounds to match those of the MIL building will be very important. Details should be supplied by condition. A new, smaller orangery will replace the existing structure although further details should be provided by condition.

The hard surfacing to the rear of the gym will be returned to grass and will thus improve its garden setting. The existing car park is proposed to be re-landscaped and will provide 18 spaces with a new bound gravel surface.

Revisions have been made to the originally submitted proposals, including, redesigning of the orangery, the retention of two original staircases with their glazed brick dado's, and the original panelled internal doors and 'gothic' church doors. Also, obscure glazing provided to windows overlooking the forecourt of Holcombe House.

In summary, no objection is raised to the proposed conversion of the MIL building into 9 units of residential accommodation as the scheme is considered to be respectful of the building's significance, including its setting and features of interest. The appearance of the former gym will also be improved by proposed external changes to allow its conversion into 6 residential units. The setting of Holcombe House will thus not be harmed as a result of this proposal.

The link between Holcombe House and the MIL building, which to be demolished, is two storeys in part. It is a utilitarian structure containing wc's on both floors, two concrete staircases and a lobby area. The link is plainly detailed and not considered to be of sufficient historic or architectural interest to warrant retention. A single door opening on the southern side of Holcombe House is proposed to be infilled and part of the northern wall on the ground floor of the MIL building will be rebuilt following the demolition. A single door opening on the north side of the MIL building will also be infilled. It will be necessary to ensure that the various infills and rebuilding of the wall are carried out in materials to match the existing

Inclusive design

All of the units in the MIL building will be designed to Lifetime Homes Standards, and two of the units (No's 2 & 3) will be designed to be wheelchair accessible. Two of the 18 spaces within the MIL site will be designed for disabled persons use.

Two platform lifts are proposed due to level changes across the MIL site. The difference in height between the ground level and the entrance to the flats proposed in the former gym building is 1.5m and in order to comply with Building Regulations a ramp (1:20) would need to be 30m long. This would present a significant incursion into the proposed parking / landscaped area to the north-east side of the building and the platform lifts are considered to be an appropriate solution.

3. COMMENTS ON CONCERNS RAISED

External pipe work on the north elevation of Holcombe House is currently painted black. This is considered to be an appropriate colour and a requirement, of any consent granted, that the pipes are painted white would be unreasonable.

4. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which came into force on 5th April 2011 imposes important duties on public authorities in the exercise of their functions, including a duty to have regard to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

For the purposes of this obligation the term "protected characteristic" includes: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

It is considered that the proposals do not conflict with either Barnet Council's Equalities Policy or the commitments set in our Equality Scheme and supports the council in meeting its statutory equality responsibilities.

5. CONCLUSION

The proposed development is considered acceptable for this sensitive site, which includes a Grade II* Listed Building, within the Mill Hill Conservation Area and Green Belt.

The proposal would enable the preservation of the important historic building without harm to it's character and appearance.

The development would accord with adopted planning policies. It is recommended that consent be granted subject to appropriate conditions.

SITE LOCATION PLAN: Holcombe House, The Ridgeway, London, NW7 4HY

REFERENCE: H/01745/12



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