

REFERENCE

Application: 24/1427/FUL

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Proposal: To exceed 90 days use of Airbnb

Site: 2 Palace Gate Hampton Court Road Hampton East Molesey

Applicant: Alexander Fox

Heritage Statement.

We have consulted with the accessible records namely the Hampton Court Green Conservation Area 11; and Historic England. The property is Grade 2 Listed Building – list entry number 1240005 (first listed 20.7.93).

We have considered likely impact and conclude that the proposal does not adversely affect the property and/ or its setting. In contrast, we consider to change of use enhances property (and the setting/ local economy and provides wider access to a wider variety of people) for the reasons summarised below.

The proposed use enhances and is consistent with:

1 The Surrounding area/ setting- the property's immediate neighbours (all on the level plane) include busy publicly accessible establishments eg a hotel- the Mitre (which offers public bars/ restaurants and short-term lettable accommodation either side and behind our property); the Mute Swan; and the next-door café (the Coppernose/ the Mitre short term lettings Annex). All these surrounding sites are used heavily throughout the year and their use spills out into the property's frontage. The property provides further but distinctive good quality and good value family accommodation. The property's guests are heavy users of the local traders/ suppliers in the surrounding area and frequent paying guests for Hampton Court Palace. We host the HQ staff teams for the Goodings car festival and the music festival at the palace, which also support local business. We also host bridal parties for Palace weddings. We are happy to provide guest references to support their contribution to the local economy, e.g. eateries, boats, shops. Given the proximity to Heathrow (by bus) and Central London (by train) the impact of this use on the environment is minimised. Having hosted guest parties intermittently over the past two years, we are not aware of a single paying group that has brought a car into the area or required parking.

2 The historic use/ setting- prior to our purchase the property was previously successfully used as a AirBnB for many years; it was also used before then as an office and also as family home (the latter use is now partly continuing by us). There is bike storage at the back (again this is aimed at lowering the ecological impact of travel).

The required short term letting income helps maintain and enhance the property in line with the area. Income earned on lets so far has contributed to tending flowers outside (including the provision of good quality flower boxes/ features sympathetic to the local environment), painting the façade, window frames and doors to a high quality, and day to day maintenance in line with the original architectural look and feel. The original Tudor beams on the posterior aspect of the property have been professionally painted and maintained since we owned the property. The front door has been painted to match the adjacent post pillar box as a complementary feature (which colouration has also been picked up the adjacent Coppernose's façade colours).

It is not expected that the use as AirBnB (or similar) will adversely impact the property in any way; we anticipate it should enhance it as the site is regularly checked for wear and tear and kept up to a high standard for use by guests which enhances the broader heavily visited setting. The use by guests ensures that there are funds to ensure any damp is well treated and mould does not grow (which are otherwise typical for such houses). This has included maintenance of the guttering and downpipes, and a one-off substantial payment to repair the roof that was leaking adjacent to the Mute Swan. We have also replaced cracked window panes on the anterior aspect of the property that were present on purchase of the house. Income from guests is essential to allow proper and respectful maintenance of the historic property.

We are committed to maintain the quality and standard. We have very good relations with our commercial neighbours who are also seeking to maintain their buildings to a high standard, and have worked with them to collaborative and positive manner and who we get on well with. We have set up a neighbourhood WhatsApp group of the local traders sharing information and ideas to enhance the immediate setting.

While the property has modest architectural significance (compared with the more significant heritage aspects on show by our neighbours) it remains in keeping with the setting. All the listed features continue to be maintained well - front range of c1840, rear range partly C18 and partly c1840. Front range of stock brick with rendered ground floor. Tiled roof with end brick chimney stacks (recently maintained). 3 storeys, 3 windows. 2nd floor windows are 6-pane sashes with central, blank moulded surrounds and stops. 1st floor windows are 12-pane sashes with moulded surrounds. Ground floor has right- side 12-pane sash, recessed doorcase with 3-panelled door and left-side carriage entrance. Rear elevation is of brown brick. Attached is a 2-storey outbuilding of timber framing with painted brick infill. The ground floor has wide-spaced panels, probably C18, and the 1st floor thinner panels, probably mid-C19. All well maintained. Listing NGR: TQ1540968600.