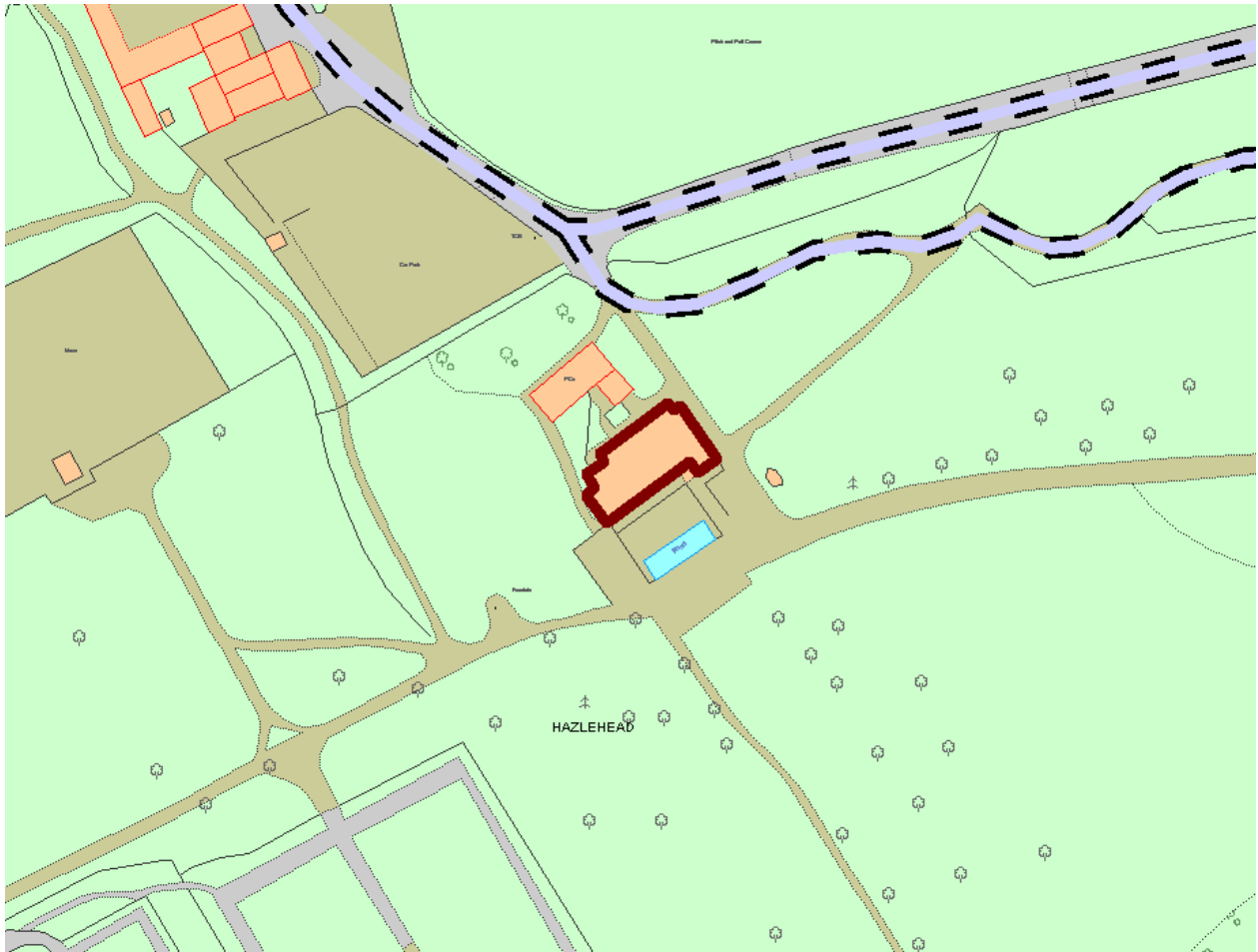


HAZLEHEAD CAFE, HAZLEHEAD PARK,  
HAZLEHEAD

PROPOSED EXTENSIONS AND  
ASSOCIATED ALTERATIONS

For: Coffee Societea T/A Seasons in the  
Park

Application Ref.	: P121258	Advert	:
Application Date	: 05/09/2012	Advertised on	:
Officer	: Jane Forbes	Committee Date	: 6 December 2012
Ward: Hazlehead/Ashley/Queen's Cross(M Greig/J Stewart/R Thomson/J Corall)		Community Council	: No response received



**RECOMMENDATION: Approve Unconditionally**

## **DESCRIPTION**

The application site lies within Hazlehead Park and comprises a detached building which rises to a maximum of 2 storeys in height, with a footprint of some 400m<sup>2</sup>. The building was previously used as a café/restaurant for visitors to the Park, but has been vacant for some time. The application site, which extends to approximately 1260m<sup>2</sup> also includes a patio area and pond to the front (south) of the café building, whilst to the rear (north) lies a yard area within which is located a small group of trees and a detached store. The trees provide some screening between the rear of the cafe and a public toilet block which lies immediately to the north of the application site, with further high level screening of the site provided by the mature trees and hedging located along the northern boundary of the Park.

## **PROPOSAL**

Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a single storey extension to the rear (north) of the property which would include the creation of a new second entrance to the café building and allow for the reconfiguration of the existing internal layout.

The proposed extension would extend a total of 18 metres along the rear elevation of the existing building, and project between 4.8 and 6.9 metres from the rear building line. The extension would include a flat-roofed section of development which would allow the existing kitchen area to be extended, and a conservatory style entrance foyer with tiled roof to match the existing building which would provide direct access onto an existing path which links the site and the park beyond with the visitor's car park to the north. The proposed extension would be finished in a roughcast render to match the existing building, and would incorporate glazing along the north and west elevations, with full length window and glazed door openings within the foyer area.

The proposal also includes the creation of a raised deck area to the front of the two storey section of the existing building, to project 2.3 metres from the front building line at a width of 6 metres, and supported by steel posts rising to 3 metres above ground level, with a glazed balustrade; the replacement of existing glazing; and the installation of 14 no. solar panels on the front (south) elevation of the single storey section of the existing building which would lie flush with the roof.

## **REASON FOR REFERRAL TO SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Council has an interest in this application as owner of the existing café building and Hazlehead Park within which it is located, and therefore in terms of the Council's Scheme of Delegation the application must be determined by the Development Management Sub Committee.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

ROADS SECTION – Response received – no observations.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – Response received – no observations.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL – No response received.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

No letters of representation have been received.

## **PLANNING POLICY**

Aberdeen Local Development Plan: Policy NE2 (Green Belt) – all proposals for development associated with existing activities in the green belt are permitted if the development is within the boundary of the existing activity; the development is small-scale; the intensity of activity is not increased; and any built construction is ancillary to what exists.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan: Policy NE5 (Trees and Woodlands) – There is a presumption against all activities and development that will result in the loss of or damage to established trees and woodlands that contribute significantly to nature conservation, landscape character or local amenity.

## **EVALUATION**

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations suggest otherwise.

It is considered that the proposal does not conflict with Policy NE2 (Green Belt) in the local plan. The proposed extension would extend the existing property which has a current footprint of approximately 500m<sup>2</sup> by 104m<sup>2</sup>, with the resultant footprint remaining within the boundary of the existing activity. The proposed extension is very much ancillary to the existing building and the relatively small scale of development which is proposed would ensure that any intensification of use of the building as a café/restaurant would clearly remain within an acceptable level and would not be significant.

It has been recognised that the proposed development may lead to the loss of a small number of trees located immediately to the rear of the existing café, and in this regard the proposal does not strictly comply with Policy NE5 (Trees and Woodlands). As a result of the proximity of some of the trees growing within the application site and the proposed footprint of the extension, the applicant was requested to submit a tree survey. Whilst to date a tree survey has not been submitted, confirmation has been provided by the local authority environment team that a site visit was undertaken by officers, including the local authority's Arboricultural Officer, in order to assess the likely impact of the proposed development on the surrounding trees. The officers assessed the overall condition of trees within the application site and whilst they identified that 2 no. small trees would need to be removed to allow for the proposed development, they also provided confirmation that it should be possible to retain the remaining trees on site and that the health of these remaining trees would be monitored by the Council.

In evaluating the acceptability of the proposed development it has been necessary to take into consideration the importance of balancing the overall benefits which the provision of a refurbished and extended café facility would bring to the numerous visitors to Hazlehead Park, against the potential adverse

impact which the loss of a small number of trees may have on the character of the Park and the surrounding area. In this instance, due to the very limited and localised impact which the tree loss would have on the overall landscape character and local amenity of the Park, coupled with the significant number of mature trees which would remain in very close proximity to the site and beyond, it is considered that the loss of 2 no. trees would be deemed acceptable in order to allow the proposed development to proceed.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Approve Unconditionally**

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed extension and alterations to the existing cafe building are considered acceptable in terms of scale, design and materials. The proposed development is considered to be small-scale and would remain ancillary to the existing cafe and would be suitably located within the boundary of the application site. Although the proposed development would impact on a small group of trees which lie immediately to the rear of the cafe, such impact would be very much localised and would have minimal effect on the character of the wider park area, given the particularly high level of mature trees which would remain within close proximity of the development site. Although the proposal would extend the overall footprint of the cafe building, it is felt that this would not lead to a significant increase in the intensity of activity. Taking into consideration the above, the proposal is deemed to be compliant with Policy NE2 (Green Belt) and whilst not strictly compliant with Policy NE5 (Trees and Woodlands) in Aberdeen Local Development Plan, on balance, the loss of a small number of trees on site as a result of the proposed development is considered acceptable in this instance, given that this would have a minimal impact on the landscape character and amenity of the Park.

**Dr Margaret Bochel**

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.