

Bhaktivedanta Manor Letchmore Heath Planning Brief



December 2012

Contents Page

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Planning

3.0 Site Appraisal

4.0 Needs Appraisal

5.0 Development Principles

6.0 Conclusion

7.0 Consultation

Appendices

Policy summary

Planning History

All aerial photographs and maps are reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office.

Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

Hertsmere Borough Council Licence number: 10017428

1.0 Introduction

Purpose of this Planning Brief

The need to prepare a Planning Brief for Bhaktivedanta Manor arises from the fact that a number of planning applications have been submitted in recent years, in part, in response to the cramped conditions experienced by the existing users of Bhaktivedanta Manor, and an associated request from the Council's Planning Committee¹ for a brief, to provide a clear understanding of the long term aspiration of the Manor's owners - the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON).

The purpose of this planning brief is to provide a clear development framework for Bhaktivedanta Manor. The brief considers the function, character, opportunities and constraints at the site and the future development aspirations of ISKCON over the next 15 years and beyond.

The objective of this Brief is to guide appropriate development, and ensure that any such development is sustainable, suitable and occurs in line with relevant planning policies. Once adopted, this brief would have the status of a Supplementary Planning Document and will be taken into account as a material consideration in the determination of any potential planning applications for the site.

The key aims of the brief are to consider the needs of the Manor within the context of the:

- Green Belt
- Conservation Area
- Listed Building
- Amenities of the local community

This document was produced by HBC planning officers through working with a consultant team commissioned by the owners, ISKCON and from responses received through the public consultation exercises.

¹ Meeting of Bushey and Aldenham Planning Committee, Thursday 29th April 2010

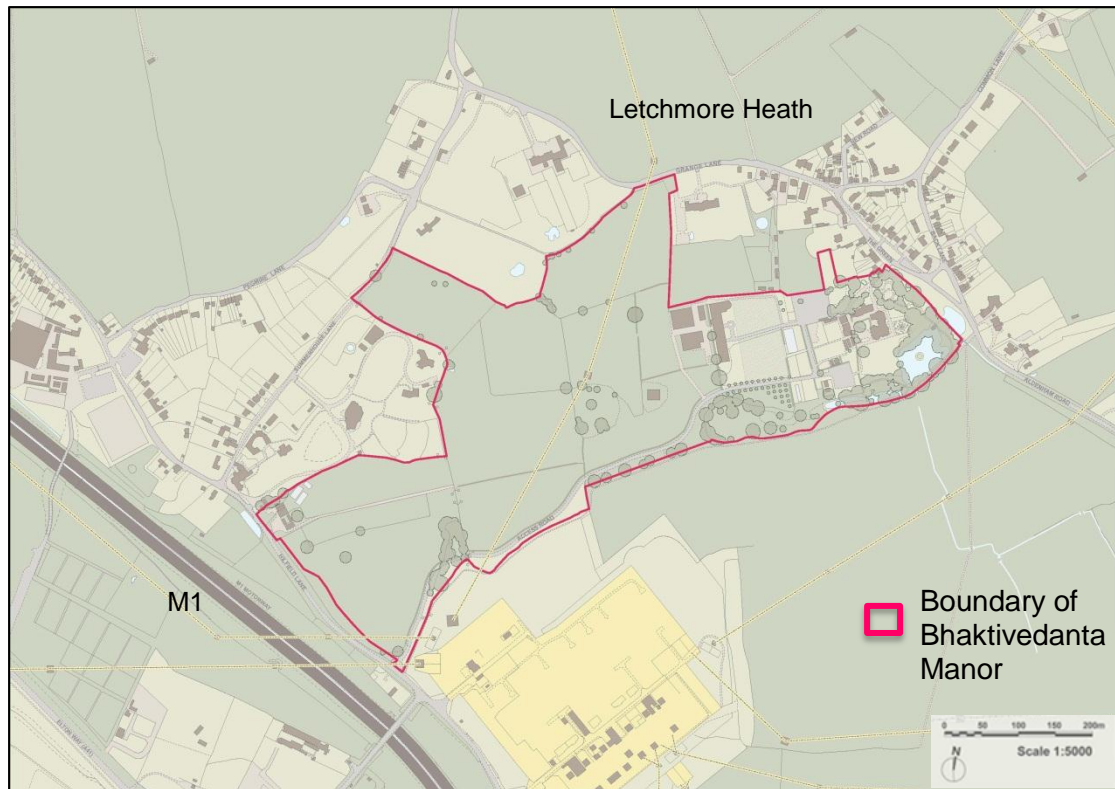


Figure 1: Site plan

The Site

Bhaktivedanta Manor is a large Grade II listed building standing within larger ornamental gardens and agricultural estate at Letchmore Heath. Whilst part of the village of Letchmore Heath, it is accessed from Hilfield Lane at the south west end of the site and is separated from the village by mature vegetation and neighbouring farming land.

The Manor (formerly Piggot's Manor) was acquired in 1973 by George Harrison, the musician, and donated to ISKCON to further their theological activities for the benefit of the growing number of Hare Krishna devotees in the UK. The property is now a nationally recognised Hindu shrine and temple and also acts as the headquarters of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Consequently, over the last four decades the Manor has become a highly important place of pilgrimage for those familiar with the Hare Krishna movement because of the association with the founder, Srila Prabhupada, who wanted the Manor to be a place of spiritual sustenance for its members and congregations where rural life coupled with Krishna Consciousness could be combined.

This document should also read in conjunction with the Bhaktivedanta Manor Needs Assessment Document which has informed the preparation of this Planning Brief.

Planning Brief Context

Hertsmere Borough Council is currently in the process of reviewing its Development Plan. As part of this work the Council is reviewing a number of sites within the Borough to address a variety of different land uses. The Council has considered a number of different approaches with regard to Bhaktivedanta Manor in the light of its particular circumstances.

The Council originally considered the option of putting Bhaktivedanta Manor forward as a Major Developed Site (MDS) within the Green Belt. 80% of Borough is designated Green Belt and there are a number of MDSs nearby including Aldenham School, the Haberdashers Aske schools and the Bio Products laboratory. However, the designation of an MDS would place pressure on the Listed Building as a defined area or envelope for appropriate infilling which could harm the setting and listed building as any development would be directed within the curtilage of the building. As a result it was decided that a Planning Brief to guide future development would be a more appropriate way to determine a suitable option for the site.

Consequently, Hertsmere Borough Council wrote to ISKCON on 22nd April 2010 inviting ISKCON to work with the Council to produce a Planning Brief for the Manor and it has since been agreed that the most appropriate way of addressing those needs is via a Planning Brief for the estate.

In the last few years a number of planning applications have been submitted by ISKCON. At the Bushey and Aldenham Planning Committee, on Thursday 29th April 2010 a request was confirmed by the Committee for a master plan detailing the future development.

The brief subsequently underwent a period of public consultation between 9th July, 2012 and 10th September 2012 where a total of 482 responses were received. All responses have been taken into account when formulating the final draft of the brief.

2.0 Planning Framework

Planning Policy

Various policies that affect the site can be found in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF hereafter), the Hertsmere Local Plan and the Draft Revised Core Strategy (2011). A summary of these policies can be found in Appendix 1 and this document. The emerging Hertsmere Core Strategy specifically recognises the need to accommodate diverse interests including Hertsmere's substantial Jewish community (12% of the population) and its growing South Asian community (5%).

However, there are also a number of designations which cover the site, which are considered below:

Designations

Green Belt

The whole of the Manor estate and the village of Letchmore Heath lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, which washes over the area.

The fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness.

Within the Green Belt there is a presumption against inappropriate development unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

Where Special Circumstances are demonstrated the Hertsmere Local Plan requires that development should be located as unobtrusively as possible, isolated buildings should be avoided, and should not be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt.

Listed Building

The Manor is a substantial Grade 2 Listed Building, listed in 1985, the listing includes:

“House. 1884 with mid C19 core and c.1900 extension. Probably by Hesketh and Stokes for G.W. Williams Brick, steel and concrete. Original villa extended to form a large L plan. 2 storeys and attic. Interior: Neo-Jacobean chimneypieces, plaster ceiling, panelling. Staircase with carved newels and pierced balusters. Formerly known as Piggott’s Manor.”

Conservation Area

The Manor is located within the Letchmore Heath Conservation Area which was designated in October 1969, and enlarged November 1978. A significant

number of properties within the village have Article 4 restrictions, Listed and locally listed buildings.

The Hertsmere Local Plan and emerging Core Strategy requires that any new development should not detract from the setting of the Listed Building whilst preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

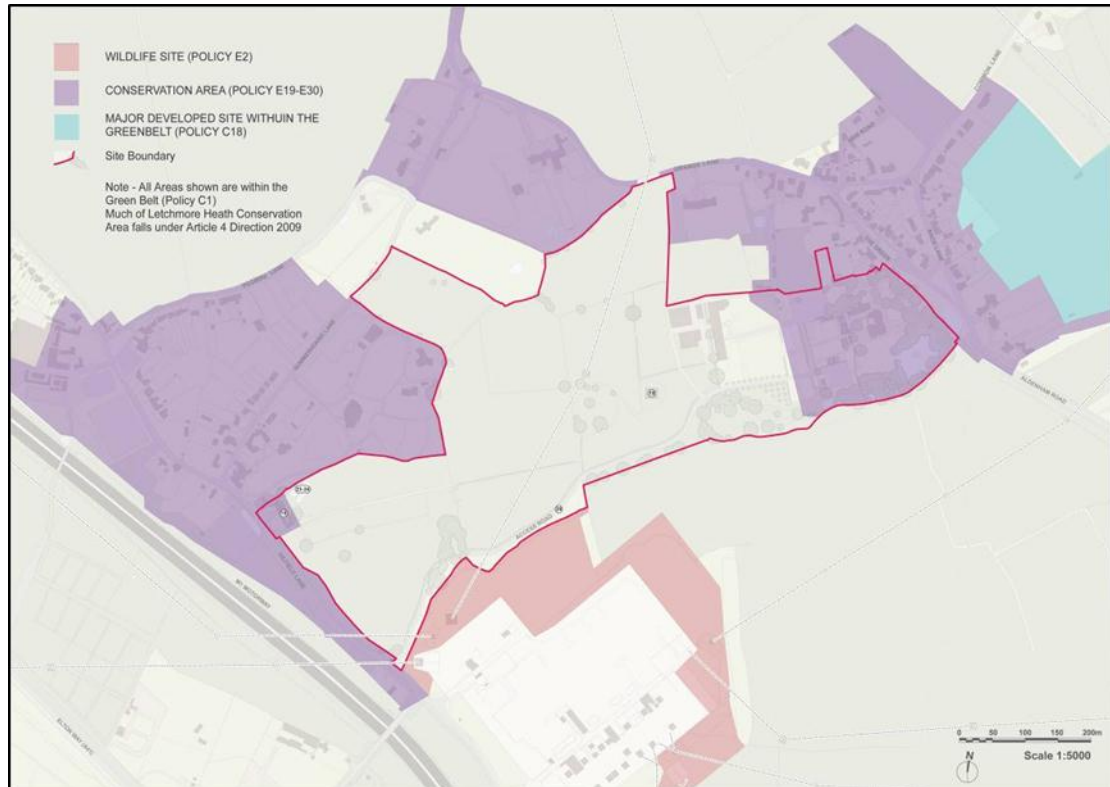


Figure 2 Planning designations

Planning History

A number of planning applications have been submitted to the Council over the years as summarised in Appendix 2

Some of the applications allowed confirm the accepted uses and permanent structures on the site, where very special circumstances have been justified to outweigh any harm to the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. In particular, the religious and spiritual importance of the Manor to the Hindu community was recognised in the 1996 appeal decision to outweigh the harm the development would cause to the Green Belt.

There have been three planning appeals on the site that have:

- 1) Determined the principal uses of the Manor (as a theological college, religious community and a place of public worship, including the observance of religious festivals), the car parking and access.
- 2) Approved the erection of the goshalla, agricultural buildings.

- 3) Dismissed the case for the erection of a marquee (beyond that which can be erected for fewer than 28 days a year as 'permitted development' without planning permission).

3.0 Site Appraisal

This section provides a summary of the key characteristics, context and constraints affecting future development on the site.

Size

The size of the estate as a whole was originally 6.8 hectares but was increased in the late 1990's to 30 hectares with the purchase of adjoining agricultural land. The extent of the estate owned by ISKCON is shown in Figure 1.

Access

Vehicular access is from a purpose-built road owned by ISKCON which connects to Hilfield Lane. The road was constructed specifically to remove traffic from the centre of Letchmore Heath village after planning permission was granted in 1996. This road and associated junctions on the public road network have adequate capacity to serve the Manor. There is also gated access from Letchmore Heath, which is closed to vehicular traffic to prevent visitors entering the site from the village. This access was used as a pedestrian entrance but is generally locked/controlled by ISKCON to limit any disturbance to the village. There are clear instructions on the ISKCON website directing visitors to access the site via Hilfield lane.

Site Function

The Manor functions as a religious community and theological centre involving a range of interconnected uses including:

- **Temple and shrine**– an important place of worship according to the authentic scriptures of Vedic India.
- **Theological College** – a college for residential and non-residential students to study the philosophical and practical manifestation of a life of devotion to Lord Krishna.
- **Reception facilities** for visitors.
- **A Nursery school and a Primary school** – a small devotional nursery and primary school in ancillary buildings.
- **Other Educational facilities** - hosting and visiting schools and other educational institutions in order to teach Hinduism and engage with the national school curriculum.
- **Small theatre and library** for cultural activities and study relating to the Manor.
- **Ashram** located in the Manor and cottage for resident monks and female members.

- **Support services** for the Temple, residents and visitors, including catering facilities.
- **A venue for Hindu weddings and conferences.**
- **Small shop** selling mainly food products made on the premises.
- **Ornamental gardens** and lake surrounding the Manor.
- **Farm, dairy and agricultural land** mainly given over to pasture—producing milk products for the use of the residents and visitors and demonstrating practical cow protection.
- **Horticultural fields and greenhouses** - producing vegetables, fruits and flowers for the use in the Shrine, and by residents, other centres and visitors.
- **A Goshalla** comprising a range of substantial new buildings for the care and protection of cattle.
- **Religious festivals** held at the Temple and on the adjoining festival field on a limited number of occasions a year.

Relationship to Letchmore Heath

The centre of Letchmore Heath village known as “The Green” lies to the north-east of the Manor. The Manor’s grounds provide a wooded setting to the south-western part of Letchmore Heath and effectively buffer the main buildings and on-site activities from the village.

There are no public rights of way across the estate although the public are welcomed by ISKCON to attend religious events and festivals. A public footpath (FP29) runs along the southern boundary connecting Letchmore Heath with Hilfield Lane but views across the site are greatly restricted by established vegetation. Footpath FP 28 to the north west lies some distance from the main buildings so there is no visual interconnection.

There are a number of different sites which adjoin the Manor, these include the Electricity substation, the Institute of Grocery Distribution, residential properties, and farmland.

Description of Buildings and Estate

Bhaktivedanta Manor was built in 1884 on the site of an older property. The main building has a mock Tudor style with sham timber framing. It contains the Temple room, including a Shrine, where the various Hindu Deities are sited, a dining hall, theatre, library and a suite of rooms dedicated to the founder of ISKCON; together with reception, administration and dormitory accommodation. There are various outbuildings, including a converted stable block and cottage and an enclosed garden.

The use of the buildings by ISKCON is an interesting example of how best to make beneficial use of a large listed building without major physical alteration (as in the case of sub-division into flats), thereby being consistent with the aims of government policy in protecting heritage assets.

In 2004 / 2005, ISKCON carried out a major programme of repair and maintenance to the building thereby preserving the important internal and exterior characteristics.

The Manor is located within its own extensively wooded grounds. These comprise formal and enclosed garden areas, lawns, wooded areas and a lake.

In 2008, ISKCON constructed substantial new agricultural buildings (known as the Goshalla) to house the expanding herd of cattle maintained at the Manor.

Religious Context

The International Society of Krishna Consciousness

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (Srila Prabhupada) established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in 1966. It belongs to the Gaudiya Vaisnava tradition of Hinduism, a devotional tradition based on the teachings of Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam.

Better known as the Hare Krishna movement, ISKCON is comprised of more than 350 centres, 60 rural communities and 50 schools worldwide.

International and Local Importance of Bhaktivedanta Manor to the Hindu Community

The whole site of the Manor is a 'Dhāma' – a sanctified place in accordance with the religious tradition of Krishna Consciousness.

Whilst the shrine is an important focal point at the Temple, it does not detract from the theological concept that the entire Temple property and estate is a holy place. Acts performed in the holy Dhāma, including birth ceremonies, wedding ceremonies and the like take on a higher religious significance from having taken place in such a location.

Since 1973, Bhaktivedanta Manor has become one of the most important Temples within the Hindu community, not only in the UK but also in Europe as a whole. On Sundays for example, a thousand or more people may visit the Manor to worship and pay their respects to the Deities in the Temple room. They are also able to attend one of the religious classes, use the Sunday school for their children and partake of a sanctified meal (Prasad).

During the six annual religious festivals, especially the summer two-day Janmashtami Festival, tens of thousands of people visit the Manor at different times to celebrate the appearance of Lord Krishna.

The Manor is a special place of worship to a large number of Hindus and their families throughout all the phases of their lives, including bringing new born children to the Temple to be blessed and providing sacred place for marriage ceremonies to take place.

Religious community / catchment

More than 2000 Hindu families from Hertfordshire (mainly Watford and Hertsmere) attend the Temple at different times but there is also a large Hindu population in the nearest North London boroughs (in particular Harrow, Barnet and Brent) who regularly worship at the Temple. On festival days Hindus will attend the Temple from all over the UK.

4.0 Needs Analysis

This section summarises an appraisal of the demands on Bhaktivedanta Manor and ISKCON's future needs for the site.

The information in this Chapter has been established through a detailed assessment commissioned by ISKCON and from ISKCON's regular workshops with stakeholders. Full details of the assessment are available in the Bhaktivedanta Manor Supporting Documentation for Planning Brief (draft for consultation February 2012).

A main issue recognised by the Council is the immense pressure placed on the Grade II listed building by the existing ISKON community. As a result ISKCON commissioned a team of consultants, including architects to undertake an assessment of the existing uses and to consider the potential opportunities for creating additional space and using existing facilities more efficiently.

In assessing future needs the following principles were adopted:

- Future use of the site will be limited to the existing established uses.
- No new uses or additional quantum of parking are proposed.
- The general level of use will continue to be regulated to the existing levels.
- The protection or enhancement of the listed building and conservation area, in addition to the environmental and amenity considerations of the local community.
- The status of Bhaktivedanta Manor and the Temple as a special religious place of national importance demands a high quality environment for the many devotees and visitors to the Hindu temple and shrine.

Deficiencies of Existing Accommodation

Key findings of assessments

The present activities at the Manor have been evaluated on a room by room basis through observation and consultation with members of the Society. This analysis has confirmed a range of significant deficiencies that have been categorised and are summarised as follows:

At present, the majority of activities for the visiting Hindu community are focussed on the Manor itself, although there are linked activities in adjoining buildings, in particular the Stable Block (main kitchen and school classrooms on the ground floor and residential above) the Cottage Block (ladies residential ashram) and the Goshalla.

- The **sanctity of worship** in the Temple Room is **severely undermined** by the conflict between related activities (school visits, wedding functions, Prasad, dining) that, through lack of space, overlap and clash with regular worship. The Temple Room should be wholly reserved for worship at the shrine and new accommodation is needed to relieve conditions in the Temple Room by relocating incompatible activities.
- A principal problem lies in the **congestion** arising in the Manor's public areas due to the strong attraction of the Temple and Shrine to the Hindu community and the demands of providing for the range of holy rituals of the Gaudiya Vaisnava tradition. Hinduism promotes **inclusivity**, but due to the congestion and nature of the existing facilities, wheelchair and other mobility impaired users, the assistance of the Temple ushers is sometimes required to participate in worship given that The Manor does not meet modern accessibility requirements.
- Worshippers who come to view the Arati ceremony at the Shrine, and to hear Pravachan (sermons) or engage in Kirtan (chanting) should do so in an atmosphere of peaceful contemplation, but invariably, through lack of space, they have to share the Temple room with other often **incompatible functions** (e.g. visiting school lunches). These overlapping functions interrupt and greatly diminish the environment for worship.
- **Dining facilities** for Prasad for the congregation and resident monks (a vital part of Hindu religious devotion) are altogether **inadequate** both in terms of size (concentrated on the original domestic scale dining room) and operational efficiency (due to the location of the kitchen in an outside stable block). Consequently visitors are forced to take Prasad in separate sittings or wherever they can in hallways, on the stairs and landings, or outside subject to the prevailing weather. A new building, complete with an integral kitchen, would cater for the large number of people taking Prasad especially at peak times.
- The dining hall is one of the larger, (but nevertheless modestly sized) rooms available in the Manor for **other regular events** interspersed between the three daily meals. These regular events include youth club, meals for disability groups, community meetings, community dinners, yoga classes, theological workshops, minding children during Kirtan and other spiritual activities. Given the important dining function

of the room these other activities **should be transferred** into a new building as there is no other spare accommodation.

- Culturally, the theological college **is impoverished** due to the severely restricted size of the theatre and adjoining library. These rooms double up for other activities which seriously compromise the main use. Even in its principal use, the theatre is deficient in that with a capacity of 60 persons it only serves a fragment of the demand on Sundays and on other occasions is timetabled for plays, lectures and presentations. It is both congested and insufficient and if relocated in a modern purpose built space would become a major asset for the Temple devotees and their families. As the library is in multi-functional use, it fails to perform as a place of study, so reducing the learning environment at the Manor. New accommodation would release the library for its proper function.
- **Sunday, the main day of family worship**, attracts a large congregation that **places huge pressure** on the Manor's internal space, and requires attendance of Temple volunteer ushers. Visitors have to queue to see Arati and to take Prasad (often forced outside), and there is inadequate space for seating families with young children, the old and the disabled. Likewise ancillary amenities such as the reception area, cloakrooms, shoe depositories, and crèche are inadequate and would be better addressed as part of a new building thereby improving visitors' impressions and taking further pressure off the Manor itself.
- **Wedding functions impose an enormous stress** on the Temple Room and the Manor's public areas with inadequate facilities for the reception and entertainment of guests. A new building with flexible space and an adequate dining facility to accommodate weddings would also relieve pressure on the Manor and the Temple Room and resolve this current problem.
- **The administrative space is generally very cramped** and many of the current departments/communities have no administrative spaces of their own so there is scope for rationalisation by transferring some of the present activities from the Manor to a new building.
- **The main kitchen in the stable block** is inadequate both in terms of size and layout to meet the daily demands placed upon it by visiting members of the community, especially on Sundays and other peak events such as weddings and festivals. A purpose built kitchen

attached to the new dining facility would free up the current kitchen to accommodate activities located elsewhere.

- The current community require **education and training** spaces, which are not provided in the existing buildings.

Internal Arrangements

The scope for re-arranging the accommodation in the Manor is minimal as it is a listed building whose internal features have needed to be appropriately preserved.

Major internal alterations have also been discounted as they would detract from the established spiritual significance of the Temple created by its founder, His Divine Grace Swami Prabhupada.



- States of use of room
- Single/adequate
 - Single/congested
 - Multi/congested

CURRENT USE MANOR GROUND FLOOR

Internal space of congregation and dining takes place at peak



- States of use of room
- Single/adequate
 - Single/congested
 - Multi/congested

CURRENT USE MANOR FIRST FLOOR

Future Requirements

As illustrated above and within the supporting documentation, it is clear that additional space is required in order to provide sufficient accommodation for the existing congregation only.

The supporting document undertakes an assessment type of accommodation that would be required to remedy identified shortcomings. Four guiding principles were used;

- The scale of new accommodation required should be kept to a reasonable minimum given local planning constraints.
- The accommodation, both existing and new, should be used as efficiently as possible, for instance, sharing space where feasible through timetabling and by multi-functional flexible layouts.
- The quality of the space and the personal experience derived from a spiritual and visitor perspective should be given significant weight.
- There is no scope for substantially extending or altering the listed building because of The Manor's Grade II status and potential impact on its special architectural interest.

The needs assessment identifies the requirement for a bespoke, flexible and enclosed building to include:

- A facility that will be fully accessible.
- A new hall with a flexible layout for Sunday worship, Kirtan, ceremonies, theatre and other cultural performances, community activities etc.
- A dining area for Prasad on Sundays and festivals and weddings or other major occasions and also youth and sport activities.
- Reception and lobby space to accommodate visitors at all times.
- An efficient modern kitchen with capacity to meet peak demands
- Class/presentation rooms for religious education and community activities.
- A hospitality room for visiting dignitaries.
- Additional administrative and ancillary spaces (offices, meeting rooms, kitchenettes and dayrooms cloakrooms/locker room, crèche/toddlers changing facilities).

It is envisaged that such facilities would be purpose-built in reasonable proximity to the Manor building as a strong physical and spiritual connection to the shrine is essential. There is also a clear dependency on the theological college and its community for the teaching and ministering offered to the congregation and public.

Facilities of the type proposed that support the spiritual and social aspects of a religious community and temple are known as a "**Haveli**" in Hindu culture.

Potential locations for a Haveli

A number of locations for a purpose built Haveli, within reasonable proximity to the Manor, were considered as part of the analysis:

To the East of the Manor – this would result in the loss of mature trees and open up views to the detriment of the village and conservation area, as well as impacting on the main elevations of the listed building.

To the north – there is inadequate space and there would be a detrimental impact on trees and views from the conservation area, particularly from properties on The Green.

The geo-grid area – the area is needed for car parking at peak periods and is less well linked to the Manor for easy pedestrian access. The construction of a building here would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

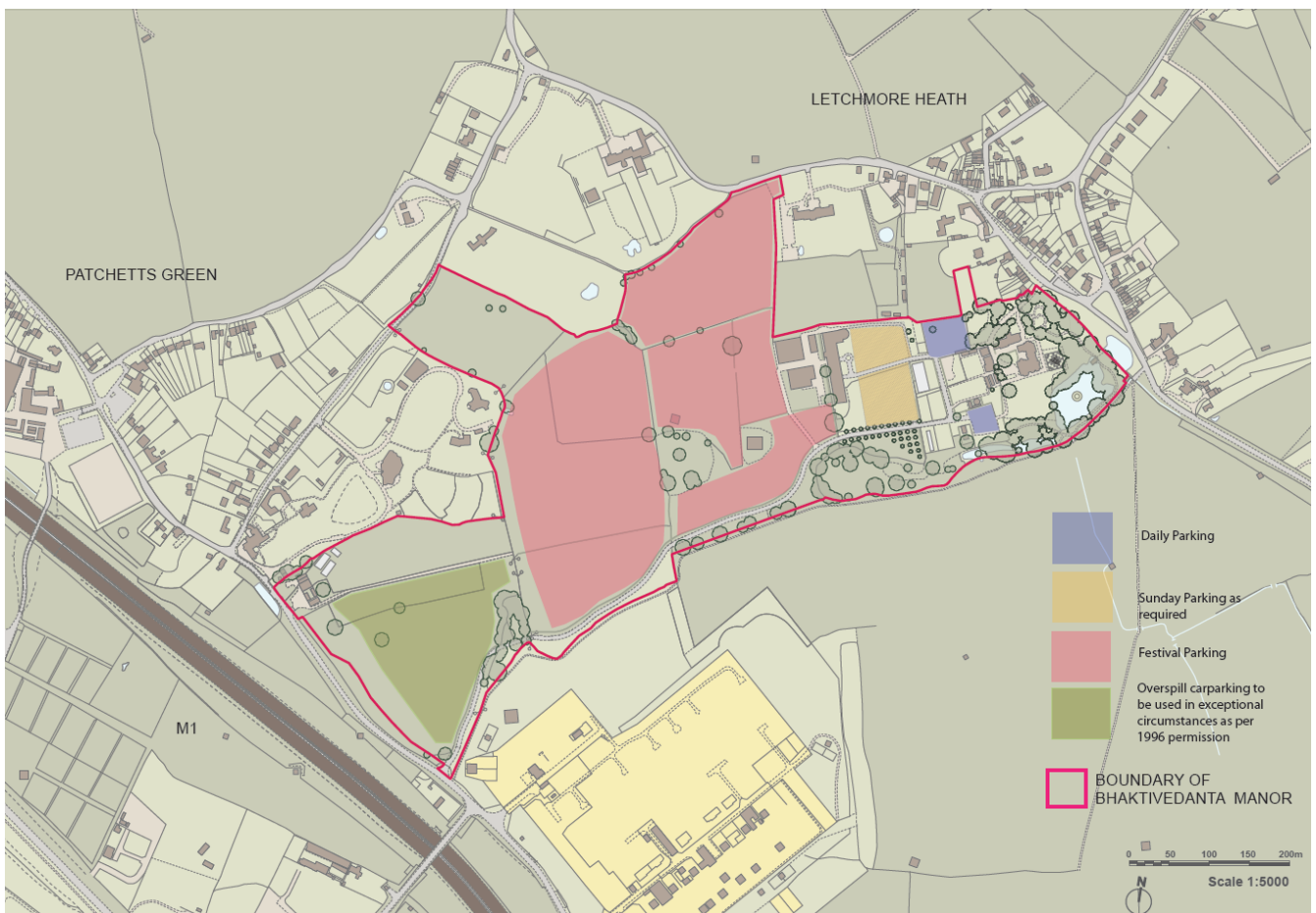
The wider farmed Estate – this has been discounted as a freestanding facility in open farmland would have a greater impact on the Green Belt than other options and would be too remote from the main Manor buildings for convenient access and parking.

A central site to the west side of the Manor has therefore been selected, which has the following advantages:

- It is beyond the kitchen garden wall but is mainly contained by natural established hedgerows and walls.
- It does not project significantly into the open area of Green Belt and countryside to the west and impact on the Green Belt is well contained.
- The site does not interfere with the main southern and western elevations of the Manor listed building or its setting to any harmful degree.
- There is scope for replacing existing greenhouses that do not contribute positively to the setting of the listed building or conservation area.
- It is on the edge of the conservation area in a less sensitive location beyond any important views from the village and other public areas.
- Being situated away from boundaries there will be no discernible negative impact on the amenities of neighbouring houses, particularly any residents to the north. Vehicle deliveries and arriving visitors can also be diverted away from residential properties.
- There is greater scope, through high quality design, to create a new and enhanced courtyard to the west of the Manor which can improve the setting of the western elevation and the environment for those visiting the Temple.

The existing parking areas would be retained and parking confined to the areas authorised by the 1996 consent only. The current level of car parking allowed, essentially restricts the number of vehicular movements to and from the site which is considered to be appropriate for the existing users' needs. It is also considered that restricting the car parking areas rather than the numbers in order to ensure that the Haveli would not result in a significant increase in visitors is more enforceable due to the visibility of the cars and car parking areas. The Manor's car parking capacity was effectively authorised by the 1996 decision to comprise:







- Hard-standing areas adjoining the Manor authorised for permanent daily use of approximately 175 spaces
- The parking area authorised by Condition 12 of 1996 planning permission and Hertsmere Borough Council's letter of 4 September 1996 for Sunday parking "as required" i.e. up to full capacity (approximately 410 spaces) and for festivals.
- Parking on the wider field areas during the 6 main festivals.





EXISTING

KEY

-  CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY
-  SITE BOUNDARY
-  EXISTING BUILDINGS
-  SITE ROAD
-  TREES
-  PARKING

BUILDINGS

- A. Manor
- B. Stable block
- C. The Cottage
- D. Shop
- E. Greenhouses
- F. Workshop
- G. Nursery
- H. Goshalla
- I. Boat house
- K. Sheds

SITE FEATURES

- 1. Site boundary
- 2. Conservation area boundary
- 3. Emergency site gates
- 4. Manor courtyard
- 5. Car park (N) - Staff car park
- 6. Car park (S) - Visitor car park
- 7. Formal Garden
- 8. George Harrison Garden
- 9. Woodland
- 10. Equipped play area
- 11. Japa Garden
- 12. Site marquee
- 13. Festival field

14.

- 14. Fruit orchard (S)
- 15. Flower production (N)
- 16. Flower production (S)
- 17. Clothes drying area
- 18. Croquet lawn
- 19. Lake and stream
- 20. Island
- 21. Woodland / Marsh
- 22. Hospital Field Copse
- 23. Slurry Lagoon
- 24. Cultivated Field
- 25. Vegetable Patches
- 26. Main site entrance

CONTEXTUAL FEATURES

- i. Ditch
- ii. War memorial
- iii. Electrical substation
- iv. Letchmore Heath Pond
- v. Paddock
- FP Footpath
- TH Three Horseshoes (public house)



DEMOLITION PLAN

The plan shows the likely scope of demolition required to implement the various options. The buildings and areas are also detailed in the Haveli Community Facility Area Explanation in the Needs Analysis section (section 03, page 37).

KEY BUILDING

- A nursery / laundry (incl adj greenhouse)
- B nursery and pergola
- C north shed and adj greenhouse
- D sheds (near Tulsi greenhouses)

KEY

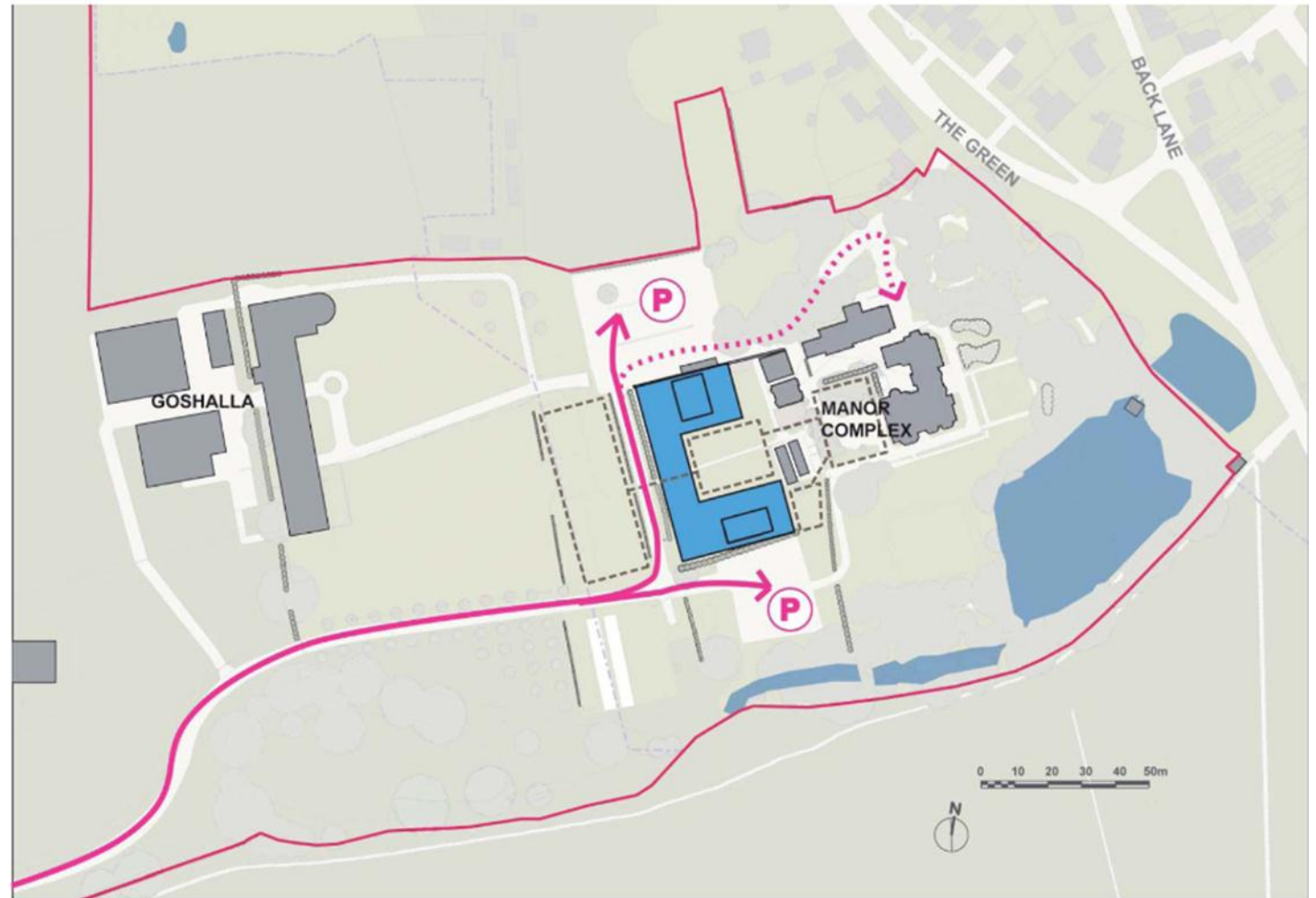
- - - - CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY
- SITE BOUNDARY
- EXISTING BUILDINGS
- DEMOLISHED BUILDING
- SITE ROAD
- TREES
- Ⓟ PARKING

Haveli Floorspace Needs Assessment

Bhaktivedanta Manor Haveli Community Facility Area Explanation					
The below is an explanation of the approach used for the needs assessment. The ground and first floor of Manor are on average twice oversubscribed. This overlapping is moved to the new building. Some outbuildings are retained as they are, some outbuildings are demolished/relocated into new building or stable block.					
The location of the below buildings refer to Bhaktivedanta Manor Site information, appendix					
EXISTING MANOR BUILDINGS	Internal Floor Area (m2)	PROPOSED MANOR BUILDINGS	Internal Floor Area (m2)	PROPOSED DEMOLITION Internal Floor Area (m2)	Note
Manor Ground and First Gross internal Floor Area	1200	Manor Ground and First floor Gross internal Floor Area	1200		Overall internal area of Manor will remain the same. Unsuitable activities in the existing Manor are proposed to be relocated to the new Haveli Community Facility. The Manor is to be Worship & Theological College only.
Second Floor Manor Ashram	240	Second Floor Manor Ashram	240		No change
Kitchen in Stable block	200	Kitchen in stable block	50		Approximate 50m2 of the existing kitchen area will be retained as a Brahmanical kitchen. The rest of the existing kitchen area will be used for replacement nursery spaces that will be lost if the proposed Haveli site is accepted. Therefore, the area of stable block is unchanged
Manor school/ashram in Stable block, ground floor	185	Stable block, ground floor (nursery to be relocated)	335		
First Floor stable ashram	190	First Fl stable ashram	190		No change
Shop	120	Shop	120		No change
Cottage, ground floor	82	Cottage, ground floor	82		No change
Cottage, first floor	77	Cottage, first floor	77		No change
Nursery/ Laundry, next to Cottage	78	Nursery/ Laundry, next to Cottage	0	78	The building is to be demolished and the facilities are to be moved to the stable block if the proposed Haveli site is accepted.
Nursery, by visitor carpark	48	Nursery, by visitor carpark	0	48	The building is to be demolished and the facilities are to be moved to the stable block if the proposed Haveli site is accepted.
Greenhouses (2no.)	70	Derelict greenhouse omit	0	70	To be demolished
Tulsi greenhouses x 2	108	Tulsi greenhouses x 2	108		No change
Shed north	60	Shed north demolish	0	60	The building is to be demolished and the facilities are to be moved to the new building if the proposed Haveli site is accepted.
Shed near Tulsi	45	Shed near Tulsi demolish	0	45	The building is to be demolished and the facilities are to be moved to the new building if the proposed Haveli site is accepted.
Workshop	48	Workshop	48		No change
		New Haveli Community Facility	2000		As noted in Haveli Community Facility Area Requirement
TOTAL	2751	TOTAL	4450	301	
Net Increase in Area					1699
The above figures exclude Manor basement plant/storage, cow barns, and etc					

PREFERRED OPTION

- KEY**
- CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY
 - SITE BOUNDARY
 - EXISTING BUILDING
 - PROPOSED BUILDING
 - DEMOLISHED BUILDING
in demolition plan only
 - OUTDOOR AREA
 - VEHICLE ACCESS
 - ... SERVICE ACCESS
 - ▲ BODY OF WATER





- KEY**
-  CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY
 -  SITE BOUNDARY
 -  EXISTING BUILDINGS
 -  AREA OF PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY DEVELOPMENT
 -  SITE ROAD
 -  TREES
 -  **P** PARKING
No additional parking spaces are proposed

5.0 Development Principles

This section of the brief identifies the key factors relating to the development of the site and sets them out as development principles that will guide future development.

Principle of development

Policy C1 of the Hertsmere Local Plan 2003 specifies that there is a presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances exist, which is reflective of paragraph 88 of the NPPF which states that *'When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.'*

Paragraph 89 of the NPPF goes on to state that *'a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:*

- *the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;*
- *the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;*
- *limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.'*

The proposed Haveli does not comprise appropriate development in the Green Belt, as defined by the NPPF. Therefore, any planning application must be able to demonstrate very special circumstances to justify development within the Green Belt. By virtue of this Brief, however, the Council would accept that there are compelling needs which amount to very special circumstances justifying consideration of a new Haveli building at the site for the long term benefit and support of the religious functions of Bhaktivedanta Manor, and reduce the stress on the listed building

Policy C4 of the Local Plan requires that developments should be located as unobtrusively as possible, isolated buildings should be avoided, and should not be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt.

Any proposed development must also ensure that it does not detract from the setting of the Listed Building whilst ensuring that it preserves the character or appearance of the Conservation Area which it is desirable to protect or enhance to comply with Policies E16, E22 and E23 of the Hertsmere Local Plan.

Key principles for the proposed building

- The building should be sensitive to its Green Belt location and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area setting.
- The development should seek to create an ease of connection with the Temple and shrine and to generate a public realm that complements the Temple.
- The building is to be fully accessible for people in wheelchairs, and the visually impaired etc.
- The Haveli building should be predominantly (at least 75%) single storey to reduce the impact on the listed building setting and, where floor area is exceptionally required in areas other than the ground floor; this should be incorporated into the roofspace and/or any basement area rather than in a first floor element.
- The design should break down building volumes as far as practicable to create the impression of a smaller building.
- A detailed analysis of the trees and hedges on the site must be made.
- The route for deliveries and reception points should be located to minimise potential adverse impacts on the environment of the Temple and neighbouring residential properties.
- The building and landscape should be designed to reduce evening light spillage and whenever possible benefit from natural daylight and designed to remove acoustic transit to neighbouring properties.
- High quality building design and detailing and the use of appropriate materials to enhance the setting of the listed building and the Letchmore Heath Conservation Area.
- There will be no increase in parking levels above the current levels.
- Planning conditions and/or S106 will be used to restrict parking areas to what is currently exists and limited to 3,000 vehicles at any one time.
- Following the construction of a Haveli, there will be a presumption against allowing any temporary outdoor structures or buildings across the site for times other than Janmashtami and Diwali; this would be reinforced through a review of Permitted Development rights in respect of temporary structures and the introduction of an Article 4 Direction.

- Planning conditions will be used to tie the activities to ancillary D1 uses in order to ensure that the proposed Haveli is used for purposes ancillary to the main manor buildings. Planning conditions and/or s106 legal agreement will be used to manage any additional, approved development and ensure it reflects ISKCON's existing needs, rather than any increase in visitor levels and specifically, visitor levels during the six annual religious festivals. These would need to be limited to the visitor levels set out in the needs assessment in relation to the annual religious festivals, including the summer two-day Janmashtami Festival.
- Following the construction of a Haveli, surplus buildings and structures on the site will be cleared.
- Any planning application will be required to be accompanied by a traffic control plan.
- Elements of devotional art may be incorporated in the development, where appropriate.
- Appropriate conditions from the 1996 SoS Decision will be re-added upon approval of a Haveli.

Sustainability

The building will aim to; reduce energy demand; supply energy demand efficiently; and use renewable energy sources.

- Materials: The use of high quality, long lasting materials will be sought. Materials should also be chosen for their low 'embodied energy', the ease of maintenance and repair, and the ability to recycle and reuse the material.
- Adaptability: The proposal needs to be flexible and adaptable to accommodate change over time.
- Environment: Sustainable technology should be used to provide an improved environment in the Haveli. This should involve where possible natural lighting, heat distribution, acoustic performance and separation, natural ventilation, reduced/recycled water consumption.
- Building Process: The Council will encourage a reduction in levels of material waste during the construction process and how changes in construction techniques can lead to improved performance.
- Energy Efficiency: Innovative approaches to energy generation, use and conservation are required. Alternative forms of energy generation, such as a district heating, cooling and power system, combined heat and power, solar energy etc, should be considered.

- Water Conservation: The development is to incorporate water conservation techniques (e.g. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems -SUDS) and grey water recycling.
- Transport Measures: Proposals should also demonstrate the benefits of improving and encouraging pedestrian and cycle linkages within the site area and to wider passenger transport facilities in terms of sustainable transport improvements. The Council will expect ISKCON to produce a Travel Plan for the Temple in the event of a planning application for the Haveli.

Landscape Strategy

A planning application should also be supported by a wide ranging landscape plan outline details of:

- Tree planting to strengthen the structural landscape of the estate having regard to Conservation Area and Green Belt objectives.
- Methods to integrate the Haveli through hard and soft landscaping measures.
- To improve the setting of the listed building and maintain the inter-relationship with the village in the vicinity of the Green and the pond.
- How to maintain and enhance the existing landscape.
- To introduce greater access for visitors, where appropriate, via country walks and other measures.
- To improve the ecological potential of the estate.
- To remove access to the Manor from Footpath 29.

Associated signage and lighting

A planning application should also include any associated development that would support the main functions of Bhaktivedanta Manor and its approved functions. Any proposed associated development must also ensure that it preserves and enhances the setting of the Listed Building, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the rural nature of the Green Belt.

Associated development would include:

- Appropriately designed lighting in order for the existing users to safely navigate the built up areas of Bhaktivedanta Manor. Any proposed lighting would be required to be lit at an appropriate level to preserve the character and setting of the Listed Building and rural character of the site.
- Appropriately designed signage. Any proposed associated signage should be minimal in number and size.

6.0 Conclusion

The purpose of this planning brief is to provide a planning framework for Bhaktivedanta Manor. It considers the function, character opportunities and constraints at the site and the development aspirations of the Manor.

The needs analysis which supports this brief has identified that the current space is being intensively used which is undermining both the spiritual experience of the users of the site and the character of the listed building.

Appendix 1: Policy summery

1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Available from: www.communities.gov.uk/.../planningpolicyframework/

2. Hertsmere Revised Core Strategy (2011)

Available from:

<http://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/planning/hertsmerelocaldevelopmentframework/corestrategy.jsp>

- **Policy CS12:** Green Belt protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
- **Policy CS13:** Protection and enhancement of heritage sites.
- **CS15:** Environmental impact of development.
- **CS17:** Access to services.
- **CS21:** Securing a high quality and accessible environment.
- **CS24:** Accessibility and parking.

3. Hertsmere Revised Core Strategy (2011)

Available from: <http://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/planning/hertsmerelocalplan/>

- **Policy C1:** Green Belt.
- **Policy C4:** Development Criteria within the Green Belt.
- **Policy D14:** Noisy Development.
- **Policy D15:** Energy Efficiency – Design and Layout of Development.
- **Policy D19:** Lighting Installations and Light Pollution
- **Policy D23:** Access for People with Disabilities.
- **Policy E2:** Species protection.
- **Policy E7:** Trees and Hedgerows – Protection and Retention.
- **Policy E8:** Trees, Hedgerows and Development.
- **Policy E16:** Listed buildings – Development Affecting the setting of a Listed Building.
- **Policy E22:** Conservation Areas – Preservation and Enhancement.
- **Policy E23:** Conservation Areas – Design of Development.

- **Policy M2:** Development and movement.
- **Policy M13:** Car Parking Standards.
- **Policy S7:** Community Centres and Religious Buildings

Appendix 2: Previous Planning Decisions at Bhaktivedanta Manor *

Reference	Scheme	Decision
TP/94/0014	Change of use to a residential and non-residential theological college and religious community, together with the use for public worship (including the observance of religious festival days)	Refused Appeal upheld
TP/94/0844	Erection of detached hay and straw barn with equipment store together with extension to existing cowshed	Grant permission
TP/95/0575	Introduction of new self-closing fire doors on the ground and first floors (application for Listed Building Consent) (amended plans received 23.04.96)	Grant consent
TP/97/0381	Alterations to existing 'stable' block building including the erection of single storey entrance porch, insertion of 2 no. high level dormers, 2 no. roof lights and additional roof area.	Grant consent
TP/02//1060	Erection of two greenhouses following the demolition of the existing greenhouses	Grant permission
TP/03/0333	Repairs to the existing fabric and minor alterations including details of scaffolding (application for Listed Building Consent) (additional information received 4.4.03)	Grant Consent
TP/03/0566	Erection of multi-purpose agricultural building. To accommodate livestock, milking parlour, treadmill, storage of hay, grain and straw and other farm equipment, workshop and other associated uses together with visitor and education facilities.	Refuse
TP/03/0690	Construction of children's playground (additional and amended plans received 13.08.03)	Refuse permission
TP/04/0503	Erection of temporary marquee for Temple related activities, including weddings	Refuse permission
TP/04/0996	Construction of children playground	Grant permission
TP/04/1391	Erection of new agricultural building (with a gross external floor area in the range of 3,086	Refuse permission

	to 3,660 sq m), including removal of existing agricultural buildings.	Appeal dismissed
TP/04/1485	Erection of an agricultural building to house cattle with an approximate floor area of 3,800 sq m (involving demolition of existing cowsheds)	Appeal Dismissed
TP/05/0590	Erection of temporary marquee for Temple related activities (certificate of lawfulness – proposed)	Refuse certificate.
TP/06/0654	Erection of polytunnel for growing flowers	Grant permission
TP/06/0655	Erection of agricultural buildings (notice of intention to erect an agricultural building and Part 6, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country General Permitted Development Order 1995)	Withdrawn
TP/07/0263	Demolition of 3 existing buildings and erection of 4 new buildings (for agricultural use with additional viewing facilities for visitors) and provision of new slurry lagoon	Grant permission
TP/07/1155	Erection of temporary marquee for 11 weeks	Withdrawn
TP/08/1595	Erection of temporary marquee for 11 weeks, for temple related activities, including weddings	Refused Appeal withdrawn
TP/09/0641	Retrospective application for the installation of a geo-grid and grass re-seeding to reinforce and stabilise existing car parking areas	Grant permission
TP/09/1885	Erection of a temporary marquee (certificate of Lawful development – proposed)	Refuse Certificate Appeal dismissed
TP/09/1913	Erection of temporary wedding marquee between 6 June and 22 August 2010 and 22 May and 7 August in 2011 and associated car parking (amended description 29.04.2010)	Refuse permission Appeal dismissed
TP/10/1177	Revised application to TP/07/0263 for the erection of agricultural building with viewing	Grant permission

	facilities for visitors (retrospective application)	
TP/11/1274	Retrospective application for 19 new lamp posts, 3 lamp posts with security cameras and 3 columns with security columns only (amended plans received 7.2.12)	Not yet determined

** Only applications pertinent to this brief are included*