

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL
PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE
8th MAY 2003
REPORT OF THE CHIEF PLANNING &
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER

PCC 8.05.03
PART 1
ITEM NO
FOR DECISION
CPEHO

N6/2003/313/FP & W/2003/385/EM
SINGLE STOREY SIDE AND FRONT EXTENSIONS AND SINGLE STOREY AND
TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION AT 18 FORDWICH ROAD, WELWYN GARDEN
CITY.

APPLICANT: MR AND MRS R POTTER

(Handside)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is located on the western side of Fordwich Road which comprises of mainly red brick two-storey semi-detached dwellings that were built together around the end of the 1930's. Fordwich Road is located on the western side of Parkway close to the centre of Welwyn Garden City within the Welwyn Garden City conservation area.
- 1.2 The application premises forms one of a pair of red brick, detached houses, with linked flat roofed single garages to one side.
- 1.3 This application has been called in by Ward Members.

2.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 W/2002/1753 - .Single storey side and front and single storey and two storey rear extension, rooflight to rear elevation and alterations to side and front elevations – withdrawn 3/02/03
- 2.2 N6/2002/1728 - .Single storey side and front and single storey and two storey rear extension – withdrawn 3/02/03

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 This application seeks permission to erect a two storey rear extension at a depth of 3.5 metres, and ground floor extensions on the northern side of the property, to the rear of the existing garage, and infilling the passageway to the southern side of the property following the removal of the existing rear conservatory and single storey accommodation behind the existing garage.

- 3.2 The Estate Management Application also seeks permission to insert a ground floor window on the north elevation and insert a rooflight to the rear roof slope.

4.0 MAIN RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

- 4.1 The Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations Number 1, 1998
Policy BEV5 Welwyn Garden City
Policy BEV10 Development in Conservation Areas
OTH Criteria 1 Development in Conservation Areas
Res Criteria 22 Extensions to Dwellings

The Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review, Revised Deposit Version June 2002
Policy R20 Development in Conservation Areas
Policy D2 Character & Context
Supplementary Design Guidance

5.0 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

- 5.1 The application has been publicised by means of notification of neighbours by letter, site notice and press notice. In response to the consultation process no neighbour letters of objection have been received.
- 5.2 The Welwyn Garden City Society objects to the application and considers that the proposed extension is too large, over dominant and disproportionate in scale and mass with the original house. In addition the fenestration also needs improvement.
- 5.3 Beams comment that the main problem with the application proposal is the proposed first floor rear extension in that the views between buildings against a backdrop of landscape is an important characteristic of the Garden City. The proposed two storey rear extensions by reason of its width and height will in Beams view detract from this relationship. In summary it is recommended that the proposal is refused on the grounds that the two storey rear proposal will detract from the existing building and its setting.

6.0 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The main issues in this case relate to the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area. It is considered that the proposals will, due to their distant location from neighbouring properties, have no impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. The issue relating to the impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the building and wider area in general are of particular importance in this case given its position within the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area.
- 6.2 With regard to the impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the area, policy BEV10 of the adopted district Plan indicates that within conservation areas extensions to existing buildings will only be permitted when they would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. Policy BEV5 indicates that within Welwyn Garden City, all proposals for development will be required to reflect the established character of the built environment in

terms of generous standards of space, formality of layout and uniformity of architecture.

- 6.3 Policy R20 and D2 of the Plan Review dictate that similar considerations are relevant when assessed against emerging policy. The application premises comprise a simple detached property, with generous visual gaps to either side that allow distant wooded views. The attractiveness of the building is enhanced by this setting and the simplicity of the original design which is mirrored by the adjoining property at No.20. Fordwich Road, although not as formally laid out as other areas of the Conservation Area, still derives much of its character from layout of properties with the generous spacing between buildings particularly at first floor, and the uniformity of architecture.
- 6.4 It is considered that the proposal to extend at first floor on the western rear elevation of the property would detract from the original simple design of the building due to the bulk of the proposal which will be highly visible from the streetscene when approaching the property in either direction along Longcroft Lane. Furthermore, the scale of the proposed first floor extension would result in a roof ridge line greater than that of the existing and this is considered to be out of scale and not to be subordinate to the parent property. In addition, this first floor proposal, although located to the rear of the premises, would appear to diminish the generous standards of space that is afforded to this part of the Garden City as indicated in the comments of Beams and which is an attribute defined as worthy of protection in Policy BEV5. In these circumstances it is considered that the proposed first floor extension would clearly neither preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area, and would in fact be detrimental to it. Therefore the application is considered to be contrary to the provisions of Policy BEV10 and Policy BEV5 of the adopted District Plan.
- 6.5 The single storey extensions will alter the original plan form of the building, however they will, apart from the small infill between the existing garage and house, not be visible from the streetscene and in design terms respect the character of the existing property and so are considered to comply with the provisions of Policy BEV10 and Policy BEV5 of the adopted District Plan.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 In accordance with the advice in PPG15 on Planning and the Historic Environment, specialist conservation advice has been sought in the consideration of this application, from Beams. It is considered taking on board this advice that the application proposal, that the rear first floor extensions, will detract from the simple design of the existing building. In addition it is considered the extent of the proposed extensions will be out of scale with the parent property and in particular the first floor rear extension due to its proportioning will not be subordinate to the existing building and will at the same time reduce the spacing and distant wooded views. This it is considered will result in a development that will detract from the character and appearance of this part of Welwyn Garden City and this attractive part of the conservation area. The application is therefore considered contrary to Policy BEV5 and BEV10 of the adopted District Plan.
- 7.2 I have considered the impact of the proposed extension on the amenity of neighbouring properties, and I am of the opinion that when considered in relation

to the provisions of Res Criteria 22 of the adopted District that the amenity requirements of these policies have been complied with.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 I recommend that this planning application N6/2003/313/FP be refused for the following reason:-

The proposed extensions by virtue of their incongruous and insubordinate scale and bulk detract from the simple design of the existing house and so will harm from the uniformity of architecture and sense of space between buildings which contributes to the attractiveness of the Garden City within which the application site is located. The proposals would therefore cause harm to the established character of the Conservation Area and would comprise development conflicting with the aims of Policy BEV5, BEV10 and OTH Criteria 1 of the adopted District Plan, and Policy D2, R20 and the Supplementary Design Guidance to the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Revised Deposit Version, June 2002.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Planning Applications N6/2003/313/FP

