

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL  
PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE – 16 FEBRUARY 2006  
REPORT OF THE CHIEF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER

S6/2005/1560/FP

ERECTION OF 4 TWO BEDROOM AND 1 THREE BEDROOM TERRACED DWELLINGS FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING GARAGES AT LAND ADJACENT TO FLATS, 1 TO 12 LAMBS CLOSE, CUFFLEY, POTTERS BAR

APPLICANT: Apollo Consultants

Northaw

**1 Site Description**

- 1.1 The site comprises 33 garages in flat-roofed blocks located to the eastern side and northern end of Lambs Close, to the rear (south) of maisonettes fronting Station Road and adjacent to a four storey block of flats, Nos 1 to 12 Lambs Close dating from the 1960s. The garages are presently in separate ownership to the freehold of the flats but were provided as part of the original planning permission in 1964 for 48 flats and garages. The site area is 0.094Ha.

**2 The Proposal**

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing garages on the site and the erection of a terrace of 4 two bedroom and 1 three bedroom dwellings. The terrace of dwellings is to be aligned parallel to Lambs Close and the dwellings are to be positioned so that they have private garden space to the rear with hard/soft landscaping and car parking (8 spaces) to the front with vehicular and pedestrian access to the dwellings from Lambs Close.
- 2.2 The proposed terrace of 5 dwellings is to comprise a two-storey structure with a “saw tooth” series of pitched roofs over the five dwellings. Unit 1 is to the north is to be a slightly larger two bedroom dwelling than units 2, 3 and 4, which are to have the same internal floorspace. Unit 5 proposed to the southern end of the terrace is to be a three bedroom dwelling. The ridge height of units 1 and 5 is to be 5.9m, whereas the ridge height of units 2, 3 and 4 is to be 6.5m.
- 2.3 An enclosed bin store is proposed to the front of the car parking area. Materials proposed are fairfaced brick walls, roof in proprietary glass reinforced plastic (GRP) with reconstituted stone parapets and natural finish timber-framed windows.
- 2.4 This application has been submitted following refusal of S6/2005/0043/FP for the erection of 6 two bedroom terraced dwellings. The present scheme represents a reduction in the number of dwellings proposed from 6 to 5 coupled with changes to the design and layout of the proposed units. This revised layout results a reduction in the built footprint of the proposed terrace and an increase in the distance between the main flank (north facing) wall of unit 1 and the rear of the

adjacent properties fronting station road to 12m. This is coupled with a reduction in the ridge height of unit 1 from 7.2m to 5.9m, taking into account it is now proposed to set the building 0.5m below adjacent ground level at the northernmost end of the terrace. Dwellings 2 and 3 are to be positioned 1.3m forwards of the other dwellings in the terrace thus providing additional depth to their rear gardens.

### **3 Planning History**

- 3.1 E/2210-64 Erection of 48 Flats and 48 Garages – Granted
- 3.2 S6/1990/142 & 143 New mansard roof forming 4 one bed flats and demolition of garages – Refused
- 3.3 S6/1990/986 New mansard roofs to blocks A, B, C & D, 4 one bed flats to A, B, & C and car parking – Refused. Allowed on appeal.
- 3.4 S6/1990/987 New mansard roofs to blocks A, B, C & D, 4 one bed flats to A, B, & C and car parking – Refused. (no appeal lodged)
- 3.5 S6/1992/583 Revisions to S6/1990/986 for 8 studio flats for Block A – Granted
- 3.6 S6/1994/665 New mansard roof to block B and 8 studio flats – Granted
- 3.7 S6/1994/703 Revisions to S6/1990/986 for 8 studio flats – Granted
- 3.8 S6/1995/561 Revisions to S6/1994/703/ and S6/1994/665 to provide 4 two bed flats and 2 studio flats – Granted
- 3.9 S6/1997/656 New car parking layout and replacement of existing garages – Granted
- 3.10 S6/1998/272 Revisions to S6/1990/986 for part cosmetic mansard and 3 flats – Granted
- 3.11 S6/2002/1260 Demolition of 33 garages and erection of thirteen 2 bedroom flats (Scheme 1) – Refused. Dismissed on Appeal.
- 3.12 S6/2005/0043/FP Demolition of existing garages and erection of 6 two bedroom terraced dwellings – Refused.

### **4 Planning Policy**

- 4.1 Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (PPG3): Housing
- 4.2 Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991- 2011:
  - Policy 6: Settlement pattern and urban concentration
- 4.3 Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:
  - GBSP2 – Town and specified settlements
  - H2 – Location of Windfall Residential Development
  - M14 – Parking standards for new development

D1 – Quality of Design  
D2 – Character and Context  
D3 – Continuity and enclosure  
D4 – Quality of the Public Realm  
D5 – Design for movement  
D8 - Landscaping

4.4 Supplementary Design Guidance (Statement of Council Policy)

4.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance – Parking Standards (Adopted January 2004)

## **5 Representations Received**

5.1 **Neighbouring occupiers** - The application was advertised by neighbour notification letter on 21 December 2005 and by the display of a site notice on 22 December 2005.

5.2 40 letters of objection have been received raising the following issues:

- The proposed development is too close to the existing dwellings in Lambs Close and Station Roads
- The proposed development will overlook the existing dwellings in Lambs Close and Station Road
- The proposed development will over-populate Lambs Close
- The proposed development removes parking spaces (garages) and will exacerbate the already intolerable parking situation in Lambs Close.
- The proposal will remove mature trees and vegetation both on the site and on land adjoining
- The proposed developments will prove a danger and nuisance to residents of Lambs Close during the construction period.
- Already insufficient parking areas for the occupants of Lambs Close.
- When additional flats were added to Block 1 additional parking spaces were created. However these spaces have been removed from public use when the applicant subsequently purchased these garages and prevented the spaces being used for parking. When more flats were added to Blocks 2 and 3 there were no additional spaces provided and car parking at Lambs Close became under pressure. As these will be two bedroom dwellings it is likely that they will be purchased by two-car families. The woeful lack of adequate parking for residents and visitors will further exacerbate the problem.
- Demolition process will damage existing fences and cause a great deal of disruption over a long period of time.

- Proposed development will remove other mature trees and vegetation, both on site and on the adjacent railway embankment, which will be detrimental to local wildlife and quality of life of surroundings for existing residents. Disturbance from passing trains will increase
- 5.3 Neighbouring occupiers were notified of an amended description of the application on 3 February 2006. Any representations received as a result of this notification will be verbally reported to Members.
- 5.4 **Hertfordshire Highways** – Comments received will be verbally reported to Members. In term of the previous application (S6/2005/0043/FP) the Highways Authority did not wish to restrict the grant of permission.
- 5.5 **Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council** - Object to the application. This is a reduction of 1 dwelling from the previous application S6/2005/0043/FP it does not sufficiently address the concerns of that application. It is still overdeveloped and cramped and would not complement the existing surroundings, gardens are still too small and would have an overbearing impact on those properties in Station Road it would be prudent to look at the appeal report where the previous refusal was upheld. This is a garage complex which if demolished would greatly exacerbate the already serious traffic problems.
- 5.6 **Thames Water** - With regard to surface water drainage, it is the responsibility of the developer to make proper provision for drainage to ground, water courses or surface water sewer. It must not be allowed to drain to the foul sewer as this is the major contributor to sewer flooding. Thames Water recognises that the environmental and economic benefits of surface water source control and encourages its appropriate application where it is to the overall benefit to our customers. Hence, in the disposal of surface water, Thames Water will recommend that the applicant a) looks to ensure that new connections to the public sewer system do not pose an unacceptable threat of surcharge, flooding or pollution b) check the proposals are in line with the advice from DETR which encourages, wherever practicable, disposal on site without recourse to the public sewerage system- for example in the form of soakaways or infiltration areas on free draining soils c) looks to ensure the separation of foul from surface water sewerage on all new developments.
- 5.7 There are public sewers crossing the site, therefore no building will be permitted within 3 metres without Thames Water’s approval.
- 5.8 **Environment Agency** – unable to respond to the planning consultation.

5.9

## 6 Discussion

6.1

## 7 Conclusion

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## 8 Recommendation

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Chris Conway, Chief Planning and Environmental Health Officer  
Date *(insert)*

Background papers to be listed (if applicable)