

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	<u>S6/2007/0405/FP</u>
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NOTATION:

The site is located within the Green Belt as designated by the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

The site is located on the southern side of Shepherds Way and incorporates a girl's school. The access to which this application relates is the 'middle' of three access points into the school on this part of Shepherds Way. The access to the east provides the existing entrance and egress to the main car park.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

The application seeks the opening up of an existing access onto Shepherds Way. This access was required to be shut as part of the 2000/1119 application. The development would provide for this access to be the entry into the school with an automatic barrier located within the site and for the existing access to form the egress point.

PLANNING HISTORY:

- S6/1975/0508/FP Fire escape - Granted
- S6/1976/0307/FP Fire escape - Granted
- S6/1977/0550/FP Fire escape staircase - Granted
- S6/1977/0494/FP New school sanatorium - Granted
- S6/1978/0544/FP New sanatorium - Granted
- S6/1979/0305/FP Construction of foul sewer – Granted
- S6/1979/0021/FP - Conversion of staff house into three flats - Granted
- S6/1983/0574/FP - Alterations to old sanatorium including a first floor flat and erection of a 6th form centre - Granted
- S6/1988/0921/FP - Erection of new educational building - Granted
- S6/1989/0454/FP - Erection of seven 4-bedroom houses with garages and eight 2 bedroom flats with garages for staff accommodation - Refused
- S6/1989/0219/FP - Erection of temporary classroom – Granted
- S6/2000/1199/FP – Formation of new vehicular access and gates to serve existing car park, and closure of existing access - Granted

S6/2006/470/FP - Demolition of existing residential properties and erection of 3 no. 3 bed residential units for staff accommodation – Refused

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:

Policy 5 – Green Belt

Policy 22 – Reduction of Travel Need and Car Usage

Policy R29 – Traffic and Road Safety Implications of Development Proposals

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1 Sustainable Development

GBSP1 – Definition of Green Belt

RA1 – Development in the Green Belt

CONSULTATIONS:

HCC Highways – do not wish to restrict the grant of permission – recommend conditions

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS:

No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS: None. Notification period expired 11th April.

DISCUSSION:

The main issues are

- 1) Impact on the Green Belt**
- 2) Impact on Highway Safety**
- 3) Other material planning considerations.**

1) Green Belt

Policy RA1 defines developments that are appropriate within the Green Belt. Whilst accesses do not fall within the defined definitions, the access exists and therefore would have no greater impact on the visual character of the Green Belt than currently. The proposal would therefore comply with policy RA1.

2) Impact on Highway Safety

Policy R29 identifies that proposals which would generate a significant or type of traffic using rural roads will be resisted where, amongst other issues, there is an increased risk of accidents. The proposal in itself would be unlikely to increase the amount of traffic to and from the site. The assessment therefore needs to determine whether using this access in addition to the existing access would be likely to increase the risk of accidents.

Comments from HCC Highways indicate that the highway authority does not usually encourage the use of multiple accesses serving a site. However, in these circumstances allowing this proposal would have benefits for the free flow of traffic by removing the conflict currently existing between cars entering and exiting the site and potential for those entering to reverse back on to the highway. The barrier proposed is sited approximately 38 metres in length from the junction and therefore concerns regarding vehicles backing up onto the highway when accessing the site are unlikely to be realised.

With regards to the current gates across the site, located adjacent to the highway, the agents have indicated that the applicant is willing for a condition to be attached requiring the access to be kept free of any obstruction. This would therefore overcome any concerns regarding the possibility of this gate preventing access to the site. The proposal therefore complies with policies R22 and R29 of the Hertfordshire Structure Plan.

CONCLUSION:

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

CONDITIONS:

- 1. C.2.1 – Time Limit for Commencement of Development
- 2. Prior to the use of the approved development, all access arrangement serving the development shall be completed and constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction.

REASON: To ensure that the access is constructed to the current Highway Authority's specification as required by the Local Planning Authority and to comply with policies R29 of the Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991-2011.

- 3. Prior to the use of the approved development, the new access shall be made clear of any obstruction and shall be kept free of any obstruction at all times thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that vehicles wait clear of the highway in accordance with policy R29 of the Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991-2011.

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:

The proposal has been considered against development plan policies (Hertfordshire Structure Plan 5, 22, 29 Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 SD1, GBSP1, RA1), in addition to the Human Rights Act 1998, which indicate that the proposal should be approved. Material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the Development Plan (see Officer's report which can be inspected at these offices).

INFORMATIVES:

To ensure that work undertaken on the highway is constructed to the current Highway Authority's specification, to an appropriate standard and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. All works to be undertaken on the adjoining highway shall be constructed to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority and in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council publication "Roads in Hertfordshire - A Guide for New Developments". Before proceeding with the proposed development, the applicant should contact the Mid West Hertfordshire Area Office (01727 816025) to obtain their permission and requirements.

DRAWING NUMBERS: 4339 030 & 4339 031 & 4339 032 and date stamped 12th March 2007

Signature of author..... Date.....