

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2007/0592/FP
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NOTATION:

The site lies within the Green Belt, Area of Archaeological Significance and Landscape Region and Character Area as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

The site is part of the wider setting of Bedwell Park which consists of a grade II listed building, currently undergoing conversion to residential accommodation.

The Tennis Court House is one of a number of new build dwellings built as part of the enabling development for renovation works to the listed building and wider curtilages. The site is located to the south west of Bedwell Park.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

The proposal seeks full planning permission for an outdoor swimming pool and associated pool building to the north of the Tennis Court House. The pool would be 12 x 6 metres, depth of 1.8 metres and the summer house 6 x 6 metres, height of 4.4 metres to the ridge with a finial detail increasing the height to 5.5 metres.

The materials are proposed to be timber weatherboard and timber shingle roof.

PLANNING HISTORY:

S6/2003/941/FP AND S6/2003/942/LB

Conversion, refurbishment and change of use of former golf clubhouse to ten apartments, conversion of existing courtyard buildings to four dwellings, retention of the existing east cottage, erection of nine new dwellings adjacent to the main house erection of one new dwelling within the walled garden with new garage, staff flat plus associated garaging parking and landscaping and selected demolition of modern extensions to the walled garden cottage and main house.

Granted

S6/2001/0208/LB and S6/2001/0210/FP

Full planning permission and listed building consent for an extension to the existing Country Club for a health and leisure facility, change of use of part of the building for nine residential units, office and conference use at the Old Clubhouse, January 2002
Granted

S6/2001/0394/OP

Outline planning permission for the demolition of the single storey extensions, retention of the existing building as a single dwelling, with a single storey side extension on either side, plus two new dwellings and garages at the Walled Garden Cottage (then referred to as The Seminar House), August 2001.

Refused

S6-1996/0484/FP and S6/1996/0483/LB

Full planning permission and listed building consent for single storey extension to provide new laundry, enlarged ladies locker room and removal of vent, August 1996.

Granted

S6/1995/0414/FP and S6/1995/0539/LB

Full planning permission and listed building consent for conservatory,

Granted

S6/1993/0709/FP and S6/1993/0710/LB

Full planning permission and listed building consent for single storey extension to golf club house, December 1993.

Granted

S6/1990/1019/FP and S6/1990/1020/LB

Full planning permission and listed building consent for demolition of maintenance building, external alterations and single storey extensions to enable extended building to be used for hotel, golf and country club, December 1991.

Granted

S6/1987/0135/FP Full planning permission for 18 hole public golf course, July 1987.

Granted

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

Hertfordshire Structure Plan

Policy 1 – Sustainable Development

Policy 5 – Green Belt

Policy 6 – Settlement Patterns & Urban Concentration

Policy 43 – Landscape Conservation Areas

Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan

Policy SD1 – Sustainable Development

Policy GBSP1 – Definition of the Green Belt

Policy R25 – Works to Listed Buildings

Policy R29 - Archaeology

Policy D1 – Quality of Design

Policy D2 – Character and Context

Policy D8 – Landscaping

Policy RA1 – Development in the Green Belt

Policy RA2 – Development in Settlements within the Green Belt

RA3 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt

Policy RA10 – Landscape Regions and Character Areas

Supplementary Design Guidance

National advice

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development

PPG 2 – Green Belts

PPG 15 – Planning and the Historic Environment

CONSULTATIONS

Environment Agency – would have a low environmental risk

BEAMS – a sensitive site as far as setting of listed building is concerned. If pool is necessary, an alternative siting should be considered

Environmental Health – Condition suggested regarding details of water filtration and treatment system should be submitted

Hertfordshire Gardens Trust – concerned the summerhouse would further clutter the open landscape views from the mansion entrance.

Landscaping – Trees and bushes surrounding the proposed site have limited amenity value and would likely be retained for privacy; recommend condition for protection of trees during works.

PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Concerned at location of pool and summerhouse which would be too close to main building and would diminish the character of the grounds and setting. Design acceptable but use of materials is poor and would detract from the setting.

REPRESENTATIONS

None. Period expired 16th May 2007.

DISCUSSION:

The main issues are:

- 1. Impact upon the openness of the Green Belt**
- 2. Impact upon the setting of the listed building**
- 3. Design of the building**
- 4. Other Material Planning Considerations**

- 1) The site is within the Green Belt whereby policies RA1, RA2 and RA3 are applicable. Policy RA3 indicates that extensions to dwellings (which also includes outbuildings) will only be permitted where the proposal together with other extensions would not result in a disproportionate increase and would not have an adverse visual impact in terms of its prominence, size, bulk and design on the surrounding countryside.

This dwelling was permitted under very special circumstances as part of the enabling works to Bedwell Park and therefore its existence is different to the majority of cases.

The size of the development in terms of floorspace is comparable to the size of the dwelling being built and in this regard is considered would not represent a proportionate increase to the dwelling. The location of the pool and summerhouse away from the main dwelling also represents an incursion into the openness of the surrounding area, again making this development inappropriate. By virtue of the scale of the development, particularly the summerhouse, its bulk and size would result in a building that would have an adverse impact upon the openness of the green belt and is thus contrary to policy RA3.

- 2) Policy R25 indicates that permission will be refused for any proposal which would adversely affect the historic setting of a listed building. The siting of the pool and summerhouse would bring the development closer to the proximity of the listed building and would thus have impact upon its setting. There would be some screening by virtue of the landscaping that currently exists to the northern and eastern boundaries, however this part of the site would be visible from the gardens which are part of the setting of the listed building and located to the south of the listed building and the proposal would thus have a detrimental impact upon the wider setting and be contrary to policy R25.

- 3) The design and choice of materials of the building is of a fairly modern but traditional in its character of a summerhouse. The choice of materials with timber weatherboarding could be conditioned to be of both design and colour that would reflect the character of the dwelling and the wider character of the area. The details could be controlled by condition and it is therefore considered that the design is reflective of the locality in which it is set.
- 4) Landscaping have indicated that the surrounding landscaping has limited amenity value but would be likely to be retained for privacy purposes. A condition has been suggested for prevention of damage to planting during construction and this could be attached to any approval. This would then comply with policy D8.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed development would introduce a building and pool that would result in a disproportionate increase to the size of the existing dwelling and no very special circumstances exist to grant permission and is therefore contrary to RA1 and RA3. The siting of the pool and building would have a detrimental impact upon the setting of the listed building and wider gardens and would therefore be contrary to policy R25.

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSAL AND REASON (S)

REASONS FOR THE REFUSAL OF PERMISSION:

1. The proposed building and pool would result in a disproportionate increase in the size of the dwelling and by virtue of its prominence, size and bulk would have an adverse visual impact upon the openness of the green belt. No very special circumstances have been given for development to be granted. The proposal would thereby be contrary to policies RA1 and RA3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.
2. The proposed development would be detrimental to the setting of the Listed Building and gardens in which it is set and thereby contrary to policy R25 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

INFORMATIVES:

None

DRAWING NUMBERS:

493/TCH/SP/01 & 4493/TCH/SLP/01 & 4493/SH/01 and date stamped 11 April 2007

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