

**WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**  
**DELEGATED REPORT**

<b>APPLICATION No:</b>	<b>N6/2007/1434/FP</b>
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**NOTATION:** The site lies within the settlement of Welwyn Garden City as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE:** The site is located to the South of Stanborough Lane in the South of West of Welwyn Garden City. The site measures approximately 340 metres deep and 70 metres wide. The site contains a hotel and a public house/restaurant.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:** The application outlines the proposal to erect a single storey extension at the front of the existing restaurant to provide additional restaurant space. The extension would protrude from the existing building by 6 metres and would be 9.4 metres wide, to match the width of the existing single storey protrusion from the main building. The extension would feature a flat roof built to a height of 3.5 metres and would feature a mock balcony that would add an additional metre to the height of the structure.

**PLANNING HISTORY:** None Relevant.

**SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:**

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011: None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1 Sustainable Development

GBSP2 - Towns and specified settlements

D1 - Quality of design

D2 - Character and context

D8 - Landscaping

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005

**CONSULTATIONS:** Hertfordshire County Council Transportation Planning and Policy Department outlined that they would not wish to restrict the granting of planning permission.

The Environment Agency outlined no objection to the proposed development.

**TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS:** None

**REPRESENTATIONS:** The Welwyn Hatfield Access Group have requested that building regulations are considered. Period expired 01/11/07.

**DISCUSSION:** The main issues are:

1. The impact on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area.
2. Other Material Planning Considerations

1. The application site is highly prominent from within the street-scene of Stanborough Lane and features large elements of built form which provide a hotel and a public house/restaurant. The building features two main gable protrusions which are built to an equal depth and width with similar architectural styling. It is considered that the positioning and size of these protrusions and the manner in which the left-hand protrusion appears to be subordinate in scale to the right-hand protrusion is considered to be important to the character and visual interests of the application site.

The proposed extension would feature a flat roof which would fail to reflect the architectural style of the existing building and would be out-of-keeping with the visual interests of the site. Whilst it is noted that there is a general preference for single storey extensions in the Garden City to feature a flat roof, in this instance it is considered that the extension should replicate the style of the existing building and feature a pitched roof accordingly. In addition, whilst it is noted that the proposed balustrade would replicate the appearance of the other existing protrusion at the application site, it is considered that the manner in which the proposed balustrade would connect to the eaves of the existing extension would have an awkward appearance that would detract from the architectural merit of the existing building.

The Councils Supplementary Design Guidance; Statement of Council Policy 2005 expects that “new development responds to building forms and patterns of the existing buildings in the detailed layout and design to reinforce a sense of place.” By virtue of the design of the proposed extension, it is considered that the development is contrary to the principles of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

The submitted drawings show the retention of the highest level of the existing windows. On consideration of this proposal it is a concern that significant structural works would be required to enable the retention of these windows. Upon discussions with Building Control it has been a concern that this element of the proposal could not be easily weather-proofed and may result in the extension having an untidy appearance to overcome these concerns. Further information was requested in relation to this feature, however this request has been ignored. It is therefore considered that it has not been proven that the extension would not have an untidy appearance and would therefore be likely to have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the building and the site.

An important aspect of the design of the existing building is that the entrance at the frontage of the site protrudes beyond the main building line, thereby attracting the eye and providing a degree of legibility to the building. The proposed extension, by virtue of its bulk and positioning would add a significant amount of bulk and mass to the frontage of the property, thereby being unduly prominent to the detriment of the appearance of the site and reducing the legibility and clarity of the building.

2. The applicant has shown an application site boundary that does not include the land in which the proposed extension would be positioned. On the basis that the failure to include the building within the site boundary would prevent enforcement action being taken if necessary, it is considered that the application should be refused on these grounds. In this instance it is considered that the submission of incorrect plans may prejudice the future ability of the Council to control the

development, therefore the failure to provide accurate plans should be considered as a material planning consideration.

The proposed development, by virtue of the manner in which it would extend onto a prominent walkway, would result in the loss of a designated pedestrian route between the hotel and the restaurant. Although this may result in an increased demand for people to walk within the internal service road, it is considered that the low speed of traffic in this area and the fact that that the service road is privately maintained would mean that it is unreasonable to refuse a planning application on the grounds of highway safety. In addition, as there is a direct internal link between the hotel and the restaurant, it is considered that it would be unreasonable to refuse the application on those grounds.

The proposed development, by virtue of its positioning approximately 30 metres from the application site, would not result in a loss of light or privacy within the neighbouring property to an extent that would justify the refusal of the application on those grounds.

**CONCLUSION:** The proposed development, by virtue of the prominence and bulk of the proposed extension and the design considerations do not respect and reflect the form, architectural merits or visual interests of the existing building and therefore detracts from the character and appearance of the site and the street-scene. The application is therefore contrary to policies GBSP2, D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

The proposed development would extend into an area that is not included within the application site boundary, as shown on the Site Plan submitted. The proposed submissions are therefore considered to be of insufficient accuracy to allow the planning application to be approved. The application is therefore contrary to

The proposed development would not have a detrimental affect on highway safety or the amenity of surrounding residents to an extent that would justify the refusal of the application on those grounds.

**RECOMMENDATION: REFUSAL AND REASON (S)**

1)

**INFORMATIVES:**

**DRAWING NUMBERS:**

Site Location Plan XX and date stamped XX

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