

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

<b>APPLICATION No:</b>	<b>S6/2009/1479/FP</b>
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**NOTATION:**

The site lies within the Green Belt designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE:**

The Cock O the North pub is located on the southern side of the highway on Great North Road, Hatfield. The premises is situated on a large allotment with a site frontage of approximately 100m and a depth of 56m with mature hedgerows lining the boundaries. The pub is located within the middle of the allotment and has a car parking area on the eastern side of the site. The car parking area has a circular driveway with a one way traffic flow.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:**

The application seeks full planning permission for alterations to the Cock o the North pub. The alterations include the relocation of the main entrance from the site elevation of the building to front elevation, including the installation of a plate glass lobby. The proposal also includes the installation of oak bench seats and tables to the front elevation with tensioned canvas awnings strung from existing posts with heating and lighting.

**PLANNING HISTORY:**

S6/2009/1480/FP- Erection of a sign – Pending determination

S6/1999/0283/FP - Erection of single storey extension and pergolas – Withdrawn

S6/1999/0371/FP- Extension to bar, kitchen, toilet facilities and addition of paved terrace and external pergolas – Granted

S6/1999/0840/AD - Two illuminated fascia signs, and one post sign to replace existing – Granted

S6/1998/0314/FP – Erection of a pergola – Granted

S6/1989/0030/FP - Single storey rear extension to toilet facilities – Granted

**SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:**

National Policy

PPS1: Delivering sustainable development

PPG2: Green Belts

East of England Plan 2008

SS1: Achieving Sustainable Development

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:

None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1: Sustainable Development

GBSP1: Definition of Green Belt

R3: Energy Efficiency

D1: Quality of design

D2: Character and context

D9: Access and Design for people with disabilities

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Planning Guidance, Parking Standards, January 2004

## **CONSULTATIONS**

The Welwyn Hatfield Access Group have reviewed the planning application and have noted some standards for disabled access. These matters, whilst valid are issues, make reference to internal works which are not subject to the external works that are subject for assessment under this application.

## **TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

North Mymms Parish Council - *We do not object to this application but comment that the smokers area at the front of the building (awnings and seating) should be located at the side of the building and not the front. This would preserve the character of the 1930's frontage.*

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

This application have been advertised and one representation has been received from North Mymms District Green Belt Society who raised an objection to the application given it's location in the Green Belt. *We object to this application on the grounds that the alterations are not in keeping with the original 1930s frontage. We suggest that the seating etc should be located at the side of the building.*

## **DISCUSSION:**

The main issues are:

- 1. The appropriateness of the proposed development in a Green Belt location and the impact on the character, setting and openness of the Green Belt.**
  - 2. Impact on amenity of adjoining properties**
  - 3. Other Material Planning Considerations**
1. The general policies controlling development in the countryside apply with equal force in Green Belts but there is, in addition, a general presumption against inappropriate development within them. Such development should not be approved, except in very special circumstances. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and it is for the applicant to show why permission should be granted. Very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. The limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings and other structures is not inappropriate provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

The proposed alterations to the entrance of the building including internal reconfigurations and the installation of an awning does not increase the building footprint past the existing front building line. The awning to be constructed is to be tensioned canvas to be strung across existing posts which exist at the front of the property. An inspection of the site revealed that the supporting posts have been replaced as they were in a dilapidated state and required restoration to support proposed awning. The revised entrance point will not increase the bulk of the building, rather alter the appearance of the building from the street scene. The proposed changes to the building are not considered to be out of proportion and therefore appears limited within the context of the site. In this regard, the proposed development is considered to be an appropriate form of development within the greenbelt.

Extensions to existing structures within the green belt are considered appropriate where there is limited or no impact by way of its prominence, size, bulk and design on the character, appearance and pattern of development on the surrounding countryside. The application seeks permission for external works which are required as a result of internal refurbishments and alterations.

The fundamental aesthetic changes to the buildings as viewed from the street scene proposal include replacing the garden on the front elevation with seating and the installation of tensioned material as a awning to cover patrons using the seating area. The posts structure which currently exists along the front elevation is to (and has been upon recent inspection of the site) be replaced given the poor and dilapidated state of the timberwork which was rendered unsafe to leave. The size and number of pergola posts has been replicated, and the structure is constructed of an oak wood which is anticipated to weather and mellow in time into a similar colour that was replaced on the site, therefore it is considered that there is no material change to the aesthetics of the pergola/awning structure.

The tensioned material forming an awning, however will form an addition to the property and is considered to be an appropriate form of awning within the context of the site. The character of the building has subtly changed over time with the various signage and painting to the façade of the building. The use of tensioned material, rather than a rigid structure is considered to be appropriate as it forms a softer addition to the building rather than a rigid awning structure. The resultant impact therefore is considered to be a less dominant form of awning on the front façade of the building.

The impact of the additional seating at the front of the site is not considered to be detrimental to the appearance or character of the property, as it is obscured from the road by the mature hedging which lines great north road. In addition, the property maintains a high standard and coverage of landscaping which maintains the fundamental appearance of the building. Overall it is considered that the proposed changes would not be detrimental to the appearance or character of the building to an extent that would warrant refusal of the application.

It is considered that the proposed development would be in keeping with the pattern of development on site and not detract from the openness or character of the area in accordance with D1 and D2 and PPG2.

2. The impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties is measured in terms of privacy, access to light and overshadowing. The proposed development proposes minor changes to the façade of the building which will not increase the building footprint, rather change the orientation of the entrance to the building.

Despite this, being located in the greenbelt, there is sufficient distance between the site and the neighbouring properties to not be adversely affected by privacy, shadowing or loss of light. Furthermore, no objection was received from adjoining property owners with regard to amenity issues. Therefore it is considered that the amenity of neighbouring properties is maintained.

3. There are no other material planning considerations

**CONCLUSION:**

Overall it is considered that the proposed development would be in keeping with the pattern of development on site and not detract from the openness or character of the area in accordance with D1 and D2 and RA3, and PPG2. In addition, the development would not impact on the amenity of adjoining properties.

**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**

**CONDITIONS:**

1. 2.1 - Time Limit
2. 13.1 - The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details MMS/09/01/09 & MMS/09/01/P02 received and dated 18<sup>th</sup> August 2009 & MMS/09/01/P08 Revision A received and dated 25 September 2009 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings and any changes must be agreed in advance in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

3 Material Samples of proposed tensioned material.

**SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION**

The proposal has been considered against Planning Policy Statement/Guidance PPS1, PPG2, East of England Plan 2008 and development plan policies SD1, GBSP1, D1, D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, 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:** None

**DRAWING NUMBERS:**

Site Location Plan 1:1250 & MMS/09/01/P02 received and dated 18 August 2009 & MMS/09/01/P08 Revision A received and dated 25 September 2009.

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