

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2009/2702/LB
------------------------	------------------------

NOTATION:

The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and Northaw Common Parkland Landscape Character Area as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

The application site accommodates a Grade II* Listed Building (1 Northaw Place). Northaw place was constructed in 1690 as a two-storey house, with basement and attic rooms. A second storey was added in the early 19th Century. A balancing single storey wind was added in 1988.

The property's main feature is a painted staircase hall which dates from around 1700, which is of national significance, and is the remaining significant internal feature, since much of the remaining original fabric was stripped from the interior when the building was substantially repaired around 1988.

Although the restoration of the internal paintings was secure by enabling development in the 1980's, several inappropriate internal alterations have been carried out over the years. The property is currently in need of several repairs and general maintenance.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

The application applies for Listed Building consent to make the following alterations: a new window in the west wing north elevation, 1st floor; roof lantern in flat roof of west wing; formation of two access hatches to roof gutters internal alterations to second floor to rearrange bathrooms; redesign of 20th century staircases to 2nd floor and west wing, reopen blocked doorway between original dining room and morning room, alterations to 20th century cornices, door surrounds in entrance hall, replace 20th century floor boards on ground floor, stripout bathroom on first floor and reinstate south east room , replan kitchen and bathroom in basement

PLANNING HISTORY:

Northaw Place has an extensive property history. However, when considering the proposed developments, the most relevant applications were determined in the 1980's. These applications have the following reference numbers:

S6/1986/0970/LB – Extensions and alterations and partial demolition to form 4 dwellings – Approved.

S6/1986/0971/FP – Change of use from institutional to residential to form 4 dwellings and erection of five dwellings with garages – Approved.

S6/1998/1249/FP – Amendments to S6/1988/1249/FP – extra dormers on rear of garages to each dwelling and 2 single storey conservatories on rear of houses type A – Approved.

S6/2009/2355/PA – New detached garage with adjacent plant and store room and proposed repairs and alterations to the main house – response generally supportive of internal works.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

National Policy
PPG 15: Planning and The Historic Environment

East of England Plan 2008
ENV6: The Historic Environment

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:
None.

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:
N/A

CONSULTATIONS

English Heritage were consulted on the proposed works at pre-application stage. The feedback was supportive of the proposed internally works that are proposed within this application.

Welwyn Hatfield Council Building Control – No objection.

HATFIELD TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

The PC have no objections to the new window and roof lantern. We cannot comment of access to gutters because it is not obvious from the plans. The PC do not know if this is a Listed Building so will rely on the Officer's at WHBC.

REPRESENTATIONS

None. Period expired 25 February 2010.

DISCUSSION:

The main issues are:

- 1. The proposal's impact upon the character, appearance and setting of the Listed Building**
- 2. Other Material Planning Considerations**

1. Prior to this application being submitted the applicant submitted a pre-application consultation. Within the pre-application process the proposed works were assessed by both English Heritage and BEAM's, who have both visited the site.

It has been acknowledged that the application dwelling has been subject to several alterations that have been carried out without Listed Building Consent. The response from English Heritage stated:

“Although the interior of the house has been largely remade following a period of dereliction late in the last century, and much of what was described in the Statutory

List has been lost, the very fine painted staircase compartment survives in good order”.

The proposed window within the west wing would replace an opening that has been sealed. The addition would have a more balanced appearance than the existing infill and reflect the size and proportions of the existing frame and other windows.

The proposed roof lantern to the west wing would be an inconspicuous addition and would not detract from the appearance of the main building. This addition would improve the light to the room below and improve the internal character of the property.

The formation of two access hatches to roof gutters internal alterations to second floor to rearrange bathrooms would create an appropriate access to the roof of the property. Considering the existing building is suffering from leaks and has a complicated roof, access is important to ensure the building's regular maintenance. These additions are considered to be appropriate and would not affect the character and appearance of the Listed Building.

The proposed redesign of 20th century staircases to 2nd floor and west wing would replace two modern staircases with simple stairs detailed in an early 19th century manner (ramped handrails, stick balusters) , which would improve the character of the house.

The proposed works to alter the plan of the house would reopen blocked doorway between original dining room and morning room. This would restore a modern alteration, which is considered to be inappropriate. The existing basement area has been neglected and the proposed works would make minor alterations that would add a bathroom in basement and two doors. The refurbishment of this area is considered necessary and the proposed alterations would not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the building.

The existing kitchen was created during the alterations around 1988. The kitchen is relatively small for a property of this size and does not add to the character of the property. The proposed works to the kitchen area are considered to be appropriate and acceptable.

As existing there is a bathroom adjacent to the painted staircase and hall. The removal of this bathroom would be highly beneficial, as the presence of a bathroom here could result, in the event of accident or leakage, in serious damage to the most important feature of the house. Furthermore, it is a modern addition and its removal is considered to be appropriate.

The replacement of the modern boards on the ground floor with oak boards would improve the character of the house. The area forms an approach to the painted hall and its improvement would be appropriate.

The remodelling of the space leading to the drawing room so as to create a formal lobby would improve the character of the house.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed works generally are to restore a property that has suffered various works and inappropriate additions over the years. Although previously some effort was made to produce something in keeping with the building's character, as existing the result is disappointing. The alterations proposed are intended either to improve

upon the modern work aesthetically or to improve the planning of the house. The proposed works are considered to be acceptable and would comply with Policy ENV6 of the East of England Plan 2008 and PPG15.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

CONDITIONS:

- 1. C.2.2: Standard Time Limit of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas
- 2. C.13.1: Development in accordance with approved plans/details 1000 & 1001 REV A & 2003 REV A & 2002 REV A & 2004 REV A & 2005 REV A & 2006 REV A & 2007 REV A & 2201 & 2501 & 2502 & 2301 & 2305 & 2302 & 2303 & 2304 & 3601 & 3602 received and dated 7 January 2010.

INFORMATIVES: None.

Summary of reasons for grant of permission

The proposal has been considered against National Planning Policy Guidance PPG15 East of England Plan 2008 Policies ENV6 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.

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