

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2010/0273/LB
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NOTATION:

The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt 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 wing 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 proposed works and alterations include:- the conversion and extension of existing east wing (garage & kitchen) to form new kitchen and swimming pool, a shower area and mezzanine and a 1st floor bathroom over kitchen, which would be linked by new staircase to swimming pool. To the south (rear) of the property new conservatory would be constructed. Associated services would be installed. Works to main house's eastern elevation would be carried out at first floor and would comprise the installation of a new door to replace modern door and build up window formed in 1988. To the rear of the main building the works would comprise the reinstatement of a porch and replacement of a modern door.

The main extensions would cover an area to the eastern side of the dwelling. The single storey replacement to the existing garage would approximately measure 13.2m in width by 8.5m in depth with a flat roof and roof lantern to a height of 7m.

To the rear of this addition would be a two-storey extension which would enlarge the existing kitchen at ground floor level. This addition would approximately measure 6.2m in width by 7.2m in depth with a pitched roof to a height of 9.4m.

Beyond the rear elevation of the main dwelling a single storey garden room would be constructed, which would approximately measure 9.5m in width by 6.1m in depth with a pitched roof to a height of 7m above the adjacent ground level.

The proposed development is part of a larger package of works that include an internal refurbishment, which was approved under reference S6/2009/2702/LB. The proposals were assessed by English Heritage prior to the applications being submitted.

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.

S6/2009/2702/LB – Alterations include: new window in the west wing north elevation, 1st floor; roof lantern in flat roof of west wing; formation of two access hatched 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 – Approved.

S6/2010/0110/MA – Alterations include:-conversion and extension of existing east wing (garage & kitchen) to form new kitchen and swimming pool, shower area and mezzanine and 1st floor bathroom over kitchen, linked by new staircase to swimming pool. construction of new conservatory. associated service installations. works to main house east elevation 1st floor; installation of new door to replace modern door and build up window formed in 1988; reinstatement of porch and replacement of modern door on south elevation – Pending Consideration.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

National Policy

PPG15: Planning & The Historic Environment

East of England Plan 2008

ENV6: The Historic Environment

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:

None.

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

None.

CONSULTATIONS

English Heritage – Consulted at pre-application stage. Generally supportive of the proposed works. Suggestions were made with regard to the windows of the proposed swimming pool extension. These alterations have been incorporated into the scheme submitted.

NORTHAW & CUFFLEY PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Have concerns that this is overdevelopment of a listed building.

Welwyn Hatfield Council Building Control

No comments at this stage.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised by both a site and press notice. Period expired 9 March 2010.

Three letters of representation were received, which raised the following comments:

Northaw & Cuffley Residents Association raised concern that the proposal's are excessive bearing in mind that this is a Listed Building.

Hertfordshire Gardens Trust made note of the application but did not wish to comment.

The Potters Bar Society Country Group – stated that they support the application.

DISCUSSION:

The main issues are:

1. The proposed development's impact upon the character and setting of the Listed Building

1. Throughout the pre-application discussions, the architect explained that it was his intention to improve the appearance of the eastern part of the building. This is considered to be particularly important as it is viewed as you approach the main entrance to the property.

The conversion and extension of existing east wing (garage & kitchen) to form new kitchen and swimming pool, shower area and mezzanine would replace an area that was extended in the 1980's. As existing this extension is in a dilapidated state and appears to have been poorly constructed. This side of the building is not well balanced and generally detracts from the appearance of the main building.

The architect has amended the proposed pool enclosure after a pre-application consultation with English Heritage objected to modern window casements. The proposed casements would be reflective of the original building and be more in keeping. This addition is considered to be appropriate and when viewed with the proposed two-storey addition would give the property a more balanced appearance, which would be more attractive than the existing addition. Within English Heritage's response it was stated that the existing terraces that were built in the 1980's are unsightly. Although the proposed development would not be perfectly symmetrical it would be more balanced and appropriate than as existing.

The proposal would include a first floor bathroom over the kitchen. This would form an en-suite that allows a new first floor layout, which removes an existing bathroom that is adjacent to the main staircase. As detailed within listed building application S6/2009/2702/LB, the paintings on the main staircase are an important feature to the Listing of the building. When considering the layout of the building and that the proposed external envelope of the bathroom help would balance the appearance of the building, this addition would improve the character and appearance of the main building.

A new conservatory would be constructed to the southern side of the main dwelling. This addition would reflect the original dwelling in terms of its proportions, fenestration and materials. This addition would have a tall slate roof that would be reflective of the other roofs on the main building. It has been noted that this roof's design would be different to that of the main building, however, for a single storey addition it would be appropriate in relation to the proportions and appearance of the extension. When viewed against the backdrop of the existing house this addition would not appear dominant and is considered to be acceptable.

Works to main house on the eastern elevation would involve the installation of a new door to replace a modern door and build up window. These first floor alterations would restore alterations that were formed with the 1988 extensions, which are not considered to be well built additions.

The proposed works to reinstate a porch and replace a modern door on south elevation would be an improvement and restore modern alterations that are considered to be inappropriate.

English Heritage have given support to the proposal and have acknowledged that the proposed works would improve several inappropriate existing additions. The character and setting of the listed building would not be harmed and the important features of the building would not be affected. When considered with the development approved within application S6/2009/2702/LB the proposal is considered to enhance the existing building.

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 proposed alterations would mostly 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: Time Limit for Commencement (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings)
2. C.13.1: Development in accordance with approved plans/details EW1000 & EW1001 & EW2001 & EW2002 & EW2201 received and dated 20 January 2010.
3. C.5.2: Materials to Match

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:

Reason for Grant of Listed Building Consent:

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.

INFORMATIVES: None.

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