

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	S6/2010/2010/S73B
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NOTATION:

The site is located within Hatfield as designated by the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

This 1.5 acre site is located on the northern side of Comet Way, opposite the Galleria. It comprises the existing Beales Hotel, a series of linked buildings together with parking and landscaping.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

This application applies for an extension to the time limit of the approval under the earlier application S6/2007/1492/MA.

This earlier application was for full planning permission for amendments to an earlier approved scheme (S6/2007/236/FP - unimplemented) to increase the number of bedrooms granted by 3 to 19 in total (on a new second floor) by subdividing two deluxe suites and creating a new bedroom above the laundry room on the first floor and utilising a staircase area. This part of the proposal is to be achieved without any increase in the existing mass and footprint of the previous approval.

In addition, this application seeks approval to enlarge a previously approved gym in size by approximately 74 sqm.

The current approved extension to the hotel would be the same increase in height to that of the existing approval. The material finishes are also the same which include the use of frosted glass and non reflective finishes.

PLANNING HISTORY:

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|-----------------|--|
| S6/2007/1492/MA | Approval for the erection of 2nd floor extension to existing hotel, including a further 19 bedrooms and gymnasium |
| S6/2007/236/FP | Approval for the erection of second floor extensions to existing hotel, including a further 16 bedrooms and gymnasium. |
| S6/2003/1675/FP | Approval for the erection of boiler room and beer and furniture stores, following demolition of existing storage buildings |
| S6/2003/1658/FP | Part demolition of existing hotel and erection of 34 new bedrooms, restaurant, lounge, bar and conference facilities. |

S6/2003/1038/FP	Conditional permission granted for part demolition of existing hotel and erection of 34 new bedrooms, restaurant, lounge, bar and conference rooms.
S6/1997/0378/FP	Approval for the erection of a conservatory and alteration to car park layout to provide parking for 127 cars
S6/1997/0140/AD	Conditional permission for internally illuminated box signs
S6/1996/0624/FP	Conditional permission for the erection of two storey extension block and single storey link to provide 17 additional bedrooms to existing hotel

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

National Planning Policy:

PPS1	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG17	Planning for Open Space, Sport & Recreation
PPG13	Transport

East of England Plan 2008

Policy SS1 – Achieving Sustainable Development
 Policy SS2 - Overall Spatial Strategy
 Policy ENV7 – Quality in the Built Environment
 Policy T14 – Parking

Structure Plan Polices:

None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1	Sustainable Development
GBSP2	Towns and Specified Settlements
D1	Quality of design
D2	Character and context
R3	Energy Efficiency
CLT6	Hotels
M14	Parking standards for new developments

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005
 Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Planning Guidance, Parking Standards, January 2004

CONSULTATIONS:

Hertfordshire County Council Transportation Planning and Policy - considers the proposal would not have an unreasonable impact on the safety and operation of the adjoining highways

Environmental Agency - no comments received. (Previous application raised no concerns).

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Hatfield town Council provided no comments

REPRESENTATIONS:

Period Expired 10/11/10.

DISCUSSION:

INTRODUCTION

The application site and its surroundings have not noticeably changed since the approval of application S6/2007/1492/MA. The Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 is still the relevant local plan document and with regard to this type of application there has not been a significant shift in the national policy context.

For the sake of completeness, the previous discussion in the 2007 approval is copied below and remain unchanged.

The main issues are:

- 1) **The impact of the proposed extension on the existing hotel and the surrounding area;**
 - 2) **Whether the additional bedrooms and gymnasium would have an impact on the amenity of neighbouring sites;**
 - 3) **Other matters**
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- 1) **The impact of the proposed extension on the existing hotel and the surrounding area;**

These issues have been dealt with in the previous application apart from the slight changes to the external appearance of the building which will result from the larger gym and slight alterations to the window fenestration due to the revised bedroom layout. The alterations in this proposal would still be in keeping with the originally approved scheme and so the proposal complies with the design policies of D1 and D2 and CLT 6 of the local plan.

- 2) **Whether the additional bedrooms and gymnasium would have an impact on the amenity of neighbouring sites;**

The only external changes which may raise new issues compared to the previous approval (S6/2007/236/FP) relate to the changes to the gym and window fenestration. The most sensitive side of the building is the elevation facing northeast towards the new block of flats in the adjoining site. The previously approved planning application assessed that the new development was acceptable in regards to the potential impact on the amenity of adjoining residential neighbours. The main issue is whether, therefore, the current amendments would raise any new concerns.

The proposed increase in floor area of the gym would extend the building further forward by approximately 3.9m. In this location, it is considered that this

part of the building would not result in any further significant loss of daylight/sunlight to the adjoining flats and due to the resultant separation distance, it would not appear over dominant to these residential neighbours.

In regards to the changes to the room layout, the window which originally served a staircase is now a bedroom window. Taking into account that no objection was raised in the earlier planning application for new windows along this side of the hotel at second floor level with respect to the potential for overlooking to the neighbouring flats, it would be unreasonable now to raise a concern for one more bedroom window in this location, as it would not result in any significant increase in overlooking than that which will already exist.

A concern has been raised by an owner of three adjoining flats that the proposal will result in these residential units having no light at all. The previously approved planning application, which is still extant, is a material planning consideration for the purposes of determining this application and the assessment made at that time is, therefore, still relevant. It is considered that this proposal would not result in any significant greater loss of residential amenity from that deemed to have been acceptable under the last planning application which was considered at the time to comply with the requirements of Policy D1.

3) Other matters

Parking:

The increase in bedrooms requires, in accordance with supplementary parking guidance, a further addition of 3 spaces (one per bedroom). Whilst, like the previous application, this proposal has not proposed any increased parking, the applicants have shown in the past their interest in a Green Travel Plan which supports non car modes of travel, benefiting the site and surrounding district. This approach together with the enhanced public transport links to the adjoining district centre would be unlikely to detrimentally impact upon highway and traffic safety. Additionally, the applicant has resubmitted a record of occupancy of parking and although this has not been confirmed as a true record, with observations from highways, it would appear fairly consistent and the proposal would therefore again comply with policy M14.

Chalk Mining:

The site is located outside the Hatfield Chalk Mining Assessment Area.

Re-cycling Conditions:

HCC have requested in the 2007 application that a planning condition is attached to require the reuse/recycling of materials for the development. Bearing in mind that these policies existed at the time of the previous approval and were not imposed, it would still be unreasonable to do so on an application which is seeking a time extension.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed development would not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the area or the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties. The proposal is considered to meet the requirements of the relevant policies of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and National Planning Policy. Therefore, it is recommended that the standard 3 year time limit is reapplied.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

CONDITIONS:

1. C.2.1 3 Year Time Limit
2. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details: A05.229.P.001 & A05.229.P.006 Rev B & A05.229.SK.007 Rev D & A05.229.P.008 Rev B & A05.229.P.009 Rev B & A05.229.P.011 & A05.229.P.012 received and dated 16 September 2010 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.

Post Development

3. C.5.2 Matching Materials

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:

The proposal has been considered against National Planning Policy PPS1, PPG17 & and PPG13 and East of England Plan 2008 Policies SS1, SS2, ENV7 & T14 and local development plan policies (Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 D1, D2, R3, SD1, GBSP2, M14 & CLT6), 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:

You should be aware that the site is located within the groundwater protection zone of Hatfield Pumping Station. This is a public water supply comprising a number of chalk boreholes operated by Three Valleys Water. The construction works and operation of the proposed development site should be done in accordance with the relevant British Standards and Best Management Practices, thereby significantly reducing the groundwater pollution risk. It should be noted that the construction works may exacerbate any existing pollution. If any pollution is found in the sites, then the appropriate monitoring and remediation methods will need to be taken. For further information, refer to CIRIA Publication C532 "Control of water pollution from construction – guidance for consultants and contractors".

Signature.....

Dated.....