

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	N6/2011/0438/FP
APPLICATION Site:	Premier Inn, Stanborough Road

NOTATION:

The site lies within Welwyn Garden City as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE:

The application site is located to the south of the town centre and on the eastern side of the highway. The site adjoins a number of modestly proportioned, two and a half storey semi-detached residential dwellings that are located to the north eastern property line of the site. To the south western side of the site lies the gosling sports park.

The application site consists of a three storey hotel and restaurant located on an area of 0.97 hectares. The building has been subject to a three storey rear extension and there is an extant permission for a further three storey extension. The hotel is finished with facing brick work and a tile roof.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

The application seeks planning permission for the extension to the entrance with an extended gable roof line.

The lobby would have a rectangular footprint approximately 2.5 wide and 1.6 deep and would extend forward from the existing lobby. The existing gable roof over the entrance would be increase in depth by approximately 0.4 metres.

PLANNING HISTORY:

N6/2008/2104/FP - Erection of three storey extension to accommodate thirty bedrooms – Granted 31/12/2008

N6/2008/962/FP - Erection of three storey extension to accommodate 30 bedrooms – Refused 19/08/2008

N6/2007/1915/FP - Erection of single storey extension – Granted 05/02/2008

N6/2007/1434/FP - Erection of single storey front extension and balustrade to mock balcony – Withdrawn

N6/2006/0580/AD - Erection of externally illuminated fascia sign – Granted 28/06/2006

N6/2004/1884/FP - Erection of three storey extension to provide 30 additional hotel rooms over part of existing car park – Granted 18/02/2005

N6/2004/0802/AD - Installation of signs – Granted 21/07/2004

N6/2003/0387/AD - Retention of illuminated pole sign and five illuminated signs on building - Granted 06/05/2003

PLANNING POLICY:

National Policy

PPS1: Delivering sustainable development

PPS9: PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

PPG13: Transport

East of England Plan 2008

SS1: Achieving Sustainable Development

ENV7: Quality in the Built Environment

T14: Parking

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011:
None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005:

SD1: Sustainable Development

GBSP2: Towns and specified settlements

R3: Energy Efficiency

M14: Parking standards for new developments

D1: Quality of design

D2: Character and context

CLT6 – Hotels

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: No objection

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

None

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised by neighbour notification letters and no letters of representation were received. Period expired 28 April 2011.

DISCUSSION:

The main issues are:

- 1. Impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.**
- 2. Impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.**
- 3. Parking Provision and Highway Safety.**
- 4. Sustainable Development.**
- 5. Protected Species**
- 6. Other material planning considerations**

1. Impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area

Policies GBSP2, D1 and D2 of the adopted Welwyn Hatfield District Plan apply which seek to provide a good standard of design in all new development and require that all new development respects and relates to the character and context of the area in which it is to be sited. These policies are expanded upon in the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance which requires the impact of a development is assessed giving regard to the bulk, scale and design of the proposal and how it harmonises with the existing building and area.

The proposed extension and alteration would be very modest in scale in relation to the existing building. The extended gable would have exactly the same appearance as the existing and would only increase its depth by 0.4 metres. Similar the new lobby would have a very similar appearance, apart from a very small alteration to the appearance of the fenestration. The extension and alteration would blend into the existing building. It would not serve to increase the apparent mass and bulk of the dwellinghouse and would preserve its visual amenity.

It is considered that proposal, by virtue of its siting, scale, form and detailed design would maintain the character and appearance of this building in accordance with policies GBSP2, D1 and D2.

2. Impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties

The impact of the proposed development on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings is considered in terms of the impact on neighbouring properties access to day/sun/sky light, overbearing and privacy. Giving consideration to the scale of the proposal, the siting of windows in the adjoining properties and the orientation of the dwellings, it is considered that the proposed extension and alteration would not have an unreasonable impact on the daylight or sunlight afforded to the neighbouring residency, have an overbearing impact or the level of privacy currently enjoyed by the neighbouring residents. It is considered that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of adjoining occupiers in accordance with Policy D1.

3. Parking Provision

Parking is considered in terms of the maximum standards outlined in the Council's Parking Standards, Adopted January 2008. For the purposes of these standards the application site is within Zone 4.

The proposed development would not increase the requirement for on-site parking spaces and the proposed development would not alter the number of parking spaces provided within the site. It is therefore considered that the proposal would comply with the requirements of Policy M14.

This application proposes a very small extension to the lobby and would not increase the potential vehicular or pedestrian traffic in relation to the proposed development. No objections were raised by Hertfordshire County Council as the Highway Authority with regard to the impact of the proposal on the surrounding highway network.

4. Sustainable Development

The applicant has submitted a statement assessing the proposals against the sustainability checklist contained within the Supplementary Design Guidance. The proposals are considered to be in accordance with policies R3 of the District Plan and SD1 of the Supplementary Design Guidance.

5. Protected Species

The presence of protected species is a material consideration, in accordance with PPS9 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation), Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (section 40), Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as well as Circular 06/05. In the UK the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive is implemented by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Conservation Regulations 2010). Where a European Protected Species ('EPS') might be affected by a development, it is necessary to have regard to Regulation 9(5) of the Conservation Regulations 2010, which states: *"a competent authority, in exercising any of their functions, must have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive so far as they may be affected by the exercise of those functions."* The Conservation Regulations 2010, (Regulation 41) contains the main offences for EPS animals, however the existing site and development is such that there is not a reasonable likelihood of EPS being present on site nor would an EPS offence be likely to occur. It is therefore not necessary to consider the Conservation Regulations 2010 further.

6. Other Material Considerations

East of England Plan 2008: On 10th November 2010, The High Court quashed the decision of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to unilaterally revoke Regional Spatial Strategies in England on two grounds:

- That he acted outside his statutory powers in circumventing the need for parliamentary scrutiny of such a fundamental change to the national planning system; and
- He failed to consider the likely environmental effects of revoking Regional Strategies.

Whilst the Government is still committed to the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies through the Localism Bill, which began its passage through Parliament at the end of last year, the policies in the East of England Plan are re-established and form part of the development plan again and are therefore a material consideration which can be taken into account in reaching a decision.

The application has been considered against policy(ies) in the East of England Plan, which at the time of this decision forms part of the development plan for the borough.

CONCLUSION:

It is considered that the proposal, by virtue of its siting, scale, form and design, would maintain the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. Sufficient on-site parking provision is maintained and the proposal has sufficiently addressed the aims sustainability aims of the Development Plan. There is not a reasonable likelihood of EPS being present on site nor would an EPS offence be likely to occur.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL

1. C.2.1 – Three Year Time Limit

2. C.13.1 – The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details 1:1250 Site Location Plan & 2587/P20 A & 2587/P20 B & 2587/P21 B received and dated 23 March 2011 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

POST DEVELOPMENT

3. C.5.2 - Matching Materials

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION:

The proposal has been considered against Planning Policy Statement/Guidance PPS1, PPS9 East of England Plan 2008 policies SS1, ENV7, T14 and development plan policies GBSP2, SD1, R3, M14, D1, D2 and CLT6 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.

INFORMATIVES:

None

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