

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**  
**DELEGATED REPORT**

**APPLICATION No: S6/2013/2689/MA**

**SITE ADDRESS: Affinity Water, Tamblin Way, Hatfield**

**DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT: Erection of new weld-mesh security fencing, two pedestrian turnstiles and disabled gate (including lighting of gates) and minor works to vehicular access**

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**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**

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**1. SITE AND APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:**

The application site is located at the corner of Tamblin Way and Mosquito Way. The site covers an area of approximately 1.9 hectares and is irregular shaped. It falls within the Employment Area 6, Hatfield Business Park.

The building is of a similar form to that of the surrounding development within Hatfield Business Park, being a modern purpose built flat roof unit of steel, glass and concrete façade. The site has an open frontage with car parking spaces surrounding its road frontage along Tamblin Way and Mosquito Way. Landscaping also exists around the sites perimeter.

The application proposes the erection of a 1.98m high weld-mesh fence around the road frontage of the site. Also proposed are two turnstiles reaching a maximum of 2.2m in height for pedestrian access off Mosquito Way and Tamblin Way and a 'skirt' barrier to be added to the existing vehicular barriers. Downlights are also proposed at the gate and turnstiles to enable individuals to use the card reader.

**2. SITE DESIGNATION:**

The site lies within the Hatfield Aerodrome Site as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

**3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**

S6/1977/0480/ - Single storey extension to machine shop. Granted 17 October 1977

S6/1984/0570/ - 11 Relocatable buildings and associated car parking. Granted 26 October 1984

S6/1987/0907/FP - Renewal of consent for 11 relocatable buildings. Granted 18 December 1987

S6/1991/0134/FP - Erection of single storey building for use as non-destructive testing laboratories. Granted 12 April 1991

S6/1999/0900/FP - Temporary use of land and buildings for film production including erection of temporary film sets. Granted 29 November 1999

S6/2001/0031/DE - Erection of a building to provide 81,000sq m of accommodation for purposes within use class b1 with associated access, parking and landscaping. Granted 9 March 2001

S6/2001/0217/DE - Construction of spine road (phase 2) and highway works together with associated services. Granted 4 March 2002

S6/2005/0872/FP - Variation of condition 2 attached to outline planning permission s6/1999/1064/op to allow an additional 5 years for submission of reserved matters (up to 29/12/2015). Granted 10 October 2005

S6/2006/1392/DE - Reserved matters pursuant to outline application ref. s6/1999/1064/op for the erection of a building to provide a total of 9,241 sqm of accommodation for purposes within use class b1 (business), together with associated car parking, access and landscaping. Granted 21 December 2006

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS:**

Welwyn Hatfield Borough's Landscaping – No objections

Hertfordshire County Council, Transportation, Planning and Policy (Highway Authority) – No objection subject to a condition to ensure storage and delivery of materials is not within the highway.

Hertfordshire Police Constabulary – A crime prevention survey has been conducted and the application is supported.

Landscape department – No objections

#### **5. NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS:**

The application was advertised by a site notice and neighbour notification letters.

Representation was received from Welwyn Hatfield Access Group who raised a question for the applicant regarding disability access.

#### **6. TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS**

No representations have been received from Hatfield Town Council.

#### **7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES AND RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES:**

The main planning issues with this application are:

**a)** impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area (Policies GBSP2, D1, D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and Section 7 of the NPPF 2012)

**b)** impact on the residential amenity of nearby and neighbouring properties (Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005)

**c)** impact on highway safety (Policy M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005)

d) other material considerations

## 8. ANALYSIS:

### a) impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area

The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) notes that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments add to the overall quality of the area; respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. They should also be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

The NPPF goes on to note that planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

Policy GBSP2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 notes that development within the specified settlements will be limited to that which is compatible with the maintenance and enhancement of their character and the maintenance of their Green Belt boundaries. Policy D1 requires the standard of design in all new development to be of a high quality and Policy D2 requires all new development to respect and relate to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed. It notes that development proposals should as a minimum maintain, and where possible, should enhance or improve the character of the existing area. The Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG) supplements the policies contained in the District Plan.

The proposed development would involve the erection of a 1.98m high security fence to the southern and northern boundary of the site along with two turnstiles at existing pedestrian access points. The fencing and turnstiles will be set back from the road frontage and positioned behind existing planting in the form of hedging reaching approximately 1m in height along Tamblin Way and hedging in excess of 1.5m in height along with young established oak trees along Mosquito Way. The fencing will therefore be partially screened by this existing soft landscaping.

The fence will be of green powder coated weld mesh which is considered a suitable colour that blends in with the adjacent existing planting.

Whilst the fencing will enclose the site substantially from all road frontages, it is of a form that allows visibility through its thin mesh resulting in achieving a level of transparency. This form of fencing can be seen elsewhere in the Hatfield Business Park, for example at the adjacent site along Tamblin Way. It is therefore, a form of development that is not uncommon in the area.

The proposed turnstiles will reach a maximum of 2.24m in height, whilst these will project higher than the fence they will be set back at the furthest point from the highway in the western corner of the site.

The addition of the skirt to the existing barriers along Tamblin Way are again set back into the site and will not significantly alter the existing arrangement visually.

Overall, the proposal is considered to be of a design that will not cause any undue harm to the character and appearance of the area or appear obtrusive within the street scene. For these reasons, the application complies with policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and the design aims of the NPPF.

**b) impact on the residential amenity of nearby and neighbouring properties**

Local Plan Policy D1 and the Supplementary Design Guidance are relevant which require a high quality of design ensuring that residential amenity of the neighbouring properties is suitably considered.

The nearest residential properties are to the west of the site, these are approximately 95m away. It is not considered that the proposal will cause any visual intrusion upon the amenity areas of these properties.

All other adjoining sites are of a business or leisure use and are therefore unaffected by the proposal.

For this reason, the application is considered to comply with Local Plan Policy D1 and the Council's Design Guide.

**c) impact on highway safety**

Local Plan Policies M5, M6 and M14 consider pedestrian, cycling and parking standards for new development proposals respectively. These policies seek to improve facilities for safe and convenient movement of pedestrians; to encourage cycling; and to provide cycle and car parking spaces.

The proposal will not cause the loss of any parking spaces within the site; therefore there are no issues to consider in this respect.

In terms of pedestrian and vehicular movement, the proposal will not cause a loss of any existing access arrangements for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. The security fencing will incorporate pedestrian turnstiles at existing pedestrian access points at the northern and southern corners of the site, these link to existing footpaths around the perimeter. A cycle path will also remain around the perimeter of the site along Mosquito Way and Tamblin Way and access for cyclists into the site will be via the vehicular access points. The barriers that currently exist at the vehicular access points will be unaltered apart from the addition of the barrier skirt and a slight widening of the kerb radii within the site at access point 2 as indicated in the submitted plans.

There is not considered to be any increase in the capacity of vehicles entering the site.

The fencing is proposed to be set a minimum of 7.5m from the adjacent highway and will not cause a loss of visibility along the sight lines at the vehicular access points.

Hertfordshire County Council as a Highways Authority has been consulted with regards to this application and no objections or issues have been raised providing that all works are carried out within the application site area.

Overall, the proposal raises no concerns in terms of highway safety and is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan Policies M5, M6 and M14.

**d) other material considerations**

In terms of the impact on trees in close proximity to the proposed development, a young tree is highlighted for removal, however there are no concerns raised by the Council's Landscape Department. There is considered to be sufficient existing soft landscaping features around the site and therefore there are no conditions imposed to provide further features. The proposal is considered to comply with Local Plan Policy D8 which considers the inclusion of landscaping within all development proposals and the retention, enhancement and protection of existing landscape features.

The statement submitted with the application explains the reasons for requiring the fencing around the site and this is mainly due to trespassers and security incidents that have been reported to the police. Hertfordshire Constabulary has confirmed their awareness of these incidents.

**9. CONCLUSION:**

Subject to a planning condition to ensure materials are as indicated in the plans and that the fencing is constructed within the application site area, it is considered that the proposal would sufficiently maintain the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would not impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings or highway safety.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the requirements of the Supplementary Design Guidance (Statement of Council Policy).

**10. CONDITIONS:**

1. C.2.1 Time limit for commencement of development
2. C.13.1 Development in accordance with approved plans/details: 413913/1 Rev. A received and dated 7 January 2014.
3. The materials to be used for the development shall be as detailed in the application hereby approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies GBSP2, D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

4. All areas for parking and storage and delivery of materials associated with the construction of this development shall be provided within the site on land which is not public highway and the use of such areas must not interfere with the use of public highway.

REASON: In the interest of highway safety and free and safe flow of traffic.

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

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be viewed on the Councils website or inspected at these offices).

**INFORMATIVES:**

None

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