

# OFFICER REPORT

<b>Application Number:</b> S6/2005/992/FP
<b>Location:</b> 23 Tolmers Avenue, Cuffley, Potters Bar
<b>Proposal:</b> Erection of front boundary dwarf wall
<b>Planning Officer:</b> Eloise Kiernan

## THE SITE

The application site is located on the southern side of Tolmers Avenue and consists of a two-storey red brick detached dwelling with a hipped roof design. The surrounding area and street scene is residential in character and contains several similar dwellings in respect of both size and appearance. The site is located on a rectangular sized plot, which tapers inwards to the rear, with a substantial sized front and rear gardens. The front garden is used for the parking of cars and has a slightly steepening gradient.

## THE PROPOSAL

This application is retrospective and seeks permission to erect a front boundary dwarf wall with brick piers. The wall is of red brickwork to match the existing dwelling and is of 0.8 metres in height, with brick piers reaches 1.6 metres at regular intervals of a metre or so apart.

## PLANNING HISTORY

S6/2004/756/FP – Erection of new two-storey detached dwelling, after demolition of existing dwelling (re-submission S6/2003/1607/FP)

## SUMMARY OF RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011

None

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

**D1 Quality of Design**  
**D2 Character and Context**  
**Supplementary Design Guidance**

## REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised by mail to 7 properties: -

32 Tolmers Avenue  
16 Hill Rise  
23a Tolmers Avenue  
14 Hill Rise  
12 Hill Rise  
10 Hill Rise  
21 Tolmers Avenue

No letters of objection have been received.

Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council – Have objected to the proposal as the wall has encroached on the highways verge and is totally out of keeping with the existing street scene.

Hertfordshire Highways – have not commented to date

## **DISCUSSION**

The main issues to be considered are whether the proposal would have an adverse impact on the visual amenities of this street scene and consequently whether it is in line with the relevant policies of the adopted local plan and Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review.

Tolmers Avenue consists of a number of detached dwellings, which are of similar size and materials. It consists of a number of dwellings, which are laid out formally and symmetrically around a central road. In addition, the spacing and layout of the properties is uniform and the architectural style and detailing throughout is relatively consistent. A large proportion of the dwellings on Tolmers Avenue have front gardens of an open character or with vegetation such as hedges. None of the properties along Tolmers Avenue have a wall fronting the boundary. The generally open character gives the area a semi-rural feel, which would be altered by this application as the form of boundary treatment proposed is more urban in style and creates a hard edge.

The dwarf wall is constructed of similar materials to the dwelling, which in itself enhances the dwelling. However, when considered in the context of the streetscape it is completely out of character.

Policy D1 states that the standard of design should be of a high quality and Policy D2 requires that all new development respects and relates to the character and context of the area proposed. The existing dwarf wall is not in keeping with the characteristics of the streetscape; in particular the design, which is completely unacceptable to that of the immediate neighbours. There are no similar developments within this locality of Tolmers Gardens. The development does not enhance or improve the character of the existing area.

In addition, the proposal has been erected outside the curtilage of the property on land owned by Highways (Hertfordshire County Council). The front boundary to the site lays some 3 metres from the edge of the footway. Furthermore, the boundary wall is over 1 metre high in places and as such, has been erected without planning permission, therefore constitutes as unauthorized development.

It can be concluded that the extension does not comply with the policies quoted in both the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan and Supplementary Design Guidance.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The application is to be refused.

## **REASONS FOR REFUSAL**

The wall and brick piers, by reason of their design, materials, size and siting, give rise to an unduly prominent form of development, out of keeping with the generally open character of property frontages in this part of Tolmers avenue. As such the wall and brick piers are detrimental to the visual amenities of this part of Tolmers Avenue and contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

## **DRAWINGS**

Location Plan  
Site Plan  
Front boundary wall elevations

The plans were received and stamped on 08 August 2005.