

WELWYN HATFIELD

03 MAY 2018

PLANNING

9 Thornton Road  
Little Heath  
Herts  
EN6 1JJ

**Head of Planning**  
**Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council**  
The Campus  
Welwyn Garden City  
Herts  
AL8 6AE

30th April 2018

by post and email to [planning@welhat.gov.uk](mailto:planning@welhat.gov.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Planning Application: 7 Thornton Road, EN6 1JJ – reference: 6/2018/0803/HOUSE**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the planning application for additional works to my neighbours Mr and Mrs Horton-Coker's house that was recently submitted to you for consideration. For convenience, and in a spirit of goodwill, this letter is also being copied directly to Mr and Mrs Horton-Coker.

If and when approved, my neighbour's application will result in the removal of the predominantly glass conservatory that sits to the rear of the previous extension to their property, and its replacement with a much more permanent and substantial structure.

Dealing firstly with the rear extension itself; I have to say I am very concerned about the 4m long, 3m high flat roof brick-walled extension, as it replaces a more modest glass conservatory building which has a pitched roof with eaves at 2.5m with a ridge at 3m. The existing extension to number 7 already dominates my garden, and the proposed further new wall will only make matters worse. If the eaves could be slightly lower, or preferably the flat roof be replaced with a pitched roof matching the rest of the house, then the proposed extension will not so obviously dominate my garden.

The existing conservatory eaves are at 2.5m for 3m long, but the proposal suggests a new wall 3m high and 4m long. If the application is granted, I would very much prefer to keep the eaves at the same position, in other words no higher than 2.4/2.5m; reducing the wall from 4m to 3m long would also result in a far less intrusive structure. In terms of scale and massing, a more modest addition to my neighbour's house (as suggested herein) would be less visually imposing and therefore eminently preferable.

For the avoidance of doubt, if the application is granted, I would ask the Authority to ensure all height dimensions are agreed and written on the drawings, and also that the bricks used match both the bonding style and colour of the existing building, the latter perhaps by using old recycled stocks. My sincere hope is that the invariably ugly red brick engineering plinths can be avoided, and I would also ask that any plinth facing my house is fully rendered – I'm hoping this will also serve as an opportunity to replace the crumbling rendering on the existing plinths.

I note the design of the proposed extension includes a step back from the boundary line; this is presumably in order to address the incorrect positioning of the existing fence, and in order to ensure guttering for the new room will not extend to trespass over my own property (as it clearly does at present). If you are minded to approve this Application, perhaps these two matters could also be conditioned.

Accepting there is bound to be a certain amount of inconvenience to neighbours whilst building works are underway, I trust all concerned will make every effort to keep this to a minimum, perhaps in part by way of limiting working hours and restricting contractor access to weekdays only. To ensure no encroachment upon, or contractor access via my property, I would also ask that secure hoardings be erected between our two properties during the construction phase, and until the re-positioned boundary fence is in place. I am particularly keen to ensure root-damage to the mature shrubs immediately adjacent to the proposed new wall is minimised, and that the peaceful enjoyment of my own garden is not significantly impaired.

Secondly, while accepting that the following are not necessarily planning considerations, I'm hoping this may be an opportunity to resolve several other matters that have been ongoing for some time:

- 1) Vehicular access. A proper footway crossover to my neighbour's property would address problems with parking in front of their house, and would also make the habitual use of other footway crossovers to access the paved area in front of my neighbour's house unnecessary.
- 2) Drain problems. The drains that serve both properties run underneath my house and often get blocked; I have to pay to have them unblocked at least once a year, often more frequently. The persistent problems with drains may be due to poor design, defects in the pipes, or possibly just the types of waste matter poured down sinks and/or flushed down the toilets. Whatever the cause, blockages invariably back-fill into my property; these are always unpleasant to experience and invariably expensive to remove. The building works as proposed would seem to offer a good opportunity to investigate and repair the drains as necessary.
- 3) Trespass. The extractor fan that vents from my neighbour's kitchen directly onto my back door frequently leads to a range of cooking odours wafting in and around my house. I would very much appreciate it if a permanent alternative solution to this could be found.

Not wanting any of the above to give the impression I am opposed to (any of) my neighbours wishing to make reasonable enhancements to their properties, I am simply expressing my concerns about specific aspects of what is now being proposed.

I trust that my reasonable requests and suggestions will be incorporated into any development scheme that may eventually gain the Authority's approval.

With thanks in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,



cc:

