

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PLANNING, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND GOVERNANCE**

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2018/1770/HOUSE
Location: 1A Northaw Road West Northaw Potters Bar EN6 4NW
Proposal: Erection of fence following removal of existing wall
Officer: Ms Lucy Hale

Recommendation: Refused

6/2018/1770/HOUSE

Context			
Site and Application description	<p>The application site is located on the eastern side of Northaw Road West and consists of a two storey detached dwelling. The site falls within the constraints of Northaw Common Parkland Landscape Character Area, Conservation Area and the Green Belt. Furthermore, the site is adjacent to the Two Brewers Pub which is a Grade II Listed Building.</p> <p>The application seeks planning permission for the replacement of an existing boundary wall with a 2 metre high feather edge boarded timber fence. Part of the existing wall has collapsed in places.</p>		
Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)	<p>CA - Conservation Area: NORT LBC - LISTED BUILDING Public House. C16 timber frame core, enclosed - Distance: 28.16 GB - Greenbelt LCA - Landscape Character Area (Northaw Common Parkland) PAR - PARISH (NORTHAW AND CUFFLEY) Wards - Northaw & Cuffley A4D - ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION</p>		
Relevant planning history	None		
Consultations			
Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 0
Publicity	<p>Site Notice Display Date: 31 July 2018 Site Notice Expiry Date: 21 August 2018</p> <p>Press Advert Display Date: 8 August 2018 Press Advert Expiry Date: 22 August 2018</p>		
Summary of neighbour responses	None		
Consultees and responses	Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council - No objection		
Relevant Policies			

- NPPF
- D1 D2 GBSP1 GBSP2 M14
- Supplementary Design Guidance Supplementary Parking Guidance Interim Policy for car parking and garage sizes
- Others RA3

Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission 2016:
 SP3 Settlement Strategy and Green Belt boundaries
 SP9 Place Making and High Quality Design
 SADM11 Amenity and Layout
 SADM12 Parking, Servicing and Refuse
 SADM15 Heritage
 SADM34 Development within the Green Belt

Main Issues

Green Belt

The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. In the Green Belt, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Appropriateness

The National Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the national planning policy approach to development in the Green Belt. The framework accepts that within the Green Belt the extension or alteration of a building is not inappropriate provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original buildings. This is consistent with Policy RA3 the Council's District Plan and by Policy SADM34 of the Emerging Draft Local Plan 2016.

The NPPF defines the "original building" as a building as it existed in July 1948 or, if constructed after that date, as it was originally built. Neither the NPPF nor the Local Plan provide any detailed guidance on how to determine whether an extension is disproportionate. This is, therefore, ultimately a matter for the decision maker and demands that each proposal is considered in relation to the size and character of the original building. The proposed increase in volume, footprint and floor area are commonly used indicators, however, as well as mathematical calculations, the visual impact of the alteration also has to be considered.

In this instance, the proposal would replace an existing boundary treatment within its place. A mathematical calculation would not be relevant in this instance. The visual impact is relevant.

Openness

The NPPF confirms that inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Whilst there is a visual element to loss of openness in the sense that a loss of openness is perceived by the human eye, openness is essentially an absence of built development in the Green Belt and that is one of the essential characteristics which national policy seeks to protect.

	<p>The extension would reduce openness to some degree, given the increase in height of the boundary treatment, however, the harm to openness would not be significant. The site is located within a built up area of the Green Belt, in which boundary treatments are not uncommon. It is not considered that the proposal would result in material harm to the openness.</p>
<p>Design (form, size, scale, siting) and Character (appearance within the streetscene)</p>	<p>Section 16 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act states that the local planning authority shall have <i>“special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”</i>. The specific historic environment policies within the NPPF are contained within paragraphs 184-202. <i>Paragraph 192 states that: “In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;</i> <i>b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and</i> <i>c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness”</i> <p>Policy SADM15 of the Draft Local Plan Submission 2016 is in line with these aims. Furthermore, Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 respectively require high quality design in all new development and for proposals to respect and relate to the character and context of their location.</p> <p>The proposal seeks permission for the demolition of the existing wall along the west side boundary and the erection of a 2 metre high fence adjacent to the car park of the Two Brewers Grade II Listed Building. The new 2 metre high feather edges boarded timber fence with concrete posts would extend 36 metres along the boundary, set back approximately 3 metres from the highway.</p> <p>The wall has partially collapsed as a result of damage and therefore needs replacing.</p> <p>The application site falls within a Conservation Area. The immediate area is characterised by permanent brick built boundary walls which run along the side and front boundaries of the properties along Northaw Road West. As such, this forms part of the distinct character of the area. The boundary wall, whilst partially collapsed, its position is highly visible from the streetscene and contributes to the character and appearance of the streetscene and this part of the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The proposed fence would be highly visible from the streetscene, when traveling down Northaw Road West, views of the entire 36 metre of boundary fence would be gained. As a result of the levelling of the land, the application site sits lower to the adjacent car park of the Two Brewers. When travelling up Northaw Road West, given its siting, the fence would appear of some height compared to the ground level of 1a Northaw Road West. The proposed fence in principle is not considered to be in keeping with the character of the permanent, brick built boundaries in the streetscene. Its siting as well as length and height, would form an incongruous addition which would be highly prominent and visible from the streetscene of Northaw Road West.</p> <p>The proposed design and materials are not considered to respect or relate to</p>

	the character and historic fabric of the area. As such, the proposed fence would detract from the character and appearance of the site, streetscene and surrounding Conservation Area contrary to Policy D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, Policies SADM15 of the Draft Local Plan Submission 2016 and the NPPF 2018.
Impact on neighbours	The proposal would not result in any adverse impacts on the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers.
Access, car parking and highway considerations	The proposal would not affect the on-site car parking provision. In addition, the siting of the fence would not result in an impact on visibility or prejudice highway safety.
Conclusion	
The proposed development, by virtue of its height, siting, design and materials, would result in an incongruous addition which would be highly prominent within the streetscene and would detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, Policies SP9, SADM11 and SADM15 of the Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission 2016 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.	

Reasons for Refusal:

1. The proposed fence, by virtue of its height, siting, design and materials, would result in an incongruous addition which would be highly prominent within the streetscene and would detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, Policies SP9, SADM11 and SADM15 of the Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission 2016 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

REFUSED DRAWING NUMBERS

2.

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
18-024-02	A	Proposed Plans	31 July 2018
18-024-01		Plans	5 July 2018

1. POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraph 38 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 Council's website or inspected at these offices).

Determined By:

Mr Chris Carter
30 August 2018