



ELLENBROOK
CONSULTING LIMITED

Ellenbrook Consulting Limited
Eastway Enterprise Centre
7 Paynes Park
Hitchin,
Herts, SG5 1EH

Email

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
Planning Services
Development Management
Council Offices
The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
Herts
AL8 6AE

21st February 2024

For the attention of Louise Sahlke

Dear Louise,

Application Reference: 6/2022/1106/FULL

Proposal: Erection of 1 x detached 4 bedroom dwelling and detached 3 storey building accommodating 6 x 2 bedroom flats, car parking, refuse and recycling bins enclosure, secure cycle storage, turning heads and use of the existing vehicular access following the demolition and removal of a pair of semi-detached dwellings

Location: 1 Longcroft Green, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 6EP

Further to:

- our planning application submitted under cover of our letter dated 6th May 2022,
- your acknowledgement letter dated 20th May 2022,
- our letter dated 27th June 2022 providing a detailed response to comments made by neighbours at 3 and 4 Longcroft Green through the consultation process,
- your email dated 19th May 2023 advising us of topics requiring further discussion, and
- the meeting held at your office on 8th June 2023,
- our letter dated 14th July 2023 replying to the points raised in your email of 19th May 2023,
- the meeting held at your offices on 30th August 2023,
- your email dated 21st September 2023 identifying your remaining concerns following your meeting with the Development Management Team Manager,
- our email dated 10th October 2023 acknowledging the points raised in your email dated 21st September 2023 and confirming our willingness to work with you to address your remaining concerns, and
- your email of 29th January 2024 agreeing to an extension of time for our reply to the points raised in your email dated 21st September 2023,

we are now able to reply to matters raised in your email of 21st September 2023 which concluded that our previous application would “require some element of redesign”.

Before we address each of the specific topics covered in your email, we would advise that a significant amount of redesign has been undertaken, the principal change being the substitution of the

previous 2nr 3- bed duplexes with 2nr conventional 2-bed flats. This change, which we consider addresses your principal concern regarding the height of the flatted block, has allowed us to:

- remove the upper storey which has the effect of lowering the height of the roof ridge and eaves,
- eliminate the crown roof,
- provide a much simpler configuration of the roof reducing its “dominance”.

Now turning to the other topics in the order they appear in your email.

Lack of Landscaping

Replacing the two three-bed duplexes with two two-bed flats has allowed us to remove two of the parking places, relocate the cycle store and provide additional landscaping between the rear car park and the flatted building. Included with the information in support of this revised scheme is revised Drawing 192-102 Rev E showing these changes.

Overall Design of the Flatted Scheme

Concerns were expressed in regard to the overall design of the flatted scheme, specifically the “many roof forms, eaves height and articulations which do not collate well” together with the crown roof design, the dormers and the balconies which were considered to “not...draw from the character nearby properties...”

Replacing the two three-bed duplexes with two two-bed flats

- reduces the pitch of the roof,
- removes the dormers,
- omits the crown roof, and
- simplifies the overall roof form.

Included with the information in support of this revised scheme is revised Drawings 192-106 Rev. B and 192-111A Rev. B showing respectively the new North and South elevations superimposed on the same elevations for the original scheme. This provides a comparative visualisation of the two schemes and the significant impact of the changes introduced by the revised scheme.

We consider the flatted scheme is sufficiently distant and shielded from nearby properties that the balconies will not serve to detract from the character of nearby properties. Balconies are a common feature on flatted properties of this type and as noted in our previous letter dated 14th July 2023, the balconies, although small, can be used as amenity spaces. For these reasons we have elected to retain the balconies.

Proximity of the Flatted Scheme to the New Road Edge

Although the position and overall footprint of the flatted scheme has not been changed we have taken the opportunity to reduce the width of the access road, thereby increasing the distance between the extremes of the flatted block and the edge of the access road. The comment that the “flatted scheme was to be built up to the road edge and that the footprint would appear to be maximised” appears to be prompted by a desire to see the refuse store “incorporated into the built form”. The incorporation of a refuse store within the built form is in our experience very unusual and we consider the outdoor location of the refuse store in its current position – refer Drawing 192-102 Rev. E – is a far better arrangement.

Lack of Amenity Spaces

The removal of two car parking spaces and the reduction in the width of the new access road combine to allow the increase in the amount of amenity space now provided in this revised scheme – refer Drawing 192-103 Rev D.

We would note that there are no numerical determinands for the amount of amenity space to be provided but we believe that the private amenity spaces provided with the ground floor flats, the private balconies provided for the upper storey flats and the increased size of the common user amenity spaces now provided when considered in conjunction with the proximity of local public open spaces including Stanborough Lakes combine to provide sufficient amenity space for this scheme.

Car Parking Design and Abundance of Hardstanding to the Rear of the Flatted Scheme

Replacing the two three-bed duplexes with two two-bed flats has allowed us to remove two of the parking places, relocate the cycle store and reconfigure the car park. This has resulted in a reduction of the hardstanding areas and their substitution with additional landscaping areas. Included with the information in support of this revised scheme is revised Drawing 192-102 Rev E showing these changes.

Use of the Site by Refuse Vehicles

We consider this point was addressed in our previous letter dated 14th July 2023 which referenced the inclusion of a swept path analysis for a 10.8 meter long freighter in the Transport Statement prepared by Highway Planning Ltd and noted that this appeared to have satisfied HCC Highways since their response to the planning application – their letter ref: WH/12320/2022 dated 14th June 2022 – states that the “swept path analysis shows that the site will be accessible to refuse freighters”

That said, and in light of the fact that we have reconfigured the car parking and reduced the width of the new access road, we have included with this submission a revised Refuse Vehicle Swept Path drawing based on a 10.8m long refuse vehicle to demonstrate the accessibility to the development for the refuse collection supplier.

Negative Impact on Neighbours and Future Residents

A considerable amount of attention was originally given to the design of the flats to ensure that the windows and balconies did not materially affect the privacy of No 3 Longcroft Green and this matter was addressed in our letter dated 27th June 2022 providing a detailed response to comments made by neighbours at 3 and 4 Longcroft Green through the consultation process. This letter noted that the only windows in the block of flats offering views in to the garden of No. 3 are in halls and bathrooms were fixed and obscure.

The removal of the top storey duplex level can only improve this situation and Drawing 104 Rev B and 105 Rev B clearly identify the position of fixed obscure windows and privacy screens on balconies to the relevant flats.

We consider that there is substantial space to each side of the proposed flats and the various recesses in its built form provide a clear visual relief when viewed from any of the neighbouring houses. The flatted building retains a domestic scale at the height proposed with the use of hipped roofs predominating

With regard to the impact of the scheme on future residents, this has been alleviated to some extent by the reduction of the the width of the new access road increasing the distance between this and the habitable rooms of the ground floor flats.

Usage of the access road, in any case, will be low averaging 4 – 5 movements per hour. We would note that the Transport Statement prepared by Highway Planning Ltd in paragraph 4.1 notes that the “level of additional traffic generated by the development will not have a material impact on the safety and operation of Longcroft Green...a statement with which HCC highways in their response to the planning application – their letter ref: WH/12320/2022 dated 14th June 2022 - concur by noting that the development “is unlikely to generate a significant number of additional vehicle trips”. We therefore consider that with appropriate levels of insulation and glazing on the relevant facades the traffic on the access road should not be a nuisance to the occupiers of the flats.

In concluding, we trust that this letter and the further information provided in the form of the enclosed revised drawings and other documents adequately address the points raised in your email of 21st September 2023 and demonstrates our willingness to take on board your recommendation for improvements to the scheme by way of some redesign.

We look forward to receiving your decision in respect of this application but in the meantime if you have any further questions or require any additional information please contact the undersigned,

Yours Sincerely,

M Attridge

En

Cc: D Ashworth Richard Morton M. Williamss

For clarity, this application now comprises the following original (*) and substituted drawings and other documents (**):

- This letter (**);
- A set of completed planning application forms including completion of Certificate B (*);
- A copy of the Notice No 1 letter sent to the highway authority (**);
- Topographical survey plan showing existing house, site levels and conditions and boundaries etc, by Land Data Survey Consultancy Ltd (*);
- Site location plan – RMA Drawing 192/100 Rev. B(**);
- Existing site plan, demolition and tree constraints – RMA Drawing 192/101 Rev C(**);
- Proposed site plan – ground floor – RMA Drawing 192/102 Rev E (**);
- Proposed site plan – roof plan and landscape concept – RMA Drawing 192/103 Rev D (**);
- Apartment block – proposed layout plans – ground and first floor – RMA Drawing 192/104A Rev B (**);
- Apartment block – proposed layout plans – second and third floor – RMA Drawing 192/105A Rev B (**);
- Apartment block – proposed North elevation – RMA Drawing 192/106 Rev B (**);
- Apartment block – proposed East & West elevations – RMA Drawing 192/107A Rev B (**);
- House – proposed layout plans – RMA Drawing 192/108 (*);
- House – proposed elevations – RMA Drawing 192/109 Rev A (*);
- Apartment block – proposed South elevation – RMA Drawing 192/111A Rev B (**);
- Street Views – Longcroft Green (West Elevations) and View from Railway (East Elevations) – RMA Drawing 192/112A Rev B (**);
- Street Views – Stanborough Mews (South Elevations) and Great North Road (North Elevations) – RMA Drawing 192/113A Rev A (**)
- Planning Statement by Maze Planning Ltd (*);
- Addendum to the original Planning Statement by David Lane and Associates (**)
- Design & Access Statement by R M Architects Ltd (*);
- Surface Water Assessment by Cannon Consulting Engineers Ltd (*);
- Tree Survey Report and Arboricultural Impact Assessment by Patrick Stileman Ltd (*);
- Preliminary Geo-Environmental Risk Assessment by Delta-Simons Ltd (*);
- Ecological Appraisal and Biological Impact Assessment by Cherryfield Ecology (*);
- Transport Statement by Highway Planning Ltd (*)
- Revised drawing 21.168-001 – Refuse Vehicle Swept Path (**)
- Sustainable Construction, Energy and Water Statement by Jefferson Mies (*);
- Air Quality Assessment by Air Quality Consultancy Ltd (*);
- Planning Noise Assessment by RSK Acoustics Ltd (*);
- Demolition and Construction Method Statement by Ellenbrook Construction Ltd (*).