

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

27<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**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 and a half storey building accommodating 6 no. flats (4 x 2 bedroom and 2 x 3 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 6<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and your acknowledgement letter dated 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022 in respect of the above proposal we write in response to the various comments raised by neighbours through the consultation process.

Dealing with each point of objection in turn we would make the following observations :

**Privacy**

The only windows in the apartment block offering views into the garden of No 3 are in halls and bathrooms and are marked as fixed and obscure.

The separation between the balcony and No. 3 is 20m. A privacy screen can be added to the side of the balcony if required.

There are no windows in the new house looking towards No. 3 and No. 4 or overlooking the gardens of those houses.

The overlooking of No. 3 from the existing house is worse than that which is now proposed.

**Daylighting**

The proposed flats do not fall within the direct view line of any window in No 3.

The proposed flats occupy the site of the existing house to the North of No. 3 and the effect on daylight will be negligible.

The new house will have a limited impact on daylighting in No. 4 in the early mornings. In support of this statement we have produced a sun study which demonstrates the daylighting impact of the new house. This study is enclosed with this letter and demonstrates that there is no significant overshadowing or loss of daylight caused by the new house.

### **Sense of Enclosure**

The northern tip of the garden closest to the new flats is not in fact within the ownership of No. 3.

The flatted building does not in our view create any unreasonable level of enclosure. There is substantial space to each side of this building 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 even at the height proposed with the use of hipped roofs predominating.

### **Trees and Hedge**

Describing the boundary trees as large and well-established, we consider to be a gross overstatement of the actual state.

We remain open to discussion on the type of fencing and hedging best suited for this boundary

### **Aesthetics/Scale and Massing**

We would strongly refute the contention that the design does not respect the character, appearance and setting of the Garden City.

The design, articulation, detailing and materials reflect the traditional precedents in the Garden City rather than the designs of the immediate area. Roofs are designed in plain clay tiles with a mixture of hips and gables punctuated by lead roofed dormers and brick chimneys. Upper storeys are generally tile hung with red stock brick for lower storeys and deep-set white windows. All of these elements follow precedents within the conservation area close by. Balconies are shown in steel because warranty providers will no longer accept timber balcony structures.

With regard to the massing of the building there are very good, well-established precedents in Welwyn Hatfield for taller landmark buildings on corner sites. Examples include buildings at the Chequersfield roundabout, the Red Lion crossroads and the French Horn Lane roundabout. The single house behind is no higher than the nearby houses in Stanborough Mews.

### **Noise and Vibration**

We do not believe that the development will result in an unacceptable increase in traffic nor that there will be a permanent increase in noise and vibration. In support of this statement we would refer you to our specialist reports on these issues which confirm that our proposals are reasonable and proportionate and therefore are not contrary to the policies stated in the letters of objection.

### **Alleged presence of slow worms at the Site**

An Ecological Appraisal was undertaken by a qualified ecologist – Cherryfield Ecology – This was included with the planning application. This report at section 3.7.5 states that “no reptiles were found at the time of the survey” and that “no evidence of reptiles was found at the time of survey”. It further notes that “the site provides negligible potential for reptiles due to the suitability of the habitats being greatly reduced with the cleared bramble scrub”. In light of this assessment by a qualified ecologist we would seriously question the credibility of the objectors comments.

The clearance of the bramble scrub referred to by the ecologist relates to work undertaken some time back by UKPN in connection with the diversion of an existing 11kV power cable along the Eastern boundary of the site together with annual maintenance of the garden to the rear of 1 Longcroft Green.

In summary we are of the firm opinion that the objections are not sustainable or credible and that the design of the scheme fully takes on board the observations by the Local Planning Authority in the previous pre-application engagement. The issues raised by the objectors regarding privacy, boundary treatments and hard and soft landscaping can all be dealt with by suitable planning conditions which we are happy to accept where necessary and reasonable. With the use of such conditions any objections relating to privacy and boundary treatment can be completely fully addressed and dealt with.

We would note the letter of support to our proposals from our neighbour, Mr Thomas and Mrs Samantha Coales at No. 12 Stanborough Mews and note that no objections were received from any resident in the adjacent Stanborough Mews development or the Stanborough Mews Residents Association.

Furthermore, we feel the benefits of this scheme should not be overlooked when balancing all of the issues including:

- the provision of 7nr much-needed dwellings which can only be a benefit in terms of housing supply and delivery,
- the provision of 7nr sustainably designed and constructed dwellings to replace the older properties presently occupying the site,
- the provision of biodiversity benefits and improved soft and hard landscaping including a SUDS drainage solution,
- the more effective and efficient use of urban land which is currently under-utilised, and
- the provision of a focal point building situated on one of the mainentrance routes to the town centre and sympathetic to its surroundings.

.We trust this letter clearly sets out our position in respect of the comments received from these consultees but should you have any queries or require any further clarification please call me on my mobile telephone or e- mail me in the first instance,



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I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this letter.

Yours Sincerely,



M Attridge

Cc: D Ashworth    Richard Morton    C. Watts

Enc: 3nr plans showing daylight impact at various times of the year.