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Head of Planning

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25 May 2017

Dear Mr Waller,

Application Reference: 6/2017/0405/PA

Proposal: Pre-application advice for the repair and refurbishment of Northaw House and supporting development

Location: Northaw House Coopers Lane Northaw Potters Bar EN6 4PS

I refer to the above enquiry which follows various meetings and pre-application advice. The letter should also be read in conjunction with the previous letters dated 28 September 2016 and 16 December 2016.

Our meeting held on 30th March 2017 was predominantly associated with the impact of the proposals on the heritage assets and the general layout.

Nevertheless, with regard to the principle of the development, the site is located in the Green Belt where Northaw House is a Grade II listed building. The proposed houses would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt, where there will be additional harm to the openness, purposes and visual amenity of the Green Belt and the proposals are therefore clearly contrary to planning policy.

You have outlined that the proposed development is associated with development which will result in money to fund the repairs that are necessary for Northaw House. It would be necessary for you to refer to any very special circumstances that would outweigh the resultant harm. You would therefore need to consider whether there are any other considerations that outweigh the harm to the Green Belt which would warrant the very special circumstances necessary to justify setting aside the harm.

Unlike the previous pre-applications, the information submitted outlines that as part of any planning application a full Financial Viability Statement would be submitted. The FVS would assess the need and provision of enabling development to secure the long term future of the Heritage assets, which would be in line with Historic England's 'Enabling development and The Conservation of Significant Places Revision Note 2012'. Whilst it is positive that you are acknowledging that the scheme would be 'enabling development' and would be in line with the NPPF and Historic England's guidance, as no financial information has been submitted it cannot be concluded that the amount of development proposed is the minimum required. Therefore no view is given at this time. However please note that should a FVS be submitted at planning application stage, this information would be sent to an external consultant and the developer would be required to pay the Council's costs.

Impact on Listed Building

The proposal is for the refurbishment of Northaw House and its surroundings. Northaw House and the adjacent Stable Block at Northaw House are both statutory designated heritage assets in the form of two Grade II Listed Buildings. There are several further curtilage listed buildings and structures within the site. The proposed development includes the creation of 26 residential units. This would include the;

- conversion of Northaw House Grade II Listed Building – 7 units
- the repair of the Grade II Listed Coach House – 1 unit
- conversion of the Ballroom wing – 2 units
- Repair of Oak Cottage
- Repair of the Edwardian wing - units
- construction of a units within the walled garden – 2 units
- construction of units in the settlement area – 6 units
- Gate Lodge and Estate Entrance units – 2 units
- Estate Lodges on the East Drive – 2 units
- Replanting of the Orchard

As with the previous pre-applications, the lack of information submitted means that the following comments are unable to provide a detailed assessment of the impacts to the listed building.

Repair, refurbishment and conversion of Northaw House

No details have been submitted regarding the conversion and conservation of the house for comment and therefore the applicant is directed to the earlier letter dated 28th September 2016.

If undertaken sympathetically this could help secure the sustainable future use of the building which is recognised as being in a poor state of repair. Details of the proposed works/division of the building (and ballroom wing) have not yet been provided. At the meeting, it was generally agreed that future information submission (likely within an additional pre-application process) will include proposed alterations, demolition plan and a phasing/significance plan. This will also be supported by information detailing any original/early/significant features, fixtures and fittings within the building.

Car Park

No details for the proposed underground car park have been submitted with this pre-application submission. An underground car park has the potential to limit the impact of car parking on the setting of the heritage assets. However the proposal would require alterations to land levels in the area. Details are required to comment further and it is suggested the design of this feature considers the setting of the heritage assets.

Ballroom Wing

Still no details have been submitted regarding the conversion and conservation of the house for comment and therefore the applicant is directed to the earlier letter dated 28th September 2016.

Stable Block

The stable block, which is listed in its own right, is recognised as being in a very poor state of repair and it is accepted that intervention is needed in the near future to secure the building. Detailed proposals for this building will need to be supplied for further comment. It was suggested, during site

discussions, that a range of options could be explored to lessen the impact on the heritage asset whilst creating additional floor space.

Furthermore it was reiterated that the existing cart shed attached to the stable block should be kept and utilised for the parking of vehicles associated with the proposed dwelling. Furthermore it would maintain the original use of this structure and would reduce the amount of new build at the site which would in turn have less of an impact on the Green Belt.

Walled Garden

Following the previous plans, the principle of two smaller dwellings within the walled garden is considered to be an improvement from the earlier pre-app which had suggested a single large dwelling.

However insufficient details regarding the development within the walled garden have been submitted and are required for detailed feedback. Development within the walled garden should consider retaining the aesthetic relationship with main house/adjacent land to the east and the setting of the wall feature itself. Detailing of the proposed buildings (principal structure and ancillary structures) and their boundary treatments are also required for further comments.

I would strongly advise that your proposals consider further smaller houses being located within the walled garden as previously mentioned. It is considered that if these properties are laid out and designed appropriately this could adequately conserve or in some regards even enhance the heritage asset. Additionally by locating more built development within the walled garden would reduce the number of houses outside of this heritage asset which would reduce the impact of the development on the openness, purposes and visual amenity of the Green Belt.

Land at West (Between House and Walled Garden)

Previous advice suggested that the design of new buildings will need to reflect this space's relationship with the adjacent assets as to preserve or enhance their setting. Consideration should be given to regional character defining features of agricultural/ building types, which may enhance the quality of the buildings in this area. In order to retain relationships, it would be beneficial to create linkages between this space and the walled garden.

The outline details provided are considered an improvement on previous design iterations. Further details will be required for comment including details of individual structures, landscaping and public realm.

The retention and conservation, subject to detailed designs, of the gardener's cottage is considered to be beneficial.

During site discussions it was suggested that retention of existing historic features within this space could be explored as the detailed design for this area evolves.

Dwellings on Eastern and Western Drives

The proposed dwellings to the east of the main house form part of the setting of the designated heritage asset (Northaw House) and this will need to be considered, particularly views from the north.

Further details of these buildings will be required for feedback. The design of these buildings (in conservation terms) will need to consider materiality, design form, height, siting and boundary

treatment to ensure they are in-keeping with the character of the environs and context in which they are located.

Gardener's Cottage

Whilst no precise information has been submitted with regards to the repair of the cottage, an issue raised on site was the relationship that one of the dwellings sited within the walled garden has with this cottage. The concerns were primarily surrounding the loss of privacy to the garden area of the cottage as it would be directly overlooked by the windows seen to the walled garden property. Consideration should be made regarding this relationship and amendments should be made to ensure that this relationship was acceptable.

Affordable Housing - The Council's current threshold for affordable housing is 25 units, and the Council would seek 30% of the total dwellings as affordable units. As the proposed scheme would meet this threshold it would usually be expected that 8 affordable units are offered. You are advised that any application submitted would need to address this and justify why affordable housing is not being offered. You are advised that this is included within the FVS.

Please also note that in accordance with Policy H10 a development involving 5 or more dwellings, the Council will seek to secure a proportion of dwellings to be built to lifetime homes standard. In each instance dwelling type, site location and topography will be taken into account. Information relating to this should be submitted as part of the planning statement.

Conclusion

As it stands, it is considered that the proposals do not adequately conserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets and less than substantial harm of a designated heritage asset would result. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to, paragraph 134 of the NPPF outlines that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Unless information can be provided to demonstrate that that harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, planning permission is unlikely to be granted. Clearly in this instance, there is a strong presumption against the grant of planning permission.

Within all the pre-applications submitted, there has been a lack of information submitted in order for the Council to provide an in depth assessment of the proposals and all the issues that may arise regarding the heritage assets on site. Therefore the advice contained within all the pre-application responses have been unable to provide a detailed and critical assessment. As such the information contained within these letters can only point the applicant in the direction of what would need to be done to achieve an acceptable scheme.

As discussed on site it was strongly advised that a subsequent pre-application should be submitted providing the Council with much more detailed information regarding the development. This should include the works that are proposed to the Grade II Listed Buildings on site so that officers can understand precisely what works are required and an assessment of their likely impact and an assessment of their acceptability.

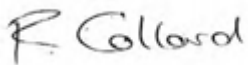
It is considered however that an appropriate proposal has the potential to suitably conserve and in some regards enhance, the significance of the heritage assets within this site. This will be subject to sympathetic intervention to the heritage assets as well as new build proposals of appropriate scale, siting, design and character. The advice from our recent meeting, together with advice in both

previous letters should be considered to seek to overcome the concerns in relation to the impact of the development to the heritage assets.

However, as with the previous letter, it should be reiterated that the principle of the development has not been addressed, which is a fundamental issue. Therefore, a proposed scheme may be able to be put forward which officers consider would adequately conserve or in some regards even enhance the heritage asset, however the onus is on the applicant to provide a detailed justification in support of the principle of the application to warrant the very special circumstances required given the proposal is inappropriate development within the Green Belt. In the absence this information at pre-application stage, objections would be raised to the principle of this development.

I trust the above information is of assistance, however the above represents my personal professional opinion and is given without prejudice to the decision of this authority in respect of this enquiry or any future application which may be submitted. This advice is given based on the policies/requirements in operation at the date of this letter. These are likely to change in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Rachael Collard
Planning Officer

Useful Information:

Building Futures website - <http://www.hertslink.org/buildingfutures/>

Statement of Community Involvement - <http://www.welhat.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=459>

Planning Application Forms - <http://www.welhat.gov.uk/planningapplication>

Hertfordshire County Council, Transport Programmes and Strategy - <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/envplan/plan/planningapps/preapplicationadvice/>

Planning obligations guidance – toolkit for Hertfordshire. Hertfordshire County Council's requirements (January 2008) - <http://www.hertsdirect.org/infobase/docs/pdfstore/planobsjan8.pdf>

WHBC Supplementary Planning Guidance including 'Planning Obligations', 'Design Guidance' and 'Parking Standards' - www.welhat.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=467

Sustainable Drainage Systems - www.hertsdirect.org/services/envplan/floodwatermgt/sab/

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Validation Requirements for Planning Applications

Section 1: National Requirements

Note: one copy only for **all** applications whether submitted electronically or on paper

1a. Application Form

Required for all applications, with the exception of prior approvals, discharge of conditions, works to trees

Guidance on how to fill out these forms can be found at the Planning Portal web site:
www.planningportal.gov.uk

1b. Site Location Plan

Required for all applications, except non material amendments and discharge of conditions when it clear from the application which development the proposal relates to

A site location plan at a scale of either 1:1250 or 1:2500 which identifies the site and the surrounding area and shows at least two roads and the north point. In exceptional circumstances plans of other scales may also be required. The site should be outlined in red and any other land owned by the applicant in blue. It should include land necessary to carry out the proposed development (e.g. land required for access to the site from a public highway, visibility splays, car parking and open areas around buildings).

Applications which have been submitted with unlicensed Ordnance Survey mapping will be accepted, but a request will be made to the agent/applicant for an appropriate plan to be provided. .

Site location (1:1250 and 1:2500) and block plans (1:500) may be obtained from the Planning Portal <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/applications/plans> or from Land Registry by calling 0844 8921111.

Policy Driver and where to get more advice:

- Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
- Planning Practice Guidance – www.planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/

1c. Site Plan/Block Plan

Required for all applications, except non material amendments and discharge of conditions when it clear from the application which development the proposal relates to

The site plan should be drawn at an identified standard metric scale (1:500 or 1:200). It should accurately show: the direction of North; the proposed development in relation to the site boundaries and other existing buildings on site, with written dimensions including those to the boundaries or and include a bar scale, drawn both horizontally and vertically.

The following may be required, unless these would **not** influence or be affected by the proposed development:

- All the buildings, roads and footpaths on land adjoining the site including access arrangements
- All public rights of way crossing or adjoining the site
- The position of all trees on the site, and those on adjacent
- The extent and type of any hard surfacing

- Boundary treatment including walls or fencing where this is proposed

Policy Driver and where to get more advice:

- Planning Practice Guidance – www.planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/

1d. Ownership Certificate (A,B,C or D as applicable)

Required for all applications except for approval of reserved matters, discharge or variation of conditions, tree works, prior approval, lawful development certificates and express consent to display an advertisement must include the appropriate certificate of ownership

If part of your proposal overhangs or forms a party wall on your neighbours land you are required to submit certificate B and serve notice on the landowner. For this purpose an 'owner' is anyone with a freehold interest, or leasehold interest the unexpired term of which is not less than 7 years.

Policy Driver and where to get more advice:

- Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
- Planning Practice Guidance – www.planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/

Guidance on how to fill out these forms can be found at the Planning Portal web site:

www.planningportal.gov.uk

1e. Appropriate Fee

Required for all applications (exemptions)

Most applications attract a fee, set by Central Government. Your application must be accompanied by the correct fee; it will not be considered valid if a fee is not submitted with the forms and plans. Please refer to the planning portal website for details: www.planningportal.gov.uk/pins/FeeCalculatorStandalone

Please make any cheques payable to 'Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council' and ensure the site address is written on the back of the cheque, or alternatively payment may be accepted by credit or debit card or through the Planning Portal when the application is submitted electronically.

There are exemptions when no fee is required, such as, applications to provide access or facilities for disabled persons; or the re-submission of applications received within a year of the decision date, or withdrawal date, where the applicant has not previously benefited from a free go for that site. The proposal description needs to be similar in nature to the previous application.

If you wish to clarify the fee please contact Development Management before submitting your application.

1f. Design and Access Statement

Required for all major developments and applications within conservation areas which comprise:

- Provision of one or more dwellinghouse
- Building or buildings where the floorspace to be created is 100m² or more

These are required to explain the design concepts and principles which have informed the proposed development, and to demonstrate how context has informed their scheme. An explanation of the approach taken to access and how any consultation on access issues has been taken into account is to be stated.

Policy Driver and where to get more advice:

1g. Personal and Sensitive Information

Requested for all application types

It is requested that any personal or sensitive information is removed / redacted from applications/reports etc. prior to their submission. Such information includes signatures, personal phone numbers, personal email addresses and photographs containing images of children and vulnerable adults and vehicle registration numbers.

Applications will not be invalidated if they have such information, however it might lead to a slight delay in its registration.

1h. Format of Submissions

Requested for those not submitted in full through the Planning Portal

It is requested, when an application and associated plans and documents are not submitted through the Planning Portal that the application should be submitted in the form of 1 hard copy of all plans and documents and 1 electronic copy on CD. Information on the CD shall be divided into 3 folders of information/documentation as follows:

- A. Application form, covering letter, design & access statement and planning statement
- B. All plans
- C. All other relevant documents
 - No bigger than 10Mb (applies to each and all documents/files),
 - No signatures on any document (or if they do have to be included only on one page). Initials are acceptable.
 - No vehicle registration plates and no children in the images. If either is included, they should be redacted.

1i. Do Not Scale

Requested for all applications with plans submitted

It is necessary to determine the size of developments proposed as part of planning applications. We are therefore unable to accept any drawing(s) with 'Do Not Scale' or similar on drawings and plans. Drawings and plans with such a disclaimer will not be accepted.

1j. Drawing Numbers

Requested for all applications with plans submitted

Any drawing submitted is required to have a drawing number on the plan. Plans without a drawing number will not be accepted. Please also consider drawing numbers when providing any revisions. The amended plan should always be identifiable with a new number. This is normally provided with an 'A' for the first amendment, 'B' for the second, 'C' for the third and so forth.

Where information is submitted both in paper and on CD, please ensure that the information on both correspond with one another. Please ensure that files are not security locked. Please label each document with a clear description as to its contents.

