

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL
PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE – 18 JANUARY 2005
REPORT OF THE CHIEF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER

N6/2005/1407/FP

DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLINGS AND ERECTION OF 24 TWO BED FLAT UNITS IN THREE BUILDINGS, 3 STOREY HEIGHT AT 48-54 BRIDGE ROAD, WELWYN GARDEN CITY

N6/2005/1408/CA

DEMOLITION OF FOUR EXISTING DWELLINGS AND ASSOCIATED OUTBUILDINGS AT 48-54 BRIDGE ROAD, WELWYN GARDEN CITY

APPLICANT: Linden Homes

(Handside)

1 Site Description

- 1.1 The application site is located on the northern side of Bridge Road near to the junction of Handside Lane which is opposite the site on the southern side of Bridge Road. The site currently consists of 4 dwellings which are grouped as two pairs of two storey semi-detached dwellings. The dwellings to the eastern part of the site (Nos. 52 and 54 Bridge Road) pre-date the other Garden City buildings and were constructed in 1876. Prior to the receipt of this application a request was made to enter these buildings onto the statutory list. This was turned down by the Secretary of State however, following advice from English Heritage as it was stated that they were “not of sufficient special architectural or historic interest to merit listing/had been too altered to merit listing”.
- 1.2 The site is located within the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area. The area is predominately characterised by two storey detached and semi-detached dwellings, however to the east of the site lies a development of three and four storey flats which were constructed in the 1970s. The rear of the site borders on to the disused railway which now forms a public footpath. A footpath also borders onto the western boundary of the site which links to the footpath at the rear of the site. Beyond the footpath to the west of the site is a bungalow which is known as ‘Weavers Cottage’
- 1.3 The site contains a number of important trees which provide a significant level of amenity within the area. All four properties are located on spacious plots with long rear gardens which with the abundant planting at the rear form a green backdrop to the development along Bridge Road. The total area of the application site is 0.382 hectares. Whilst the application is controversial in nature the application also comes before the Committee as part of the site is within the Council’s ownership.

2 The Proposal

- 2.1 There are two applications. The first application, N6/2005/1408/CA, is for Conservation Area consent for the demolition of the existing four dwellings and associated outbuildings within the site.
- 2.2 Application N6/2005/1407/FP seeks full planning permission to erect 3 main buildings of 3 storey height to provide 24 flats all of which are proposed as two bed units. The development is proposed in an L-shaped layout with development along the front of the site and turning up into the site towards the eastern end of the site. At the far eastern end of the site and fronting the return element of the proposed building is an access road and parking provision.
- 2.3 The access road follows the curve of the boundary line as it enters the site and parking is proposed to either side of this access. The development proposes to provide a total of 25 spaces within the site, 24 behind a gated entrance and one towards the front of the site for disabled/visitor parking.
- 2.4 A large open area is to be retained to the northeast corner of the site that would provide an amenity space for future residents.

3 Planning History

- 3.1 None relevant.

4 Planning Policy

- 4.1 Government Planning Policy Guidance:

- PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPG3: Housing
- PPG13: Transport
- PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment
- PPG16: Archaeology and Planning

- 4.2 Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991- 2011:

- Policy 1 – Sustainable Development
- Policy 2 – Design and Provisions of Development
- Policy 25 – Car Parking

- 4.3 Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review (Revised Deposit Version June 2002)

- SD1 – Sustainable Development
- R1 – Maximising the Use of Previously Developed Land
- R17 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
- R22 – Development in Conservation Areas

- R23 - Demolition of Buildings in Conservation Areas
- R29 – Archaeology
- M5 – Pedestrian Facilities
- M6 – Cycle Routes and Facilities
- M14 – Parking Standards for New Development
- D1 – Quality of Design
- D2 – Character and Context
- D3 – Continuity and Landscaping
- D6 – Legibility
- D8 – Landscaping
- H2 - Location of Windfall Residential Development
- H6 – Densities
- H8 – Dwelling Type and Tenure

4.4 Supplementary Design Guidance

4.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance – Parking Standards

5 Representations Received

5.1 The application has been advertised by means of neighbour notification and site notice.

5.2 Representations have been received as follows:

5.3 Hertfordshire Highways – Recommends that permission be refused due to the creation of a new access in close proximity to the junction opposite the site (Handside Lane and Bridge Road) which would lead to conflict and interference with the passage of through vehicles detrimental to highway safety. The applicant also proposes the access to be a shared surface road to serve the development however this type of road should serve no more than 20 dwellings as designed as a cul-de-sac, and therefore the proposed access road should be designed to the standards of a Minor Access Road.

5.4 Planning Policy – Raises concerns in relation to the amount of information submitted concerning sustainable development considerations. Expresses concern with the design of the proposal and considers that the application does not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. Identifies that the site is not an allocated housing site within the District Plan and therefore it needs to be considered as a ‘windfall site’. Whilst the application meets the car parking standards, concern is raised as to the level of visitor car parking provided and the amount of cycle storage to be provided. Notes that issues relating to accessibility and refuse and waste have not fully been detailed within the application.

- 5.5 BEAMS – In relation to the demolition of the existing buildings comments that the existing cottages Nos. 52-54 are of considerable historic importance and that overall the pair of buildings complement the buildings in the vicinity and contribute significantly to the character of the conservation area. In relation to development of the site it is noted that because of the location of the site and the restrictions imposed by various features, redevelopment would be far from straightforward. In relation to the acceptability of the proposed plans for redevelopment, whilst at first sight it would appear that the plans offer the most acceptable solution to date for redevelopment of the site and attempts have been made to fragment the development and the building line along Bridge Road has been respected, on close examination it appears that the Garden City principles for residential development have been ignored.

The buildings are three storeys in height (because of the wide plan form and the ratio of roof planes to external walls the buildings appear much higher than three storeys). The blocks are sited too close to one another so that there is insufficient space between them. Consequently the relationship of buildings, which in the past have been designed to be visible against a backcloth of trees and shrubs, a distinctive feature of good Garden City development, is missing.

Although a gated entrance and informal access road has been provided the view into this part of the development will be suburban and out of character with the Garden City. The situation is compounded by the convoluted plan form and the provision of car parking spaces in front of the properties. There are aspects of the external elevations which are unsatisfactory such as the monotonous roof lines, the mixture of hipped and gabled roofs, the balconies and windows. While these may be seen as details which may or may not be capable of negotiation and resolution I regret that they do not inspire confidence in a development which will make a positive contribution by preserving or enhancing this prominent part of the Garden City.

In this sense I find the proposals unacceptable. I recommend that the application be refused.

- 5.6 County Archaeologist – The buildings proposed for demolition are clearly pre-modern and as such their demolition is likely to be regarded as having an impact on significant archaeological remains. It is recommended that the buildings should be archaeologically recorded in its present form prior to demolition.
- 5.7 Thames Water – No objection in relation to sewerage infrastructure. There are public sewers crossing the site however and therefore no building will be permitted within 3 metres of the sewers without Thames Water approval. Comment that with regard to surface water drainage it is the responsibility of the developer to make proper provision for drainage to ground, water courses or surface water sewer.
- 5.8 Environment Agency – Unable to respond.
- 5.9 Welwyn Hatfield Access Group - Request that this application be considered subject to the standards and criteria outlined in the current District Plan.
- 5.10 Council Arborist – There are several important mature trees on this site and although the application shows the retention of the majority of the trees, I don't feel that they have taken into account the impact that the development would have. The most significant tree on site is a large, mature Oak tree on the centre

of the site, which is currently very prominent within the street scene and clearly visible from the surrounding streets. This is a fantastic tree which would be the feature of any site but in my view, the development is going too close to the tree and will cause detriment to the health and condition of the tree. In addition to the actual damage caused to the root system of the tree, the amenity value of the tree will also be impaired as the proposal shows 3 storey buildings to the front of it and therefore the amount of the tree that the public will see, will be dramatically reduced.

There are a number of other mature Oaks that surround the site and would have been part of the original woodland. Many of these require some remedial works due to past tree works and general form and condition of the trees but they are all worthy of retention. Again the proposal shows these trees to be retained and many of them should be unaffected by the development works. The Oak on the corner of the access footway into the woods however is again a mature Oak and the development is shown at 6m away from the trunk of the tree such that it will have an impact on the health of this tree.

Considering the significance of the trees on this site, I do not feel that adequate attention has been given to the importance of retaining these mature trees successfully. I feel that the proposals shown will have a detrimental affect on the future health of the trees and subsequently lead to their decline.

I would therefore recommend that this application be refused in its current format.

- 5.11 Welwyn Garden City Society – Consider the existing features of the site and comment that because the existing cottages are modest in scale and mass, the entire site creates an overall impression of a pleasant open space in the street scene. This makes a considerable contribution to the presentation and enhancement of the character of this part of the Conservation Area. They consider the proposal to be an over development of the site, resulting in a development which has a tight cramped effect. Due to the considerable frontage of the buildings the existing open visual character will be lost, to the detriment of the locality. Concern is also raised in relation to the low parking provision on site, and lack of provision for visitors, the prominent positions of the bin stores and the overall poor design of the development. They consider that the application does not preserve or enhance the Conservation Area and fails to comply with the relevant policies of the District Plan and Supplementary Design Guidance.
- 5.12 Letter from Grant Shapps MP forwarding letters of objection and requesting the comments to be taken into account.
- 5.13 206 letters of objection have been received from residents within the surrounding area. The concerns raised are summarised as follows:
- Objections to the demolition of the existing buildings on the site as these pre-date the Garden City and form an important part of the towns heritage which should be preserved;
 - The proposed development is totally out of keeping with the area and will not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area;
 - The height of the proposed development is inappropriate and objections have been raised as to the overall design of the development;

- Flats not in keeping within this area and development is likely to create a precedent for further developments similar in nature which will destroy the character of the town;
- The site contains mature trees which are important to the character of the area and should be preserved. They are likely to be adversely affected by the building work;
- The development will result in extra traffic and will place extra pressure on the already very busy road and cause an increased hazard;
- The development does not allocate sufficient parking for the accommodation proposed;
- Concern relating to loss of privacy and overlooking, loss of light and the development having a visually dominant impact on the flatted development of Woodside House adjacent; 'Weavers Cottage' to the west of the site; and the properties on the south side of Bridge Road.

6 Discussion

- 6.1 The main issues relate to the impact of the proposed demolition on the Conservation Area, the impact of proposed development on the character of the surrounding area and Conservation Area, the impact on the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring properties, trees, parking and highway matters.
- 6.2 **The principle of housing development** - PPG3 (Housing) encourages the provision of more housing within towns and other specified settlements and encourages local planning authorities to avoid the inefficient use of land; to make full use of previously developed sites and to seek higher density developments, by taking a more flexible approach to development plan standards in respect of car parking, amenity space and overlooking. However, this guidance goes on to state that good quality design and layout should not be sacrificed in the drive for a more efficient use of land and higher density development.
- 6.3 Policy H2 (Location of Windfall Residential Development) applies here. The application site is located within an existing housing area, and it is considered here that residential use of the land would represent a desirable form of development subject to an assessment of the scheme against the adopted policies governing new residential development, namely whether it is designed to be in keeping with the character and quality of the local environment, ensuring that there is a proper means of access and adequate car parking provision. Additionally, it will be important to ensure adequate amenity to neighbouring houses and flats, for example, relating to overshadowing and loss of privacy.
- 6.4 The site is a previously developed site and therefore the decision is guided by Policy R1 – Maximising the Use of Previously Developed Land, which requires development to take place on previously used or developed land. Policy H6 sets the densities at which development should be built. The policy requires all residential development to be built at densities of 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare provided that the development has no adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area and can satisfy the design policies of the plan. The proposed development of 24 units on this site would result in a density of 63 dwellings per hectare. Whilst the density is higher than the target figure within Policy H6, the acceptability of this is dependent on the character of the area and of the site.

- 6.5 Policy H8 of the District Plan expects new development to incorporate a range of dwelling types and sizes, where appropriate. The policy goes on to add that the Council will expect a mix of dwelling types to reflect the shortfall of flats, bedsits and one and two bedroom properties within the District. The development proposes the construction of 24 two bedroom units, and whilst the proposed development does reflect the shortfall of two bedroom properties the development does not provide any mix of dwelling types and sizes. Due to the characteristics of the site and the development which is proposed it is considered possible that a mix in the type and size of units could be provided within the development.
- 6.6 The development proposes flats, which has raised concern from residents within the surrounding area. However, the site as adjacent to the flatted development of Woodside House and with other developments of flats within the area, such as Guessens Road and Guessens Court, the principle of flats within this area, subject to meeting the necessary design, amenity, highway and parking considerations, is not considered to be inappropriate. Whilst the development will not match the bungalow and two storey properties located to the west along Bridge Road, it is not considered that in principle the development of the site for flats would be out of character with the surrounding area.
- 6.7 **Design of proposal and character and appearance of the area** - As indicated previously, whilst it is acknowledged that the advice contained in PPG3 promotes the better use of previously developed land, this also requires that new housing development should be well designed. In addition PPG15 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. PPG15 emphasises that proposals for replacement developments should provide the opportunity for imaginative and high quality design, which will enhance the area.
- 6.8 Policy R22 supports the advice within PPG15. In addition the design policies within the plan and the Supplementary Design Guidance provides further advice on the character of settlements and the design principles for new development. The Guidance states that the principle characteristics of the Garden City are the formality of its layout and architecture and the complete integration of its landscape with the built form. Careful and varied use of spaces, groupings of buildings, buildings lines and architectural details, such as windows, porches and materials have given the town a unique balance of formality and variety.
- 6.9 The proposed development is considered to be of a height, scale, form and mass which does not reflect and relate to the character of the area and which will not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. The development is three storeys in height with the front buildings having a ridge height of approximately 11.8 metres. Whilst the development has used Woodside House in terms of guiding the height of development the overall height of the proposal is higher than the closest block of Woodside House and its location adjoining the bungalow of 'Weavers Cottage' and 2 storey dwellings of considerably lower scale and height results in a development that will dominate the dwellings to the west of the site and will appear over bearing. In addition the development at Woodside House is well screened from the road by significant landscaping and the buildings are laid out such that the spacious and open character and appearance of the area is maintained. However, this is not the case within the development proposed within this application.

- 6.10 Whilst the development has been set in from the western boundary to accommodate the existing Oak Tree and set in from eastern boundary to facilitate the creation of the access, the buildings form an almost continuous frontage of development on Bridge Road. Due to the height of the development and form and massing of development across the front of the site the development results in the loss of open space around and between buildings, which forms part of the character of this part of the conservation area, and results in a number of trees to the rear of the site being masked from the streetscene and wider area, which provide significant amenity to this area. The resulting loss of space and amenity provided by the trees would have a significant detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area. Whilst a break has been provided between the two blocks at the front of the site this is minimal, being only approximately 2 metres in width, and is not considered to greatly assist the scheme. Instead this break simply enforces a vertical emphasis at this point. Overall the development along the frontage of the site will create a dominant feature within the streetscene and will close down the open space within the site to a significant extent, to the detriment of the appearance of the streetscene and character of the area.
- 6.11 The use of gables and hips on the proposed buildings is also considered to adversely affect the design of the development. The gable end proposed to the eastern end of the most westerly building results in an awkward feature and results in the appearance of the building as cut in two. Combined with the hip proposed to the western end of this building, this unbalances the appearance of the building and does not reflect the design of buildings within the area. Whilst the Conservation Area contains a variety of designs a distinguishing feature is the attention to symmetry. The development as proposed however, even within the design of individual blocks, fails to take on board the concept of symmetry within the design. As such the design of the building is not considered to be of a high standard as required by Policy D1 and the development is not considered to reflect and relate to the character and context of the area and preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area as required by Policies D2 and R22.
- 6.12 The proposed access way and parking, as designed and proposed to be located, is also considered to have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the site and area. The view provided into this part of the development will be suburban in appearance and out of character with the Garden City. This situation is compounded further by the large areas of hardstanding provided in front of the properties and the resulting car parking which is to be provided in this location. In addition, features such as the proposed gated entrance and the bin store to be located in front of the line of the main building in the far south eastern corner, introduce elements which will appear incongruent and out of keeping within the streetscene.
- 6.13 The detailing of the buildings is also considered to be detrimental to the overall design and appearance of the development. Generally balcony features are not a common feature within the Garden City and the windows do not accurately reflect the proportions of either the sash or casement window designs found elsewhere within the Conservation Area. The development as combining a range of features such as neo-Georgian windows, gable ends, hip ends, flat roofed porches and modern balconies does not create a legible design and the 'Landmark corner' feature as designed is not considered to be successfully assimilated into the area. In addition due to the location of the footpaths to the

rear and western side of the site the rear of the site is highly visible from public view, as such the appearance and design of the rear of the development are also important considerations within the application.

- 6.14 The development as proposed is therefore considered to be contrary to the requirements of Policies D1, D2, D6 and R22 of the District Plan and Supplementary Design Guidance.
- 6.15 **Trees** – Whilst the design and layout of the development has attempted to take into account and retain the important trees within the site it is not considered that the development acceptably accounts for the impact that the development will have on the trees.
- 6.16 The development is to be located too close to the mature Oak tree located to the centre of the site and will result in a significant level of building and hardstanding surrounding this tree. As such the development will cause detriment to the health and condition of the tree. In addition to the actual damage caused to the root system of the tree, as detailed in Part 6.10 the amenity value of the tree will also be impaired as the proposal shows 3 storey buildings to the front of it and therefore the amount of the tree that the public will see will be dramatically reduced.
- 6.17 The development is also considered to have a detrimental impact on the health of the Oak tree positioned to the western corner of the site, near to the public footpath which leads into the woods. This is also a mature Oak which provides significant amenity to the area, the loss of which would be unacceptable. As the development is only to be located 6m away from the trunk of the tree, the resulting impact of the development is not considered to be acceptable.
- 6.18 Whilst there are a number of other significant trees within the site they are largely unaffected by the development. Overall it is considered that the development will have a detrimental impact on the health and condition of two mature Oak trees on the site. These trees provide significant amenity within the area and the loss of these trees would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. As such the development is considered to be contrary to Policy R17 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.
- 6.19 **Highway and Parking Issues** – The development proposes to create a single vehicular access into the site from Bridge Road. The proposed access would be located approximately 6 metres from the Handside Lane/ Bridge Road junction. 25 car parking spaces are to be located of this access. Hertfordshire Highways consider that the access as proposed to be located would seriously jeopardise the safety and operation of the adjoining highways. The proposed new access is spaced considerably less than required from the Handside Lane junction, which would lead to conflict and interference with the passage of through vehicles associated with Bridge Road to the detriment of highway safety. The slowing and turning of vehicles associated with the use of the proposed access and that associated with the existing junction, would be detrimental and as such the access as located is not acceptable.
- 6.20 In addition Hertfordshire Highways have commented that the access road proposed is not sufficient. The proposed access has been designed as a Shared Surface Road which is suitable to serve no more than 20 dwellings as arranged as a cul-de-sac. Therefore the access should be designed to meet the standards of a Minor Access Road.

- 6.21 Hertfordshire Highways therefore recommend the application be refused as the development will be detrimental to the safety and operation of the highway. Policy H2 of the District Plan requires all applications for windfall residential development to be assessed for potential and suitability including the capacity of existing and potential infrastructure to absorb further development. The proposed access is not acceptable as located and therefore the development is not considered to meet this requirement.
- 6.22 In relation to parking provision the site allocates 25 spaces for car parking. 24 of these are for residents and are to be located behind a gated entrance. A single further space is provided towards the front of the site for visitor parking/ disabled parking. The site falls within Zone 2 within the Parking Standards which requires the allocation of between 25% to 50% of the maximum standard to be provided. The development therefore meets the required standards set out, although concern is raised due to the provision of only 1 visitor space to the front of the site as the other 24 spaces are only accessible through a gated entrance.
- 6.23 **Impact on the amenities of neighbouring residential dwellings** – The proposed development is not considered to have a significant detrimental impact by means of overlooking and loss of privacy, or loss of light, to the nearby dwellings. Whilst the closest block of Woodside House is positioned parallel to the return element of the proposed development and the development is proposed to be three storeys in height, due to the location of the access road between the blocks, a separation distance of at least 25 metres is retained between Woodside House and the closest element of the new development. As such that the new development is not considered to result in an unacceptable level of overlooking or loss of light.
- 6.24 In relation to the properties located on the southern side of Bridge Road, due to the set back of the building a separation distance of approximately 30 metres is provided between the frontages of the buildings. Due to this separation and the position and orientation of the buildings it is not considered that the proposed development would have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of properties on the south side of Bridge Road.
- 6.25 Whilst the development proposes to locate three windows within the western flank of the western most building on the site, as these windows are proposed to serve en-suite bathrooms they could be obscure glazed to ensure there is no loss of privacy to the adjoining bungalow property. In addition the large Oak Tree and other existing landscaping to the western boundary of the site will provide a significant screen to the proposed development from the property adjacent to the west of the site.
- 6.26 **Conservation Area Consent** – Considerable objection has been raised in relation to the demolition of the existing buildings. As detailed in the Site Description above, whilst the buildings are of local interest and pre-date the Garden City they have not been accepted onto the statutory list. PPG15 is in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Policy R23 relates to the demolition of buildings within conservation areas. It states that conservation area consent will not be granted for the demolition of any buildings or structures in the designated Conservation Areas, unless the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is thereby preserved or enhanced. The Council will therefore resist proposals for demolition within Conservation Areas, unless a very special case

has been made and acceptable detailed plans for the site redevelopment have been put forward. As the proposed plans for the redevelopment of the site are not considered to be acceptable and do not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area, it is considered that the proposal conflicts with the criteria of Policy R23.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposed residential development of this site for flats is not considered to be unacceptable. The proposed development however is not considered to provide a suitable in the type and size of units which could be possible within this site and development.
- 7.2 The design of the development is not considered to be of a high standard and will have a detrimental impact within the streetscene and from the public footpaths bordering the site. In addition the development will appear over bearing in relation to the properties to the west of the site. The detailing of the buildings is also considered to be detrimental to the overall design and appearance of the development and the development is not considered to preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area.
- 7.3 Whilst the parking provision proposed to be accommodated within the site meets the relevant standards for the development, the development is considered to have a detrimental impact on the safety and operation of the highway due to the close proximity of the proposed access to the junction of Handside Lane. This will introduce a further point of traffic conflict and therefore the proposed access is not acceptable on highway grounds.
- 7.4 The proposed development will have a harmful impact on two mature Oak Trees within the site due to the proximity and layout of the development. These trees provide significant amenity within the area and their loss would be unacceptable.
- 7.5 In relation to amenity issues, due to the separation distances between the proposed development and the neighbouring residential properties the development is not considered to have a significant detrimental impact in relation to loss of privacy, overlooking or loss of sunlight/daylight.
- 7.6 As the proposed plans for the redevelopment of the site are not considered to be acceptable and do not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area, it is considered that the proposal conflicts with the criteria of Policy R23 and the demolition of the existing buildings on the site is therefore not acceptable.

8 Recommendation

- 8.1 Recommend that the application for **FULL PLANNING PERMISSION N6/2005/1407/FP** be refused for the following reasons:
1. The proposed development by virtue of its size, scale, height, form, massing, design and detailing is considered to have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. The development will result in a visually cramped form of development to the front of the site and will appear overbearing in relation to neighbouring properties to the west of the site, will be out of keeping within the street scene and will adversely affect the open,

spacious and tree'd character of the area. As such the design of the development is not considered to be of a high quality and the development will not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies D1, D2, D6 and R22 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and Supplementary Design Guidance.

2. The proposed development due to the location and design of the proposed vehicular access would lead to conflict and interference with the passage of through vehicles to the detriment of the principle function and safety of the highway. The development is therefore contrary to Policy H2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.
3. The proposed development due to the location and layout of the buildings in close proximity to two mature Oak Trees will have an unacceptable impact on the health and condition of these trees. These trees provide significant amenity within the area and their loss would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. As such the development is contrary to Policy R17 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

8.2 Recommend that the application for **CONSERVATION AREA CONSENT N6/2005/1408/CA** be REFUSED for the following reason:

1. The proposed demolition of the existing buildings within the site is not considered to be acceptable as the proposed plans for the redevelopment of the site are not acceptable and do not preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy R23 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

Chris Conway, Chief Planning and Environmental Health Officer
Date: *(insert)*

