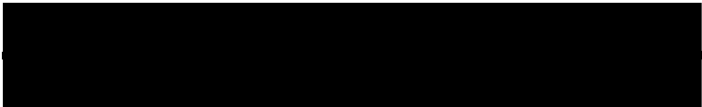


RA

SD



Sent: 07 October 2013 18:05
To: Planning
Subject: Welwyn Hatfield Council Online Planning - Comment

Application Number: N6/2013/1938/MA
Name: Peter Adderley
Address: 30 Templewood
Welwyn Garden City
AL8 7HX
Comment Type: Object
Comment: ARCHITECTURE

1. The proposed architectural treatment is quite unacceptable - brutal and out of keeping with the existing buildings.
2. There is no objection to a glazed wall in itself; the device is often used as a non-obtrusive link between new and old buildings (including the Campus elevations of the old and new council office buildings on this very site). Instead of RPS's over-large glass block, I can envisage a full-width two-storey screen linking the two wings with a third storey set back beyond. But it would have to be very sensitively designed, not crudely like this.
3. The other approach would be a brick building complementing the two existing wings, though not slavishly copying them. The design of such a brick building is likely to be controversial. I happen to think that the design of the new offices, respecting the size and proportions of the windows in the old offices but without the small-pane Georgian glazing, was an excellent way of adding new to old. We need similarly careful design.
4. The report claims that matching bricks are unobtainable. This may be true, but there is a very wide range of bricks available, and something suitable - blending or contrasting - could surely be found.

INTERIOR PLANNING

5. The proposed office space is cramped and poorly laid out, and does not even succeed in providing the required accommodation.
6. One way to improve on this would perhaps be to project the new block beyond the building line of the existing wings. There is plenty of room for this, and it could make for an interesting arrangement of blocks. It could also allow more space for the light well behind.

ARCHITECT APPOINTMENT

7. The "commercial-looking" design is very disappointing, and one questions whether a large international commercial company was an appropriate appointment for this relatively small but sensitive site, where an understanding of the local historical and architectural heritage is so important. There are many architects capable of coming up with imaginative solutions as well as sensitive design - the RIBA could provide names. A complete rethink is necessary.