

SD RA

17 The Valley Green,  
Welwyn Garden City,  
Herts, AL8 7DQ  
8 October 2013

PLANNING  
DEPARTMENT

10 OCT 2013

RECEIVED

Dear Sirs,

Re: Proposed Council Office Extension,  
Application ref. N6/2013/1938/MA.

Our attention has been drawn recently to the above Planning Application made by the local Borough Council for an extension to the Council Office/Town Hall on the Campus, Welwyn Garden City. We are writing herewith to notify you formally of our objection to the proposed external appearance of this extension and to the apparently unorthodox way that the Borough Council has chosen to progress its application through the Planning Approval process.

As local community-tax payers of some 35 years residence in WGC we feel strongly that a multimillion pound project to significantly extend a prominent and award-winning public building in the City Centre should receive a more open and transparent process, especially as the proposal is within a major Conservation Area of WGC.

The exterior design (monumental box-like) and materials (mainly glass) of the proposed extension show absolutely no respect of

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2/ compatibility with the existing building, which interestingly has previously been the subject of a wholly sympathetic extension! Also, the proposed exterior of the new extension is not subservient to the existing building — a key factor that the Council has always applied to applications for extensions to existing buildings in its Conservation Areas!

To paraphrase another well-known critic of such "modern-style" extensions to more classic or traditional design buildings, what is being proposed for the Council Office/Town Hall in WGC is "a glass-fronted carbuncle on the backside of an otherwise elegant brick-faced building."

We cannot comment on the suitability of the proposed interior changes as there appears to be no information on the Design Brief guiding such changes in the public domain.

It would appear that the whole project is deserving of a thorough review and appropriate public consultation. We think other local taxpayers agree.

Meanwhile, we remain,  
yours faithfully,

Dr & Mrs Carey E. Smitthen