

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PLANNING, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND GOVERNANCE**

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2017/2019/FULL
Location: Fountain House 1-7 Howardsgate Welwyn Garden City
Proposal: Replacement of existing steel windows on first and second floor with new aluminium windows. Replacement of existing ground floor entrance door on Parkway elevation.
Officer: Ms Lucy Hale

Recommendation: Granted

6/2017/2019/FULL

Context	
Site and Application description	<p>The site is situated on the corner of Parkway and Howardsgate, an important entrance point to Welwyn Garden City town centre. The building is not of particular architectural merit, unreflective of its surroundings. The building is three storeys high, with a mix of retail, restaurant and pub/club use at ground floor level, a mix of office and club/pub use at first floor, and exclusively office use at second floor level.</p> <p>This building is in office use currently and the proposed alterations are to the office building.</p> <p>The application seeks planning permission for the replacement of the existing steel windows on the first and second floor. The existing windows are steel painted white with clear glazing. The proposed replacement windows are aluminium powder coated white with clear glazing and aluminium spandrel panels power coated white.</p> <p>The first floor and second floor windows above the parkway bar on the south elevation would be retained. Two French windows are proposed on the west elevation which would be aluminium with glass balustrade. The existing ground floor entrance door on the south elevation would be replaced with a similar glazed door with an entry system and dry riser inlet.</p>
Constraints (as defined within WHDP 2005)	<p>CA - Conservation Area: WGC1; PRC - Primary Retail Core (Primary Retail Core) Town - Welwyn Garden City Town Centre UOL - Urban Open Land (Inset maps 2) Wards - Handside CP - Cycle Path (Cycle Facility / Route) FM00 - Flood Zone Surface Water 1000mm (74434) MIX - Mixed Use Frontages</p>
Relevant planning history	<p>Application Number: N6/1994/0850/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 06 February 1995</p>

	<p>Proposal: Second floor link between Charter House and Fountain House</p> <p>Application Number: N6/2000/1139/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 16 October 2000 Proposal: Installation of air conditioning units</p> <p>Application Number: N6/2004/0531/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 08 June 2004 Proposal: Retention of two air conditioning units on external wall at first floor level at rear of building</p> <p>Application Number: N6/2004/1131/CA Decision: Granted Decision Date: 21 October 2004 Proposal: New roof formation to accommodate additional storey at third floor level to provide six self contained flats (1-2 bed) and change of use from class b1 (office accommodation) of first and second floors to provide sixteen self contained flats (1-2 bed), including new replacement windows, rear lift tower and ground floor entrance lobby</p> <p>Application Number: N6/2004/1136/FP Decision: Granted Decision Date: 21 October 2004 Proposal: New roof formation to accommodate additional storey at third floor level to provide six self contained flats (1-2 bed) and change of use from class b1 (office accommodation) of first and second floors to provide sixteen self contained flats (1-2 bed), including new replacement windows, rear lift tower and ground floor entrance lobby</p> <p>Application Number: N6/2006/1023/FP Decision: Refused Decision Date: 14 September 2006 Proposal: Variation of condition 1 (time limit) of previous planning permission N6/2004/1131/CA</p> <p>Application Number: N6/2006/1025/FP Decision: Refused Decision Date: 14 September 2006 Proposal: Variation of condition 1 (time limit) of previous planning permission N6/2004/1136/FP</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2016/2174/COND Decision: Refused Decision Date: 08 December 2016 Proposal: Approval of details reserved by condition 2 (Materials) on planning permission N6/2004/1136/FP</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2016/2175/COND Decision: Refused Decision Date: 08 December 2016 Proposal: Approval of details reserved by condition 4 (Construction and section details of roof) on planning permission N6/2004/1136/FP</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2016/2176/COND Decision: Refused Decision Date: 08 December 2016 Proposal: Approval of details reserved by condition 5 (Section details for terrace) on planning permission N6/2004/1136/FP</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2017/0101/PN11 Decision: Withdrawn Decision Date: 28 March 2017 Proposal: Prior approval for a proposed change of use from office (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) to include the creation of 15 units</p>
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	<p>Application Number: 6/2017/0101/PN11 Decision: Granted Decision Date: 25 September 2017 Proposal: Prior approval for a proposed change of use from office (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) to include the creation of 14 residential units. Not implemented.</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2017/0400/FULL Decision: Granted Decision Date: 13 November 2017 Proposal: Formation of new roof to accommodate additional storey at third floor level to provide 8 self-contained flats (7 x 1 bedroom flats and 1 x 2 bedroom flat.), rear lift tower and ground floor entrance lobby.</p>		
Consultations			
Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 1
Publicity	<p>Site Notice Display Date: 26 September 2017 Site Notice Expiry Date: 17 October 2017 Press Advert Display Date: 20 September 2017 Press Advert Expiry Date: 4 October 2017</p>		
Summary of neighbour responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Ellis Church House Comment: The plan of the south elevation indicates that the 2nd floor windows are part of The Parkway Bar. However in the application 6/2017/1686/PN11 for the conversion of Fountain House to residential this area above the Parkway Bar is shown to be part of the conversion albeit that the space behind the windows will be non residential For conformity purposes it makes sense surely for all windows to be the same on all elevations. 		
Consultees and responses	<p>1. WHBC - Public Health and Protection The replacement windows must be of suitable standard to deal with noise. As a result the applicant submitted an acoustic report under the above planning references. Condition requested.</p> <p>2. Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council - Councillor Helen Bromley Can we insure that the windows have the right number of panes etc? There are a lot of windows being replaced in the town centre and we need to maintain the original look.</p>		
Relevant Policies			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NPPF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D2 <input type="checkbox"/> GBSP1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GBSP2 <input type="checkbox"/> M14 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supplementary Design Guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Supplementary Parking Guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Interim Policy for car parking and garage sizes Others R19, OS1 and R28			
Main Issues			
Is the development within a conservation area?			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Would the significance of the designated heritage asset be conserved or enhanced?			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Comment (if applicable): Due to the nature of the proposal, it is not considered that it would impact on Parkway, which is an unregistered Historic Park and Gardens, or indeed its character as an area of Urban Open Land.			

Would the development reflect the character of the area?

Yes No

Comment (if applicable):

The existing building is not of high quality design and is argued within the planning statement submitted with this application to have a very limited contribution to the significance of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area in spite of its location and siting on the corner of Parkway and Howardsgate. Many of the windows along Howardsgate and Parkway feature Georgian style glazing windows which form part of the character of the Garden City and surrounding Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area. Fountain House is an exemption to this style of design and architectural and features 1960's style of architectural detailing. The existing single glazed steel windows have degraded over time and appear visually worn.

The replacement windows are proposed on all elevations. The south and west elevations face Parkway and Howardsgate and would be highly visible from the streetscene. The proposed replacement windows are aluminium powder coated white with clear glazing and aluminium spandrel panels powder coated white. The design of the windows would be altered, although minimal. The three vertical panels would be retained with two smaller panels and one larger panel in the centre. The vertical panels are broken up with an additional panel running horizontal off centre. The proposed windows would alter the position of this panel to create a suitable opening. Whilst it is noted that the original design is more simplistic, it is felt that the alterations respect and relate to the original architecture of the building.

The lower section of each window is proposed to be formed with spandrel panels that will accommodate ventilation extract grilles and passive ventilators both of which would be white to match.

A comment has been received with regard to the retention of the first floor and second floor windows above the Parkway Bar. Whilst these original windows would be retained and the proposed replacement windows would alter in terms of detailing, it is noted that the appearance of the windows would be marginally different along this façade. The façade along this elevation is broken up by two protruding elements, one of which forms the frontage of the Parkway Bar in which has been painted green and ground and first floor. It is felt that this part of the building appears separate and therefore it is not considered that the difference in window design would appear at odds or result in harm to the Conservation Area.

Two windows on the north elevation first and second floor close to the Two Willows are proposed to be replaced with French windows aluminium with glass balustrade. These would replace two windows of different size, not in keeping with the existing design of window. It is considered that the siting, scale and design would relate to the proposed windows along this elevation.

On the north and east elevations facing the service yard, the windows on the first and second floor are also to be replaced altering the design in line with the front elevations of the building. These windows would also feature aluminium coated white and the design is also considered in keeping with the character and appearance of the building.

The existing ground floor entrance door on the south elevation would be replaced with a similar glazed door with an entry system and dry riser inlet.

In addition, grilles for ventilation are located on the brick wall of notably the north elevation and south elevation and will be coloured red to match the brickwork.

This application follows an application for a new mansard roof with dormer windows to create an additional storey under reference (6/2017/0400/FULL). The proposed replacement windows have been considered in relation to the dormer windows on that previous application, and it is considered that these would complement each other in other in terms of design and appearance.

It is considered that proposal would relate and respect the character and appearance of the building and would improve the contribution of the building to the Conservation Area.

Would the development reflect the character of the dwelling?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comment (if applicable): see above.	
Would the development maintain the amenity of adjoining occupiers? (e.g. privacy, outlook, light etc.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comment (if applicable): Due to the nature of the proposal, it is not considered that there would be a detrimental impact on the amenity of the adjoining occupiers to warrant refusal of permission.	
Would the development provide / retain sufficient parking?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A Comment (if applicable):	
Any other issues	<p>The replacement windows have been submitted under an application for the existing office use. The comments received from the Public Health and Protection department relate to the previous application for prior approval from office to residential and for additional residential accommodation. They have requested a condition for a certification to be issued prior to the residential occupation of the units in relation to the submitted acoustic report in line with the previous applications. However, it would be unreasonable to impose this condition when this application refers to replacement windows within an existing office use. Nevertheless, officers consider that the likelihood that this building will in accommodate residential purposes following the recent applications to residential. Accordingly, it is considered that an informative to the applicant outlining that in the event that the building changes to residential that windows are in line with condition 1 of that application to provide acceptable noise and vibration mitigation.</p> <p>Accordingly, it is considered that there would be no objection to policies D1 and R19 of the District Plan which aim to ensure a good standard of design and that development is acceptable with regard to noise and disturbance for future occupants.</p>
Conclusion	
The proposal would respect and relate the character and appearance of the building and surrounding Conservation Area. In addition the proposal is not considered to result in a detrimental impact on the amenity of the occupiers of adjoining premises. Accordingly, the proposal complies with policies D1, D2, GBSP2, R19, OS1 and R28 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, the Supplementary Design Guidance Statement of Council Policy 2005 as well as relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.	

Conditions:

1. The window frames, spandrel panels, doors and render hereby permitted shall not be any colour other than white.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DRAWING NUMBERS

2. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
A910	P4	Existing South And West Elevations	11 September 2017
A911	P4	Existing North And East Elevations	11 September 2017
A260	P3	Proposed Elevations South and West	30 November 2017
A261	P3	Proposed Elevations North and East	30 November 2017
A410	P1	Typical Window Details To South And West Elevations	11 September 2017
A411	P1	Typical Window Details To North Elevation	11 September 2017
A921	P1	Location Plan	11 September 2017
A920	P2	Site Plan	11 September 2017

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

1. POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be viewed on the Council's website or inspected at these offices).

Informatives:

1. The applicant is advised that should the premises change to residential use in line with the Prior Approval application (reference 6/2017/1686/PN11), to refer to Condition 1 of that consent which requires works to be carried out in line with the submitted acoustic reports with that application to ensure the impacts of externally generated noise on living conditions of occupiers is minimised.

Determined By:

Mrs Sarah Smith
1 December 2017