

HERTFORDSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

Researching and preserving historic gardens. Working with schools to improve and sustain their environment.



Conservation & Planning, c/o Gardens, Ashridge, Berkhamsted, HP4 1NS

Planning
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
AL8 6AE

19 August 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

Application: 6/2020/1837/FULL. Erection of 1 x dwellinghouse following demolition of existing house at 54 Bridge road, AL8 6UR

Thank you for consulting The Gardens Trust, of which HGT is a member.

54 Bridge Road is one of a pair of semi-detached cottages erected for Cowper estate workers in 1876 on the southern edge of the historic Sherrardspark Wood. It is one of the few remaining pre-Garden City buildings in the town and a good indication of the older history and heritage.

The Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area Appraisal lists this pair of cottages as one of the 2 key buildings on Bridge Road (West) on account of their historic interest. It states that the earliest buildings in WGC should merit greater attention towards preservation.

52/54 and the adjoining cottages to the east, 48/50 are recommended *as key buildings and illustrated on the map in Appendix 1 of the Appraisal. These should be considered for inclusion on a local list. The importance of a local list is twofold: to acknowledge and raise awareness of buildings of higher than average importance and to establish potential candidates for statutory listing, particularly where their significance may be diminished or through alteration or lost entirely through demolition.* We consider that 56 Bridge Road, designed by the Lutyens-trained CH James for Mary Kemp, the weaver, in 1922 is another distinctive heritage asset. These houses form a group of great heritage interest and flank a historic entrance to the Wood (as shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1878). They are a key part of the heritage of the whole of WGC and should be preserved. This is in line with NPPF and with WHBC Policy SADM15, which states that *Proposals that result in harm to the significance of other (undesigned) heritage assets will be resisted.*

The significance of heritage assets rests partly on their setting and in this case, the woods which surround the property. We consider that the erection of the new house and the proposed driveway and parking would cause serious harm to the significance of the group of houses from 48 to 56 Bridge Road contrary to NPPF, WHBC policy and the provisions of the Conservation Area Appraisal.

We therefore object to the proposals in this application.

Kate Harwood
Planning & Conservation Officer

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