

Estate Management Appeals Panel  
27 January 2021

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the ESTATE MANAGEMENT APPEALS PANEL held on Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 7.30 pm virtually via Zoom.

PRESENT: Councillors H.Bower (Chairman)

A.Chesterman, M.Cowan, B.Fitzsimon, F.Marsh,  
L.Musk and F.Thomson

OFFICIALS J.Homer, Estate Management Scheme Manager

PRESENT: S.Keenlyside, Governance Services Officer

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45. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2020 were approved as a correct record and noted by the Chairman.

The hard copy of the minutes would be signed by the Chairman as soon as it was reasonably practicable or alternatively, electronic signatures would be arranged after the meeting.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

Councillor Cowan declared an interest in Item 10 by virtue of having notified the Council of one of the enforcement cases.

47. 8 HANDSIDE GREEN, WELWYN GARDEN CITY, AL8 6SQ - 6/2020/1479/EM - ERECTION OF A FRONT PORCH

The report of the Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance), which set out an appeal against the refusal of Estate Management (EM) Consent for the erection of a front porch.

The application was refused on the 13 August 2020 for the following reason:

*“Although relatively small, the proposed porch would be an incongruous addition to the home and would detract from the architectural value of the original home. The proposed porch would alter the relationship within the group of houses within Handside Green and would have a detrimental impact upon the values and amenities of the property and street scene. As a result, the application fails to comply with Policy EM1 of the Estate Management Scheme.”*

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The application sought Estate Management Scheme consent to erect an open porch on the front elevation.

The key issue in the determination of this appeal was the impact the proposed porch would have on the character and appearance of the appeal site and the surrounding area.

The appellant had submitted a video that was played to the Panel. The appellant stated that the porch was designed in sympathy with the existing frontage of the house. The porch was small, only 1.8m wide with the pillars following the outline of existing bricks around the door. These were in harmony with the street scene. Care had been taken to match Welwyn Garden City houses with matching bricks, roof overhang and typical relief lines around the perimeter of the roof which echoed the lines of the balustrade. It was not incongruous and would not have a detrimental impact on the value or amenities of the street. The design tied in with the porch at 2 Handside Green which pre-dated the Estate Management Scheme. The existence of that porch had never affected the saleability of houses in Handside Green.

Whilst Members were sensitive to the appellant's wishes and appreciated the design of the porch and that it was using materials sensitive to the area, the Estate Management Scheme had to be considered when proposing additions to homes covered by the scheme and the application of the rules and regulations of the scheme needed to be consistent.

Members felt that the close was very small and any additional porches would be very prominent in the street scene.

RESOLVED:  
(Unanimous)

That Members uphold the delegated decision and dismiss the appeal.

48. 9 HANDSIDE GREEN, WELWYN GARDEN CITY, AL8 6SQ - 6/2020/1480/EM - ERECTION OF A FRONT PORCH

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The application was refused on the 13 August 2020 for the following reason:

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The application sought Estate Management Scheme consent to erect an open porch on the front elevation.

The key issue in the determination of this appeal is the impact the proposed porch would have on the character and appearance of the appeal site and the surrounding area.

The appellant had submitted a statement to be read out to the Panel. The appellant felt that the addition of a small porch to their house would not have a detrimental effect on the property or that of the other houses in the close.

Since lockdown they had enjoyed many walks around Welwyn Garden City and had noticed that a significant number of houses were built with a porch of some description.

Two out of the ten houses in Handside Green were indeed built with porches and one had a porch added at a later date.

The addition of a porch would give protection from the weather for themselves and visitors. It would be environmentally advantageous as it would increase the insulation of the front door.

With their neighbour, they had specifically designed our porches to compliment the houses and appear as if they were part of the original building.

Although sympathetic to the appellant's wishes, Members felt that the rules and regulations of the Estate Management Scheme needed to be upheld for consistency and the protection of the Estate Management area.

RESOLVED:  
(Unanimous)

That Members uphold the delegated decision and dismiss the appeal.

49. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

50. UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ENFORCEMENT CASES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENFORCEMENT ACTION UNDER THE TERMS OF THE SCHEME OF MANAGEMENT FOR WELWYN GARDEN CITY FOR BREACHES OF THAT SCHEME

The report of the Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) updated Panel Members with regard to outstanding arbitration cases that had been put before the Panel as well as additional cases for consideration.

RESOLVED:

That Members note the contents of the report and the new cases.

51. ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF A CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT NATURE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN

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A verbal update was provided to Panel Members with regards to arbitration cases and legal advice sought.

RESOLVED:

That Members note the verbal report.

Meeting ended at 8.30pm  
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