

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

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2019/1919/EM
Location: 12 Thistle Grove Welwyn Garden City AL7 4AN
Proposal: Installation of fence following removal of hedge
Officer: Ms Emily Stainer

Recommendation: Refused

6/2019/1919/EM

Context			
Site and Application description	<p>The site is located on the west side of Thistle Grove and consists of a two storey, semi-detached property. The area is residential in character, featuring properties of similar style and design.</p> <p>Estate Management Consent is sought for the erection of a front/side boundary fence following the removal of the existing hedge.</p>		
Constraints	Estate Management Scheme, as defined within the Leasehold Reform Act 1967		
Relevant history	<p>Application Number: W6/2001/0484/EM Decision: Granted Decision Date: 08 May 2001 Proposal: Relocate front door to front of canopy to form porch</p>		
Notifications			
Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 0
Summary of neighbour responses	None		
Consultee responses	None		
Relevant Policies			
<input type="checkbox"/> EM1 <input type="checkbox"/> EM2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EM3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EM4 Others			
Considerations			
Design (form, size, scale, siting) and Character (impact upon amenities and values of Garden City)	<p>Policy EM4 seeks to retain the appearance and ethos of the Garden City while accommodating the increased pressure for vehicle hard standings which has resulted from a rise in car ownership. Policy EM4 also suggests that proposals should retain as much soft "green" landscaping as possible, and not result in a detrimental loss of hedgerows which can be used to reduce the visual prominence of parked vehicles.</p> <p>Additionally, Policy EM3 states that works to hedgerows will only be allowed where the works would not result in a loss of landscaping which would harm</p>		

	<p>the character and amenities of the area. Guidance says that the council will aim to ensure that a significant proportion of around 50 per cent of the frontage is retained as landscaped 'greenery' to retain the appearance and ethos of the Garden City, unless individual circumstances indicate that this would not be appropriate.</p> <p>The site frontage currently consists of an area of hardstanding with sections of lawn around the edge and a boundary hedge. Scaled plans have not been submitted to allow the case officer to draw a quantitative comparison between soft and hard landscaping on the frontage, however a qualitative assessment has been undertaken following a site visit. On site, it was noted that the area of hardstanding appeared already to be in excess of the 50% guidance outlined above. The existing situation therefore results in an unbalanced proportion of soft and hard landscaping.</p> <p>The proposal would involve removing the existing boundary hedge (measuring 1200mm in height) and replacing it with a wooden boundary fence of a similar scale. As such, the proposed development would have considerably less soft landscaping and would cause detrimental harm to the appearance of the house frontage, the wider street and ethos of the garden city contrary to policy EM4 of the Welwyn Garden City Estate Management Scheme (EMS).</p>
Impact on neighbours	None
<p>Other considerations:</p> <p>Cadent Gas Limited have identified operational gas apparatus within the application site boundary. On this occasion, Cadent Gas have commented stating that if the application is refused for any other reason than the presence of apparatus, they will not take any further action.</p>	
<p>Conclusion</p>	
<p>It is considered that the development would result in an unacceptable amount of hard landscaping, contrary to policy EM4 which in turn would have an unacceptable impact on the appearance and ethos of the Garden City. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.</p>	

Reasons for Refusal:

1. The loss of the hedge to the front of the dwelling would result in an unbalanced frontage with excessive hard landscaping which would erode the immediate character of Thistle Grove and the surrounding Garden City. Accordingly, the proposal would be detrimental to the values and amenities of this part of the Garden City contrary to Policies EM3 and EM4 of the Estate Management Scheme.

REFUSED DRAWING NUMBERS

2.

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
Plan 1		Site Location Plan	7 August 2019
Plan 2		Existing and Proposed Plans	29 July 2019

Plan 4

Proposed Fence plans

7 August 2019

Plan 3

Existing and Proposed
Layout

7 August 2019

Determined By:

Mr Michael Robinson
10 September 2019