

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 14 SEPTEMBER 2017
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (PUBLIC PROTECTION,
PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE)

6/2017/1064/FULL

KNEBWORTH CARE HOME, 59 LONDON ROAD, WOOLMER GREEN, SG3
6JE

INSTALLATION OF 4 X DORMER WINDOWS AND ALTERATIONS TO THE
INTERNAL LAYOUT TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL BEDROOMS

APPLICANT: Ms P Bullock

AGENT: Miss N Davies, Pegasus Group

(Welwyn East)

1 Site Description

- 1.1 The application site is located on the eastern side of London Road in the designated settlement of Woolmer Green. The site measures approximately 50 metres deep and 72 metres wide. The site comprises a 65 bed care home with parking and landscaping.
- 1.2 The site is characterised by a mix of uses in the immediate vicinity to the care home, including commercial premises and residential units.

2 The Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal seeks the installation of four dormer windows within the front elevation of the building and alterations to the internal layout to provide additional bedrooms. As a result of the internal alterations the resultant number of bedrooms would be 69, an increase of 4 bedrooms.

3 Reason for Committee Consideration

- 3.1 This application is presented to the Development Management Committee as Woolmer Green Parish Council have raised a 'major objection' to the application for the following reasons.
 - 1. Inserting dormer windows in the roof would convert the care home to a three storey building as viewed from the front which would be out of keeping for London Road, Woolmer Green which comprises of low level buildings.

2. The windows would be more appropriate and match the style of the building if they were of a gable design, however introducing dormer windows will make the roof line look cluttered and incongruous.
3. The windows are to enable additional bedrooms to be installed which would look out into the back gardens of Longmead and compromise residents' privacy. There is already an existing central window at third storey but this is a dining room and therefore only used for a short space of time. The new bedrooms could be occupied for long periods.
4. Noise levels emanating from Cawdor Stone would have an impact on bedrooms at the front of the building.
5. There will be extra strain on health services due to the culmination of additional occupants from new elderly accommodation existing and proposed in Knebworth.

4 Relevant Planning History

- 4.1 6/2014/2337/MA – Retention of nursing home with respite care and ancillary services – Granted 19th May 2015
- 4.2 6/2013/1674/LUE - Certificate of lawfulness for use of Nursing Home, including respite care, accommodating 65 bedrooms and ancillary services – Refused 14th October 2013
- 4.3 N6/2009/0950/MA - Erection of nursing home with respite care and ancillary services, following demolition of existing building. Approved 22nd July 2009
- 4.4 N6/2008/0871/MA - Erection of nursing home with respite care and ancillary services, following demolition of existing building – Refused 28th August 2008

Appealed – Appeal Withdrawn

5 Planning Policy

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- 5.2 Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005
- 5.3 Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission
- 5.4 Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005 (SDG)
- 5.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance, Parking Standards, January 2004 (SPG)
- 5.6 Interim Policy for Car Parking Standards and Garage Sizes, August 2014

6 Site Designation

- 6.1 The site is located within the settlement of Woolmer Green as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

7 Representations Received

- 7.1 The application has been advertised by neighbour notification, site notice and press notice. No neighbour representations have been received.

8 Consultations Received

- 8.1 **Hertfordshire County Council Transport Programmes and Strategy (HCCTPS)** – No objections
- 8.2 **WHBC Environmental Health** – No objections subject to conditions
- 8.3 **East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group, Hertfordshire County Council Adult Care Services, Hertfordshire County Council Social Services, Herts Health and Wellbeing Board, National Care Standard Commission Hertfordshire, Health and Safety Executive** - No comments received

9 Analysis

- 9.1 The main planning issues to be considered in the determination of this application are:
1. Principle of Development (GBSP2, CLT17)
 2. Overall design and whether the proposal would sufficiently maintain or enhance the character and appearance of the application site and surrounding area (D1, D2, CLT17, SDG and NPPF)
 3. Impact on living conditions of adjoining/adjacent occupiers (D1, SDG, NPPF)
 4. Highway and Parking Matters (NPPF, M14, Council's Interim Standards)
 5. Other Material Planning Considerations (R19, D1, SDG and NPPF)

1. Principle of development

- 9.2 Policy CLT17 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan states that the Council will support schemes for residential homes where the developments (i) will not be detrimental to the established character of the area nor the amenity of adjoining occupiers; (ii) would provide suitable parking; (iii) is located so that it is accessible to facilities and (iv) would not result in the overloading of local facilities due to a concentration of such facilities.
- 9.3 Parts (i) and (ii) of policy CLT17 will be discussed in more detail below. However with regards to parts (iii) and (iv) of policy CLT17, as the proposed development would be to an existing care facility which received planning consent as stated above within the planning history section of this report the location of the care home has been established and the

proposed development is not considered to result in an overload of local facilities or change the character of the area in which it is located any more significantly than has already occurred.

- 9.4 Therefore it is considered that there is no objection to the principle of further development at this site.

2. Overall design and whether the proposal would sufficiently maintain or enhance the character and appearance of the application site and surrounding area

- 9.5 The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) notes that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments add to the overall quality of the area; respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.
- 9.6 Furthermore, saved District Plan Policy D1 requires the standard of design in all new development to be of a high quality and saved Policy D2 requires all new development to respect and relate to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed. It notes that development proposals should as a minimum maintain, and where possible, should enhance or improve the character of the existing area.
- 9.7 The character and form of built development in this area is mixed, it is noted that housing can be found opposite the application site, whilst this side of London Road consists of residential and commercial premises. The only external changes to the building would be the four front facing flat roofed dormer windows fronting London Road. These dormers would be 1.8m in width and would sit within the existing roof slope of the building. The appearance of the dormer windows would appear subservient in their appearance and are not considered to dominate the main roof of the existing building. As such the proposed alterations are not considered to be objectionable and would respect the appearance of the building and the area and would be in accordance with Policy D1 and D2 of the District Plan, the Supplementary Design Guidance and the NPPF.

3. Impact on the living conditions of adjoining/adjacent occupiers

- 9.8 The impact on the living conditions of existing and future occupiers of Policies D1 and the Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 (SDG) aim to preserve neighbouring amenity. The SDG sets out the Council's guidelines with regard to residential development for the protection of neighbouring residential amenity and living conditions in terms of overbearing impact, day and sun light, privacy/overlooking and noise.
- 9.9 The proposed dormers would be readily visible to properties on the opposite side of the road, however the building is set well back from London Road and as such the building is approximately 34m from the

boundaries with properties opposite fronting London Road. Whilst some views may be possible, due to the overall distance achieved the additional four dormer windows are not considered to result in direct overlooking or significantly alter the relationship already seen at the site. These windows would primarily provide views over the highway and parking area associated with the care home and therefore no objections are raised in this regard.

- 9.10 Overall it is considered that the proposal would have no significant impact on the occupiers of adjoining/adjacent properties and as such it accords with Policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and the Supplementary Design Guidance Statement of Council Policy 2005.

4. Highway and parking matters

- 9.11 The internal alterations would result in 4 additional bedrooms being created. The previous application assessed the parking requirement on 0.25 spaces per resident bed required. As a result of the changes the parking requirement would be based on 69 bedrooms.
- 9.12 In accordance with the Council's maximum car parking standards, the site would require 17.25 spaces. No alterations are proposed to the existing car park to the front of the care home which is accessed via London Road and provides a total of 18 spaces. It is therefore considered that sufficient off-street parking has been provided in accordance with the Council's SPG and Interim Parking Standards.
- 9.13 Hertfordshire County Council Transport, Programmes and Strategy were consulted on the application and have not raised any issues regarding highway safety as the increase in the number of residents is not likely to give rise to an unacceptable impact in terms of trips arising.
- 9.14 It should also be noted that the earlier consent (6/2014/2337/MA) secured a Travel Plan by way of condition. Additional comments received from Hertfordshire County Council Transport Programmes and Strategy has confirmed that a Travel Plan should be submitted and can be dealt with through condition.
- 9.15 It should be noted that the previous application paid a contribution towards the monitoring and support of the Travel Plan by way of Unilateral Undertaking. An extension to the original contribution in respect of promoting and improving the sustainability of the development was secured under earlier consents. Given that the extent of the development is to increase the provision by four bedrooms, it is not considered reasonable/proportionate to seek to secure a contribution for the four additional bedrooms created.

5. Other Material Planning Considerations

- 9.16 The application site is located on London Road which is a relatively busy road and adjacent to commercial premises. The Council's Environmental Health officer has commented on the application and has stated that there

is the potential for noise to impact on the amenity of the future occupants of the development from nearby commercial and industrial premises. Therefore it is required that the internal noise environments meets the criteria within BS 8233:214, which in the event of a permission, can be secured through condition, which is supported by Environmental Health.

- 9.17 Accordingly, this would be in line with Policies R19 and D1 which seek to ensure that the scheme is of a high quality design and the development is not impacted adversely from unacceptable noise and vibration from other land uses.
- 9.18 It is noted that the Parish Council have concerns surrounding the extra strain on health services due to the culmination of the additional occupants from the new accommodation. Whilst it is acknowledged that there would be some additional pressure, the extra 4 bedrooms created is not considered to result in a significant strain on health services to justify a reason for refusal.

10 Conclusion

- 10.1 The impacts of the proposal have been considered on the visual amenity of the site and surrounding area and on the amenity of neighbouring dwellings. It has been concluded that the construction of four dormer windows and the internal alterations resulting in the addition of four bedrooms would sufficiently maintain and relate to the character, appearance of surrounding area and would not have any significantly adverse impacts on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings. No concerns are raised regarding parking and the proposed development is not considered to significantly impact the future occupants of that care home. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policies GBSP2, D1, D2, R19 and CLT17 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance and the NPPF.

11 Recommendation

- 11.1 It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT

1. No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby granted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented using the approved materials and subsequently, the approved materials shall not be changed.

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.

2. Within six months of commencement of the development approved by this planning permission, the applicant shall prepare and submit a Travel Plan with the objective of reducing staff and visitors travelling to the site by private car for approval by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall accord with Hertfordshire County Council document 'Hertfordshire Green Travel Plan Guidance'. The approved Travel Plan shall then be implemented in accordance with the timetable and targets contained therein.

REASON: To ensure that the development offers a wide range of travel choices to reduce the impact of travel and transport on the environment in accordance with policy M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

3. No development shall commence until the applicant has submitted, for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority, details relating a scheme to protect the proposed development from traffic and commercial/industrial noise which shall be implemented before any part of the accommodation hereby approved is occupied. The scheme shall ensure the indoor ambient noise levels in living rooms and bedrooms meet the standards in BS 8233:2014. Any associated mechanical ventilation will need to meet the ventilation requirements found within The Noise Insulation Regulations 1975. The development shall be implemented in accordance with these agreed details.

REASON: To protect the occupants of the development from noise disturbance in accordance with policy R19 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

DRAWING NUMBERS

4. 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
806-WD-400	C4	Proposed Second Floor Plan - General Arrangement	1 June 2017
806-WD-500	C2	Proposed Roof Plan	5 July 2017
806-WD-600	C1	Proposed Elevations	5 July 2017
417-FPL-100	FPL2	Site Plan as Built & Proposed	16 May 2017
417-TPL-001		Site Location Plan	22 June 2017
806-FPL-100	FPL3	Existing Site Plan	22 June 2017
806-FPL-601	FPL2	Existing Southern Elevation	5 July 2017

806-FPL- FPL2 300	Existing First Floor Plan	5 July 2017
806-FPL- FPL2 601	Existing Front Elevation	5 July 2017
806-FPL- FPL2 200	Existing Ground Floor	5 July 2017
806-FPL- FPL2 400	Existing Second Floor Plan	5 July 2017
806-FPL- FPLP2 602	Existing Northern Elevation	5 July 2017

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

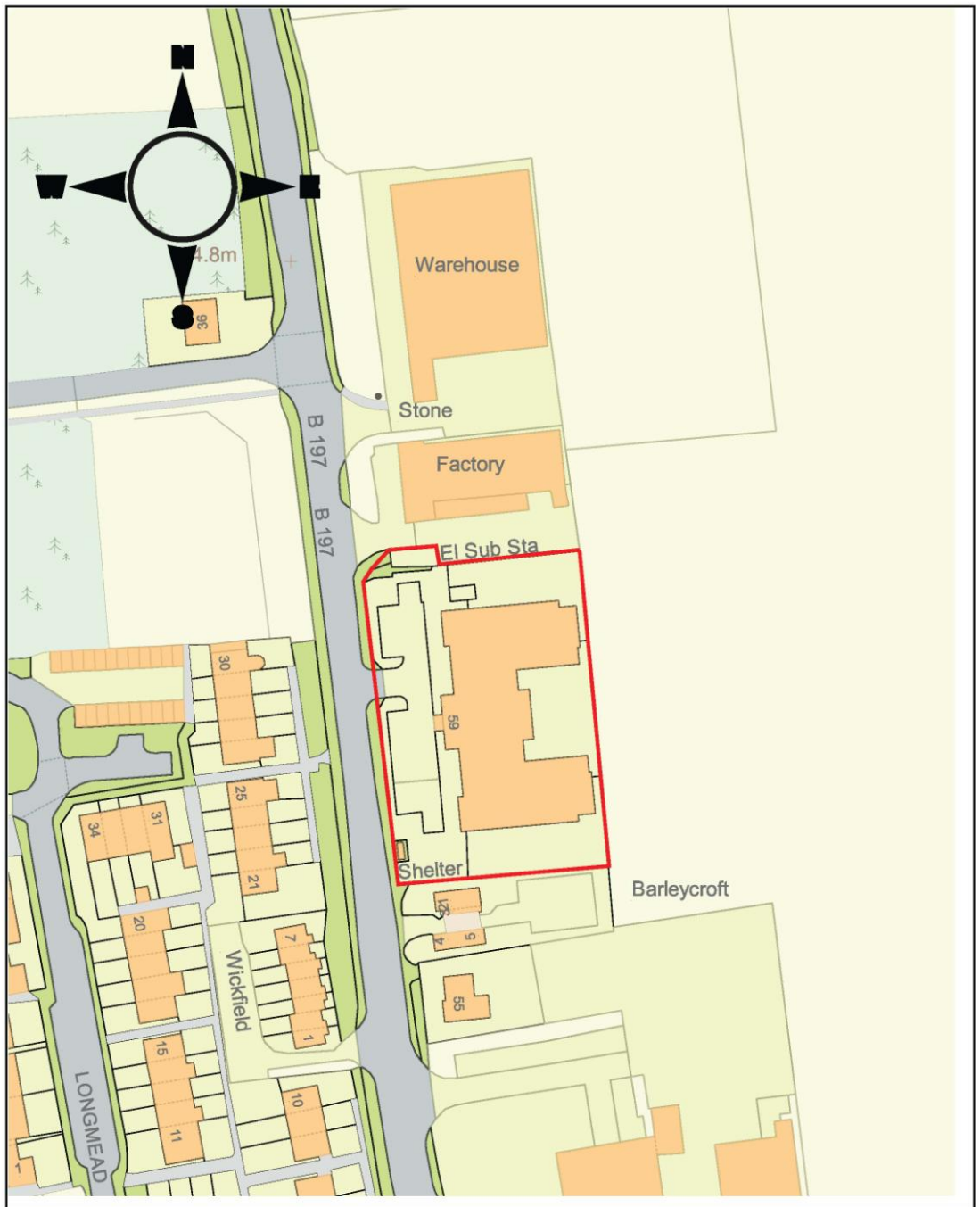
POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT

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. This permission does not convey any consent which may be required under any legislation other than the Town and Country Planning Acts. Any permission required under the Building Regulations or under any other Act, must be obtained from the relevant authority or body e.g. Fire Officer, Health and Safety Executive, Environment Agency (Water interest etc. Neither does this permission negate or override any private covenants which may affect the land.
2. The granting of this permission does not convey or imply any consent to build upon or access from any land not within the ownership of the applicant.
3. The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence.

Rachael Collard (Development Management)
Date: 22/8/17



Council Offices, The Campus
Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE

Title: Knebworth Care Home 59 London Road Woolmer Green

Scale: DNS

Date: 2017

Project: DMC Committee

Drawing Number:
6/2017/1064/FULL

Drawn: Baras Mast-Ingle

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