

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
ESTATE MANAGEMENT APPEALS PANEL – 27 JANUARY 2020
REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR (PUBLIC PROTECTION, PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE)

6/2020/1479/EM

8 HANDSIDE GREEN, WELWYN GARDEN CITY, AL8 6SQ

ERECTION OF A FRONT PORCH

APPLICANT: DELLA PARISH

1 Background

- 1.1 This appeal is against the refusal of Estate Management 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.”.

2 Site Description

- 2.1 No.8 is a two storey semi-detached property located on the northern side of Handside Green. Handside Green is a small cul-de-sac and is characterised by houses of the same design with open frontages.

3 The Proposal

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

4 Relevant Estate Management History

- 4.1 None, although the neighbouring property applied for an identical porch at the same time which has also been refused and appealed.

5 Representations Received

- 5.1 None.

6 Policy

6.1 Estate Management Scheme Policies (October 2008):

- EM1 – Extensions and alterations

7 Discussion

- 7.1 This is an appeal against the refusal of Estate Management Scheme Consent to erect and open porch at the front of the property. The appellant's appeal document is attached at Appendix 1 and the delegated officer's report for application 6/2020/1479/EM is attached at Appendix 2.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 All applications to the Estate Management Scheme are assessed against the current policies relevant to the proposals. In this case, the application was assessed against Policy EM1. Policy EM1 of the Estate Management Scheme states that extensions and alterations to existing properties will only be allowed if they are in keeping with the design, appearance, materials and architectural detailing used in the existing building and do not have a detrimental impact on the amenities and values of the surrounding area or the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers.
- 7.4 The appeal property is a semi-detached property located upon the northern side of Handside Green. Handside Green is a small cul-de-sac and is characterised by houses of the same design with open frontages.
- 7.5 The application sought Estate Management Scheme consent to erect an open brick built porch. The proposed porch would be a small addition to the front of the property and would have a depth of approx. 1m and a width of approx. 1.8m. The porch would feature a shallow dual pitched roof.
- 7.6 Although relatively small, the proposed porch is considered incongruous to the home and would detract from the architectural value of the original building. 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.
- 7.7 The appellant has highlighted two reasons for their appeal:
- To provide shelter when unlocking the door during inclement weather.
 - The proposed design respects the design value of the original building and wider street scene and does not contravene Policy EM1 of the Estate Management Scheme.
- 7.8 The appellant states that the porch was designed to be innocuous and in keeping with the frontage of the homes within Handside Green and highlights the longstanding porch at 2 Handside Green as an example. As highlighted by the appellant, this porch has been in situ for at least 28 years, however, there is no

record of Estate Management Scheme consent for this porch and is therefore considered unauthorised and does not add weight to this appeal.

- 7.9 The appellant states that no objections were raised during the formal consultation period. As part of the appeal, the appellant received a statement of support for the porch from a neighbour opposite the site but who would not have been part of the original consultation. The appellant also states that the proposal was supported more widely within Handside Green with no one believing the porch would result in a detrimental impact to the property or wider street scene. Neighbour comments are always considered when assessing Estate Management Scheme applications, however, broad support for a proposal cannot outweigh the adopted policies and associated design guidance when contrary.
- 7.10 To illustrate the proposal, the appellant has produced an artist impression of the porch at 8 and 9 Handside Green. Although the artist impression shows the porch would match the materials and style of the existing house, the porch would be an addition that would disrupt the uniform frontages and the original planned layout of the homes within Handside Green.
- 7.11 The appellant believes the addition of the porch would improve the amenity, not just for herself, but for visitors to the property whilst waiting for the door to be answered. A porch would help to shield visitors from wet weather, however, this is likely to be an occasional occurrence which does not outweigh the stature of the Estate Management Scheme to preserve the original design of individual and groups of buildings.
- 7.12 The appellant states that nearly all houses within Welwyn Garden City have a porch to protect residents and visitors from inclement weather. It is acknowledged that many houses within the Estate Management Scheme area have a porch, a small canopy or a recessed front door which are a part of the original design. In this case, the porch would be a later addition which would be at odds to the overall design of the property and street scene.
- 7.13 The appellant has included a photograph from c1922 which shows no.10 Handside Green soon after the property was built. The photograph shows a wooden porch at the front of the property, however, none now remain and it is not clear if this was a feature for all homes within Handside Green or restricted to no.10 only. The design is different from that proposed and is unlikely to gain Estate Management Scheme support if proposed today.
- 7.14 The appellant highlights the following statement from the District Plan: “*The overall aim of the District Plan for Welwyn Hatfield is to make development more sustainable to improve the quality of people’s lives.*” It should be noted that the District Plan is a planning document and does not form part of the Estate Management Scheme and therefore is not included within the assessment and consideration of Estate Management Scheme applications.

8 Conclusion

- 8.1 Although the proposed development would match the existing property in terms of materials and style, it is considered that no substantial additional evidence or information has been submitted by the appellant which would alter the officer's recommendation. The proposed porch would be an incongruous addition to the home and would detract from the architectural value of the original home. In addition, the porch would alter the existing relationship between the group of houses within Handside Green and would have a detrimental impact upon the values and amenities of the property and street scene. The original application and appeal, therefore, fail to comply with Policy EM1 of the Estate Management Scheme.

9 Recommendation

- 9.1 That Members uphold the delegated decision and dismiss the appeal.

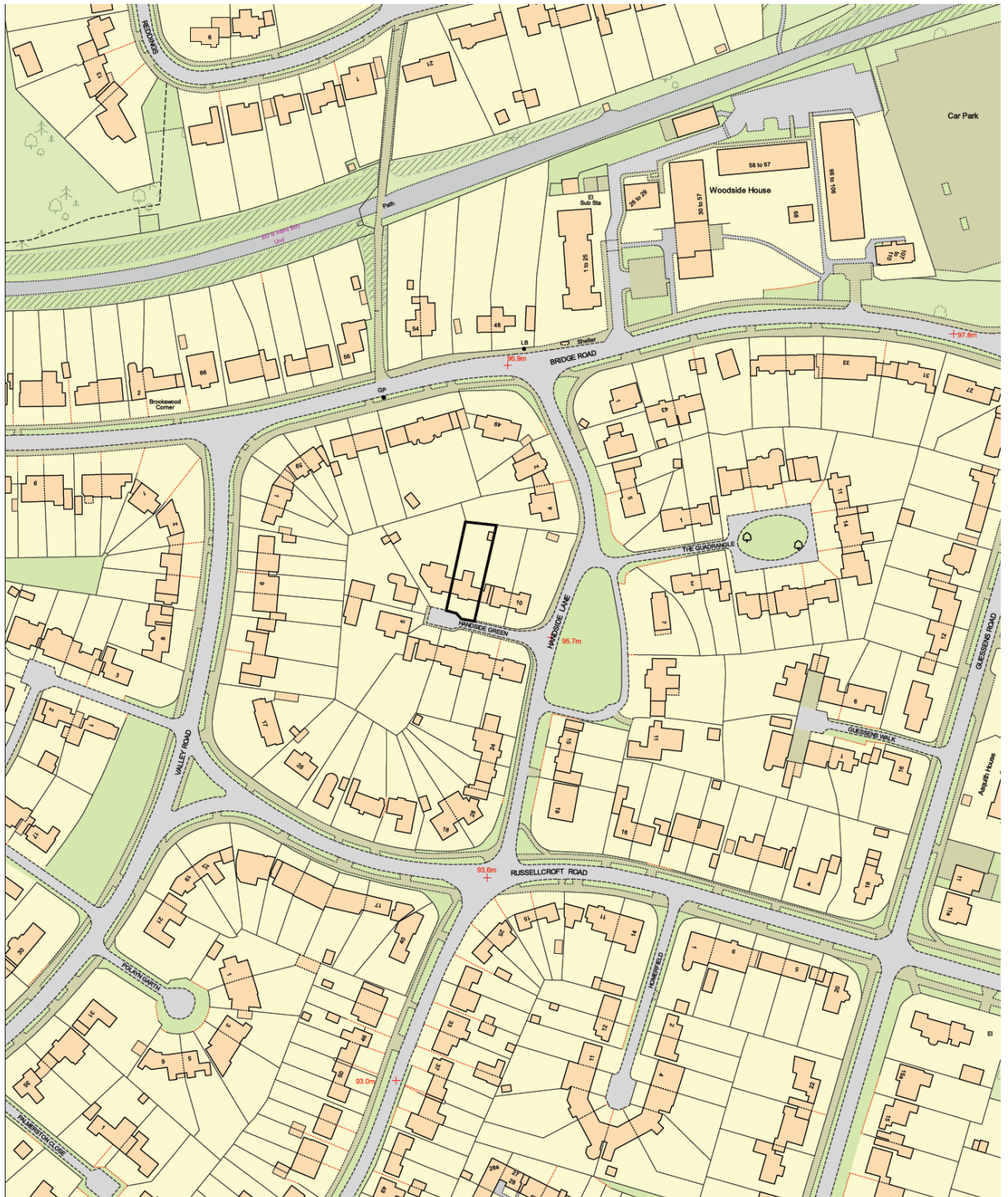
James Homer (Estate Management Scheme Manager)


Date: 15 January 2020

Background Information

Appendix 1: Appellant's Statement

Appendix 2: Original delegated officer's report



 <p>WELWYN HATFIELD</p> <p>Council Offices, The Campus Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE</p>	Title:		Scale:
	8 Handside Green Welwyn Garden City AL8 6SQ		1:250
	Project: Estate Management Appeal - 6/2020/1479/EM		Date:
	Drawing Number:		14-01-2021
		Drawn:	HBG
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