

Development Management Committee
7 March 2024

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE held on Thursday 7 March 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT: Councillors J.Skoczylas (Chairman)
R.Grewal (Vice-Chairman)

S.Boulton, J.Broach, S.Kasumu, R.Lass, F.Marsh,
D.Panter, F.Thomson, R.Trigg, S.Tunstall and
C.Watson

ALSO Cllr Chesterman, Ward Councillor (on behalf of Cllr Bierleson)
PRESENT: J. Backhaus, Legal Advisor (Trowers)
D.Scriven, Agent
C.Garrett, Resident

OFFICIALS C. Carter, Assistant Director (Planning)
PRESENT: G.Gnanamoorthy, Development Management Services Manager
L. Trainer, Governance Services Assistant

138. APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Goldwater.

The following substitution of Members had been made in accordance with Council Procedure Rules: No substitutions received

139. MINUTES

Cllr Watson noted the microphone didn't pick up her vote on the Halmer Green discussion, did not mean to excuse herself from the vote.

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2024 were approved as a correct record.

140. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER ITEM 8 AND ANY ITEMS WITHDRAWN FROM THE AGENDA

There were items of urgent business.

Development Management Committee
7 March 2024

141. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

Cllr Thomson and Cllr Boulton declared County Councillor interest.

142. 6/2023/1665/FULL 4 LITTLE LEY WELWYN GARDEN CITY AL7 4TN

Officer Ganesh Gnanamoorthy presented the report and images for dwelling application, number 4 Little Ley. The application site is set in a mainly residential area with no listed building in close proximity and not located on Greenbelt land. The proposed dwelling will attach to the end of the existing terraced dwelling, with aligned windows, solar panels and rear bi-fold doors. The dwelling will provide 1 parking space for the new dwelling and two for the existing. An application for a similar dwelling in 2006 was initially refused but allowed at appeal. The officers recommendation is to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out in officer report.

Chair invited D.Scriven, agent, to speak.

It was noted that the loss of light concern is not believed to make a significant impact with the nearest property just over 18m away. Noise & disturbance caused by construction are not material to planning, however applicant is committed to ensuring the well-being of the community, also applicant has agreed to a traffic management plan with the Council to manage disturbance and will include details of vehicle manoeuvring, call outs and working hours & times. Applicant has worked with the Council to ensure the design is appropriate and the build is in line with the Council's requirements.

Chair invited C. Garrett, resident, to speak.

It was noted the road to the property is narrow and parking/manoeuvring large vehicles blocks the access and is a health and safety concern, especially as some residents of Little Ley have disabilities and/or mobility issues so wheelchair and carer access is essential.

Chair invited Cllr Chesterman, ward councillor, to speak., on behalf on Cllr Birleson.

It was noted the warden on this site has objected the application based on severe health impact on the residents with the main objectives being loss of light, disturbance during construction and over development on the plot of trees in Shawbury. loss of light, noise disturbance.

Comments and questions from members:

Member noted the previous application that was rejected then approved should not be considered when making application decision. Member queried issue access and whether this is an existing issue and what the impacts will be with construction. Officer noted the property could undergo certain construction on this property without permission which would bring access issues. There is a condition attached to this application which highlights controls in place to minimise impact on residents.

Development Management Committee
7 March 2024

Member asked how the committee can ensure the care and needs of the residents are being met and taken into account by HSC. Officer advised the County Councils assessment will be based on looking at a range of abilities to ensure the highway safety is appropriate for all users of both the road and pavements.

Member noted, from visits, the residents' concerns seem to be around the construction not the build itself, the loss of light will only affect the host's property so doesn't affect the residents, however, the working times should be adhered to and the dust/mess control be managed. Officer confirmed these concerns will be covered in the conditions of the applications.

Member noted concerns on the loss of parking – the existing dwelling has a garage and a hard stand, but garage will be lost with the conversion, and this adds to congestion and parking issues. Also, this property will be an over development based on the area it's in, based on this member won't be supporting the application.

Member queried the landscaping and keeping the hedges around the edge of property, officer confirmed this is a condition in the application. Member also queried how the residents could communicate any concerns or issues they may have during construction; officer noted the residents should report any concerns or issues to the Borough Council and the planning enforcement team will investigate.

Chair asked panel members to consider the application and the planning issues raised during the meeting, and vote on approval for the application.

Result:

8 agree, 4 disagree – application has passed.

143. APPEAL DECISIONS 30/01/2024 TO 27/02/2024

Officer noted there are five decisions on this reports, 4 dismissed 1 allowed. The most significant, the Avenue, was an outline permission for up to 24 dwellings, with all matters reserved, except for the means of access. There were a number of reasons for refusal, the Inspector dismissed the appeal which was great news for the Council, the one that was allowed was for the extension of a dwelling and converting it into four flats that was refused by the Council on reasons of character and appearance of the area adverse living conditions for neighbouring properties, inadequate living conditions for future occupiers of the new development and parking, the Inspector did not agree with us on those reasons and allowed that appeal.

Members noted the report.

Development Management Committee
7 March 2024

144. FUTURE PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Officer noted the next committee is not until the end of June so not many items listed – currently there are two but expectations are that this will change before the June meeting.

Member noted the names of each member that has called in a report should be listed on the report front page as this could have significant weight on the application. Officer confirmed the full report holds all names, the frontpage names listed is just for practicality.

Members noted report.