

# ***Report to District Development Control Committee***



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

## ***Date of meeting:***

**Subject: Planning Application EPF/2328/07: Thatched House, High Street, Epping - Erection of a side extension**

**Officer contact for further information:  
Committee Secretary: S Hill Ext 4249**

---

## **Recommendation(s):**

**That Planning application EPF/2328/07 for the erection of a side extension at the Thatched House Hotel, High Street, Epping be refused for the following reason:**

(1) The proposal would result in the loss of off-street parking and would lead to an insufficient number of spaces for the hotel, causing increased congestion. This is contrary to policy ST6A of the adopted Local Plan and Alterations.

## **Report Detail**

1. (Director of Planning and Economic Development) This application is before this Committee since it is an application that is submitted on behalf of a Councillor (Pursuant to Section P4, Schedule A (j) of the Council's Delegated Functions).

## **Description of proposal:**

2. This application is a revised scheme for a single storey side extension to an approved reception building (EPF/1892/05) for 2 proposed bedrooms with wheelchair access to comply with Building Regulations requirements.

3. The extension is to project by 7.6m to the southeast of the site and will occupy 3 previous parking spaces for the hotel. The development will leave a gap of 2.45m between the new building and the existing Hemnall Mews flat development adjacent. Pedestrian access to the High Street from the rear of the site will remain.

4. A similar scheme was refused by the area planning committee on 21/03/2007 (EPF/1213/06). The recent withdrawn application in August 2007 (EPF/1307/07) differed from the refused scheme by way of reducing the width of the extension by 25cm.

5. The only further change from the previous withdrawn application (EPF/1307/07) is the provision of 3 bicycle parking spaces and 3 motorcycle spaces to the rear of the site adjoining Hemnall Street.

### **Description of Site:**

6. The hotel is a Grade 2 Listed Building, the front elevation of which is situated within the key frontage of Epping town centre. The hotel has 12 bedrooms (staff and guests) and the whole site is within the Epping Town Conservation Area.

7. To the rear is Henmnall Mews, a residential flat development approved in 2002 and revised in 2005 (EPF/478/05).

### **Relevant History:**

8. The site has the following relevant history:

EPF/1035/02- Partial demolition of hotel and erection of 14 dwelling units- approved.

EPF/1943/04- Creation of loft bedrooms within existing roof space- approved

LB/EPF/1944/04- Grade II Listed Building application for creation of loft bedroom within existing and approved (LB/EPF/1019/04) roof space including new dormer windows- refused.

EPF/478/05- Partial demolition of the rear of Thatched House Hotel and the erection of 14 No. new apartments with basement parking, (revised application).- approved.

EPF/1892/05- Erection of new reception area- approved.

EPF/1213/06- Single storey side extension to approved reception for two proposed bedrooms with wheelchair access. (Revised application)- Refused.

EPF/1307/07- Erection of side extension to reception area for 2 no. bedrooms with wheelchair access. (Revised application)- Withdrawn.

### **Policies Applied:**

#### *Adopted Local Plan*

CP7A- Urban Form and quality  
HC7- Development within a Conservation Area  
DBE1- Design of new buildings  
DBE2- Impact on surrounding properties  
DBE9- Impact upon amenity  
ST4A- Road Safety  
ST6A- Vehicle Parking

### **Issues and Considerations:**

9. The key issues relevant to this application are the appropriateness of the development within the Conservation Area and the setting of the adjacent Listed Building, amenity issues and highways considerations.

### Conservation Area Policy and the Listed Building

10. This extension will increase the floor area of the reception area approved in 2005 by approximately 50m<sup>2</sup>. The building will be traditionally designed with low eaves and will complement the adjacent Listed Thatched House pub.

11. The Town Council previously objected to this proposal on the grounds of overdevelopment and the impact upon the adjacent Listed Building, the Thatched House pub. However the Thatched House is already surrounded by other buildings and given the town centre location, there can be expected to be a high density of buildings.

12. The extension is located to the rear of the premises and will not be visible from the Epping town centre street scene. It is therefore acceptable in terms of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and no objections have been received from the Councils Heritage Conservation officers.

### Amenity Considerations

13. In terms of amenity considerations, the extension will be situated 2.45m (previously 2.25m) from the adjoining flats at Hemnall Mews. The resultant development would therefore be very close. However, given that the new extension would only be intermittently occupied and the ground floor flats already experience pedestrians and visitors passing by, refusal on this basis would not be justified.

14. There are no amenity issues with regard to the *Guardian* offices to the south west of the site and there is only 1 main window in this elevation which has small velux roof lights.

### Highways policy

15. The Council resolved to refuse permission previously due to the loss of off street parking, resulting in an insufficient number of spaces for the hotel, causing increased congestion.

16. The new extension will result in a loss of 3 parking spaces, leaving the hotel with approximately 5 spaces close to the rear Hemnall Street site entrance. In light of guidance within the 'Vehicle Parking Standards', (*Essex Planning Officers Association, 2001*), the requirement for parking provision is 1 space per bedroom (guest or staff). The hotel accommodation will be increased to 14 rooms as a result of this extension and on this basis parking is inadequate.

17. This latest revised application proposes bicycle and motorcycle parking facilities to the site frontage, which was not previously included within the ownership of the applicant in the 2007 withdrawn submission. Whilst there is some doubt as to whether the land is actually in the ownership of the applicant and not the Highways Authority, this does not alter the merits of the application. The bicycle and motorcycle storage will not make up for the loss of off street parking which formed the previous reason for refusal.

18. In addition to the above, nearby 'Clarks International' objected to the previous application on the grounds of congestion to the rear of the site, in particular

with regard to the large vehicles associated with refuse collection and the servicing of the hotel. The proposed extension will exacerbate this situation.

## **Conclusion**

19. Whilst the design of the building is acceptable in itself, the immaterial 25cm change in width of the building and the proposed motorcycle and cycle parking does not in any way address the 2006 reason for refusal. Consequently, the scheme is still considered to result in an increase in congestion in the vicinity. Refusal is recommended.

## **Summary of objections/observations:**

TOWN COUNCIL- Committee object as the extension is viewed as overdevelopment of the site. There is also concern regarding the loss of parking.

CLARKE INTERNATIONAL-(Responded to all submissions). Overdevelopment of this area resulting in serious access and parking issues.

EPPING SOCIETY- Application is too similar to previous submission and the proposed cycle and motorbike parking will not replace disabled car parking for whom the development is intended.

In addition the development is too close to the recently erected block of flats and will obstruct views from their windows.