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Development and Conservation
North Hertfordshire District Council
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August 16, 2024

245 Cambridge Road

Dear Sir.

With reference to the planning application for 245 Cambridge Road, Hitchin ref. 24/01534F-H I would like to put forward objections to this application on the following grounds.

1, The proposed gym ! is so close to my boundary that it would damage the roots of trees at the bottom of my garden that are of great sentimental importance to me. As there are large trees in other gardens I feel that they would be damaged and could fall onto my property. In the planning application it was stated that no trees would be affected this is clearly not true. There are even trees that would have to be removed inside the proposed floor plan area. These trees apart from being a good noise barrier from the traffic in Cambridge Road are an oasis for our ever depleting wildlife.

2, The application is clearly an attempt at Backland development. It is outside of the building line and it's scale far exceeds what is required for a outbuilding/ private gym and more along the lines of a 1 bed bungalow/ annex or business premises neither of which are suitable in this location or in keeping within a residential area and therefore should be refused.

Drawings state that the materials are to match existing, existing what? It looks to be traditional build ie insulated block and brick construction, again far exceeding the requirements of a garden gym/ outbuilding.

The applicant has clicked no to trees and hedges, but the garden/ proposal is surrounded by trees and hedges in their and neighbouring gardens, for which the design does not take consideration of their canopies nor root protection zones/ areas.

There is no justification for a pitch roof on this type of structure and a flat roof would be more suitable and reduce its impact.

Considering there is only 500mm from the eastern boundary and taking account of the surrounding trees and hedges there is insufficient room around the perimeter to erect scaffolding or build in a safe manner nor for maintenance of fascia and guttering without compromising safety or significantly cutting back foliage and roots.

bats in the area, has a survey been undertaken to assess its impact?

If this application is considered for approval, restrictions on use should be applied.

4.2.3 Building near trees - NHBC Standards 2024 NHBC Standards 2024

When building near trees, hedgerows or shrubs, the designs shall take account of:

1. physical growth of young trees
2. protection of remaining trees and hedgerows
3. removal of existing trees and hedgerows.

Before the site is cleared, a survey is required to record the location, heights and species of trees, hedgerows and shrubs on and adjacent to the site, which may affect the proposed development.

If the location of previously removed vegetation is not known, local enquiries and reference to aerial photographs should be carried out. Alternatively, the design should assume the worst conditions, or an engineer consulted to undertake a site-specific design based on all relevant information and in accordance with Technical Requirement R5.

Where root growth is noted within shrinkable soil and where records are not available, an engineer should be consulted to assess whether volume change is likely.

4.2.3 Building near trees - NHBC Standards 2024 NHBC Standards 2024

Protection of remaining trees and hedgerows#

Roots often extend to distances in excess of the height of the tree, the majority are within 600mm of the surface and project radially. All parts of the system are easily susceptible to damage which may not regenerate and which can affect the stability of the tree.

This can be caused by:

- stripping topsoil too close to trees
- excavating trenches for foundations and services too close to trees

- raising soil levels adjacent to trees, particularly where non-granular materials are used
- the compaction of soil around trees by heavy plant
- the storage of heavy materials around trees
- covering the rooting area with impervious surfaces.

Trees should be protected from damage by:

- a fence or barrier. The fence or barrier should extend around a single trunk equivalent to a circle of radius 12 times the trunk diameter measured 1.5m above ground level. The shape of this area may change depending on specific factors such as local drainage, soil type, age and species of the tree. An arboriculturist may be required to assess these factors
- ensuring services are not routed close to trees or, where this is impractical, are installed in such a way as to minimise root damage.

