

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – ESTATE MANAGEMENT SCHEME
DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION No:	W6/2013/326/EM
APPLICATION Site:	6 Fordwich Road, Welwyn Garden City

NOTATION:

The site lies within the Estate Management Scheme area under the Leasehold Reform Act 1967

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND PROPOSAL:

The site comprises a 2-storey, end terraced, dwelling of red brick under a plain gabled, concrete pantiled roof, with a flat roofed side and rear extension. A garage serving the dwelling is sited in an adjacent block to the north. The surroundings are residential mainly comprising semi- detached dwellings of similar style, scale and design to the application dwelling.

The proposal seeks the installation of roof mounted solar panels, centrally sited across the majority of the width and depth of the south (rear) roof slope. This would mirror the siting and extent of solar panels currently in existence on the south (rear) roof slope of the adjoining property (No.8). The solar panels at No.8 do not currently benefit from Estate Management Consent.

EMS HISTORY:

W6/2012/693/EM - Erection of single storey side and rear extension – Approved
22/05/2012

W6/2006/0027/EM - Erection of single storey side extension and rear conservatory –
Refused - 06/06/2007.

N6/2006/0026/FP - Erection of single storey side extension and rear conservatory –
Refused - 06/03/2006.

W6/2004/1739/EM - Erection of single storey side extension and rear conservatory –
Approved - 17/01/2005.

N6/2004/1737/FP - Erection of single storey side extension and rear conservatory –
Approved - 17/01/2005.

POLICIES:

Estate Management Scheme (EMS) Policies (October 2008):

EM1 – Extensions and Alterations

CONSULTATIONS: None

TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS: None

REPRESENTATIONS:

This application has been advertised and no representations have been received. Period expired 14 March 2013.

DISCUSSION:

The main issue is:

- 1. Whether the proposal maintains and enhances the amenities and values of Welwyn Garden City and neighbouring occupiers**

EM1 – Extensions and Alterations

Policy EM1 of the Estate Management Scheme is relevant and concerns extensions and alterations. It seeks to preserve the unique architectural heritage of the town and its buildings and only allows extensions and alterations if they are in keeping with the design, appearance, materials and architectural detailing used in the existing building and does not have a detrimental impact on the amenities and values of the surrounding area or the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers.

In order to be able to respond to the large amount of requests for roof alterations and energy efficiency measures such as Solar PV panels, following public consultation the council has approved a new Policy approach within the Welwyn Garden Estate Management Scheme Areas to deal with roof alterations and this is as follows:

- Estate Management Consent will only be granted for energy efficiency measures and other roof alterations where they are sited on the rear or side roof slope and are sited to minimise the effect on the external appearance of the building.
- Estate Management Consent will only be granted if the proposed alteration, when viewed from any surrounding public vantage point does not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the street scene and the wider amenities and values of the area.
- Exceptions to this Policy approach will apply where, in the judgement of the case officer the architectural design and style of an individual property or the wider character of the area means that an alteration on a principal roof slope of a property would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the street scene and wider amenities and values of the area.

- In all cases the decision maker will continue to weigh the environmental benefits of energy efficiency measures against the visual impact.

This above approach applies to the installation of Solar PV, Thermal equipment, wind turbines, flues, new chimneys, dormer windows, roof lights, sunpipes, aerials and antenna and any other alterations to the roof of a property covered by the Estate Management Scheme.

The proposed roof alteration would be sited on the rear/south roof slope. The proposal would have an impact on the street scene because of its location as the property features three elevations (west, north and south) which are prominent from the street scene due to its siting side-on to the street. The solar panels would therefore be visible from the south (rear) and west (side) of the site on Fordwich Road. This is evident as the panels on the south (rear) slope of No.8 which adjoins the application property (which do not benefit from Estate Management Consent) are currently visible from these positions on the street scene. Accordingly, the proposed siting of solar panels would be contrary to the aforementioned policy approach.

Solar panels have not been permitted on the current policy basis on other properties with prominent elevations visible from the street scene in the surrounding area of Fordwich Road. Further to this, solar panels are not considered in keeping with the architectural design and style of the property, which forms part of a terraced block. This is notwithstanding the panels on No.8 for which no consent has been granted and which will be investigated by an enforcement officer. As such, due to the prominent siting of the proposal which would be visible to the south along Fordwich Road, and immediately to the west of the property due to its orientation, alongside the architectural detailing and style of the property, and that of those on the surrounding street scene, the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the street scene.

It is therefore considered that the proposal, by virtue of its siting, scale and detailed design, fails to maintain and enhance the amenities and values of the Garden City.

In relation to the impact on the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers the impact of the proposed development on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings is measured in terms of the impact on neighbouring properties access to day/sun/sky light, overshadowing, loss of privacy/overlooking and impact on outlook. Given the design of the proposal with minimal projection above the roof slope, it is considered that the proposal would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers sufficient enough to warrant refusal.

CONCLUSION:

It is considered that the proposal, by virtue of its prominent siting which would be visible to the south along Fordwich Road and immediately to the west of the property due to its orientation, and the architectural detailing and style of the property on which it would sit, and that of those on the surrounding street scene, would be detrimental impact to the character and appearance of the street scene. It would be contrary to the policy approach within the Welwyn Garden Estate Management Scheme Areas to deal with roof alterations. It would therefore fail to maintain and

enhance the amenities and values of the Garden City and is not compliant with the Estate Management Scheme.

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSAL AND REASON:

1. It is considered that the proposal, by virtue of its prominent siting which would be visible to the south along Fordwich Road and immediately to the west of the property due to its orientation, and the architectural detailing and style of the property on which it would sit, and that of those on the surrounding street scene, would be detrimental impact to the character and appearance of the street scene. It would be contrary to the policy approach within the Welwyn Garden Estate Management Scheme Areas to deal with roof alterations. It would therefore fail to maintain and enhance the amenities and values of the Garden City and is not compliant with the Estate Management Scheme.
- 2.
3. **It is considered that the proposal, by virtue of its prominent siting and appearance, would be visible as an incongruous addition to the principal roofslope from the south along Fordwich Road and immediately to the west of the property due to its orientation, the architectural detailing and style of the property on which it would sit, and that of those on the surrounding street scene, which would be detrimental impact to the character and appearance of the street scene, failing to maintain and enhance the amenities and values of the Garden City in accordance with Policy EM1 of the Estate Management Scheme.**

REFUSED DRAWING NUMBERS: 1:1250 site location plan & drawing number: 6
FDWR SP01 received and dated 12 February 2013.

Signature of author..... Date.....