

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – ESTATE MANAGEMENT SCHEME**  
**DELEGATED REPORT**

<b>APPLICATION No:</b>	<b>N6/2013/1301/FP</b>
<b>APPLICATION Site:</b>	<b>24 Rooks Hill</b>

**NOTATION:**

The site lies within Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area as designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND PROPOSAL:**

The application site is a two storey semi-detached dwelling, finished in multi-red brick. The area is characterised by the open spaces between properties, which are also set back from road and are consistent in architectural style.

The property has a garage to the side, with front and rear associated gardens.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:**

The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a single storey side and rear extension.

The rear extension would be approximately 3.7m in depth, 6.9m in width and 3.3m in height. It would feature a flat roof with parapet wall. The side extension would be approximately 4.6m in width, 3.3m in maximum height and 9.4m in depth, extending across the depth of the dwelling to adjoin to the rear extension. It would feature a flat roof and would be set back approximately 1.0m from the principal wall.

**PLANNING HISTORY:**

N6/2012/2455/FP - Erection of a two storey side & single storey rear extension.  
Refused 15/01/2013

REASON: The proposed development by virtue of its location, size, form and design, would be out of scale and would fail to respect the character of the wider area. The two storey side extension would appear inconsistent with the nature of development within the area and would therefore appear as an incongruous addition that would fail to sustain or enhance the significance of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area.

N6/2007/1396/FP – Proposed single storey rear extension and insertion of window.  
Application withdrawn 14/11/2007

**SUMMARY OF POLICIES:**

National Planning Policy Framework

SD1: Sustainable Development

GBSP2: Towns and Specified Settlements

R3: Energy Efficiency

M14: Parking Standards for New Developments

D1: Quality of Design

D2: Character and Context

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Design Guidance, February 2005

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, Supplementary Planning Guidance, Parking Standards, January 2004

**CONSULTATIONS:** None

**TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS:** None

**REPRESENTATIONS:**

This application has been advertised and no representations have been received. Period expired 02 August 2013.

**DISCUSSION:**

The main issues are:

1. Character and Appearance
2. Residential Amenity
3. Parking
4. Other Material Planning Considerations

**1. Character and Appearance**

Policies GBSP2, D1 and D2 of the adopted Welwyn Hatfield District Plan are relevant. Collectively, these policies seek to encourage development of a high design standard, which should respect and relate to the character and context of the area in which it is to be sited. Furthermore, the Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG) requests that “extensions should be designed to complement and reflect the design and character of the dwelling and be subordinate in scale.”

Moreover, as the site is located within the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area, the preservation and enhancement of the appearance and character of the area must be considered in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The proposal would be a considerable increase in footprint compared to the existing dwelling, extending both depth and width. However, the proposal would remain at ground floor level only and would feature a flat roof, which would help to limit the overall bulk. Furthermore, the side extension would be set back from the principal

elevation. Therefore, it is considered that the extension would be appropriately subordinate in scale to the original dwelling.

Whilst the extension would be seen from Rooks Hill, the full scale of the extensions would not be appreciated, with the main focus on the side extension. Additionally, given its scale and location, it would not be unduly prominent or out of keeping with development within the area. A characteristic feature of the area is the spacing between properties. However, a reasonable degree of separation would be maintained from the site boundary and the proposal would not result in an overly cramped form of development.

Development previously proposed under N6/2012/2455/FP also included a side extension but was refused. However, this was a two storey development, which was considered to be overly prominent and inconsistent with the character of surrounding development, where two storey side extensions are uncommon additions. However, as the side extension has been reduced to ground floor level only, this issue has been sufficiently overcome.

With regards to the more detailed aspects of design, the development proposes matching brickwork. The fenestration and door design on the principal elevation would be consistent with the existing dwelling and surrounding area. Whilst the fenestration and doors on the rear and side elevation would not be reflective of the existing dwelling, given their publicly concealed location, it is considered acceptable in this circumstance. Given the location of the property within a conservation area, it is considered reasonable to attach a condition requiring materials to be approved by the local planning authority

Overall, subject to a planning condition regarding materials, it is considered that the design of the extension would adequately respect and relate to the existing dwelling and would sustain the Central Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework; Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 and Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 (Statement of Council Policy).

## **2. Residential Amenity**

Local Plan Policy D1 is relevant along with the SDG. 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.

The development would be located up to the boundary of neighbouring dwelling 22 Rooks Hill. However, this dwelling features an existing single storey rear extension and given the scale of the proposal it is not considered that any excessive amenity impacts to this neighbour would result.

A number of properties to the east of the dwelling feature rear gardens that face on to the development. However, given the scale of the proposal, and given its distance from these dwellings, it is not considered that excessive impacts on access to day/sun/sky light, overshadowing and outlook would result. The application dwelling

features existing windows at first floor level on both the side and rear of the property. Therefore the proposed windows at ground floor level would be unlikely to result in excessive loss of privacy. The proposal is considered to comply with policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

### **3. Parking**

Local Plan Policy M14 and the accompanying Supplementary Planning Guidance- Parking Standards is relevant.

The site is located in Zone 3 where a maximum of three parking spaces are required for a 4 bedroom dwelling. There would only likely be a maximum provision for two cars on the existing driveway and one space is lost from the demolition of the existing garage. However, it is not considered that the resulting development would have any detrimental impact on highway safety. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with the policy M14 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan.

### **4. Other Material Planning Considerations**

#### **Protected Species**

The presence of protected species is a material consideration, in accordance with the National Planning Policy, Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (section 40), Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as well as Circular 06/05.

Protected species such as great crested newts, otters, dormice and bats benefit from the strictest legal protection. These species are known as European Protected Species ('EPS') and the protection afforded to them derives from the EU Habitats Directive, in addition to the above legislation. Water voles, badgers, reptiles, all wild birds, invertebrates and certain rare plants are protected to a lesser extent under UK domestic law (NERC Act and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981).

The existing site and development is such that there is not a reasonable likelihood of EPS being present on site nor would a EPS offence be likely to occur. It is therefore not necessary to consider the Conservation Regulations 2010 and amended 2012 Regulations further.

#### **Sustainable Development**

The application has included a sustainability checklist which notes that the proposal would be insulated to meet current building regulation standards. It is considered that these provisions would be a reasonable effort to meet the requirements of Policy R3 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The development would increase the mass and bulk of the property, but would not result in a discernible presence in the street scene and would appear subordinate to the main dwelling. Therefore, no objections are raised with regard to its mass and

bulk. In addition, its general design and appearance are considered acceptable. Turning to neighbour amenity the proposed development would retain a reasonable relationship with the adjoining properties and would satisfactorily meet the requirements of energy efficiency and would not unduly impact on any protected species. The proposal would therefore comply to policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan and the guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework.

**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**

**CONDITIONS:**

1. C.2.1 Time limit for commencement of development
2. C.13.1 The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details: 2932-OS1 & 2932-OS2 received and dated 19 June 2013 and 2932-P01 received and dated 18 July 2013 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

**POST-DEVELOPMENT**

3. C.5.1 – Samples of materials to be agreed

**REASON:** To ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.

**SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:**

The decision has been made taking into account, where practicable and appropriate the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and material planning considerations do not justify a decision contrary to the development plan (see Officer's report which can be inspected at these offices).

**INFORMATIVES:**

1. This approval relates to planning permission only. The property is within the Estate Management area and separate consent is required for this before the commencement of any works.

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