

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PLANNING, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND GOVERNANCE**

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2022/2302/EM
Location: 5 Densley Close, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 7JX
Proposal: Garage and loft conversion with rooflights to provide living accommodation, alterations to openings, replacement windows and doors, Installation of solar panels to modified garage roof and installation of EV charger to garage side wall, new side access gate and related paving, new shed to rear garden.
Officer: Mr James Homer

Recommendation: Granted

6/2022/2302/EM

Context			
Site and Application description	<p>No.5 is a two-storey detached chalet style property located upon the eastern side of Densley Close. The property benefits from an attached garage and occupies a spacious plot.</p> <p>The application seeks Estate Management Scheme consent to undertake a part garage conversion, loft conversion with 2 rooflights to provide living accommodation, replacement windows and doors, Installation of solar panels to a modified garage roof, installation of an electric vehicle charging point to the garage side wall and the erection of a small shed within the rear garden.</p>		
Constraints	Estate Management Scheme, as defined within the Leasehold Reform Act 1967		
Relevant history	<p>Application Number: W6/1998/5247/EM Decision: Granted Decision Date: 13 July 1998 Proposal: Relay existing drive and paths, extension to vehicle crossover and hardstanding</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2022/2306/HOUSE Decision: Granted Decision Date: 25 November 2022 Proposal: Garage and loft conversion with rooflights to provide living accommodation, replacement windows and doors, Installation of solar panels to modified garage roof, installation of electric vehicle charger to garage side wall and modifications and alterations to fenestration.</p>		
Notifications			
Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 0
Summary of neighbour responses	No comments received.		
Consultee responses	No comments received.		
Relevant Policies			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EM1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EM2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EM3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EM4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EM5			

Others

Considerations

Design (form, size, scale, siting) and Character (impact upon amenities and values of Garden City)

Alterations to an existing building are covered by Policy EM1 of the Estate Management Scheme which states that extensions and alterations to existing properties will only be allowed if they are in keeping with the design, appearance, materials and architectural detailing used in the existing building and do not have a detrimental impact on the amenities and values of the surrounding area or the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers.

To enable the part conversion of the existing garage, the application proposes to raise the height of the garage roof to allow sufficient insulation to be installed. The increase in height would be relatively minimal and would not result in significant change. The replacement roof would also feature three new roof lights that although slightly proud of the roof, are unlikely to be unduly visible from the street at the front of the property. The front of the garage would be retained as a storage area and the existing up-and-over door would be replaced with two hinged doors with high level glazing. The replacement doors would reflect the character of the property and wider area.

The application proposes to convert the existing loft space into habitable accommodation. To facilitate this change, single Velux standard roof lights are proposed for the north and south facing roof slopes of the main house. Each roof light is set toward the rear of the property but would remain visible from the street. To ensure the impact of the roof lights is minimised it is considered reasonable and acceptable to include a condition to the decision notice that requires the rooflights to be conservation style. This will help ensure the roof lights are fitted as flush as possible to the roof slope. In addition, a new window opening is proposed for the front and rear gable ends of the property. Although not an original feature, new window openings within gables to allow loft conversions has been considered acceptable in the past and the matching style of the proposed frames will ensure the additional windows are in keeping with appearance of the property. It is also worth noting that a gable window can be seen at 10 Densley Close.

The application proposes alterations to existing window and door openings. At the rear of the property, two windows are to be removed, the opening made larger and bi-folding doors installed. The bi-folds will not be visible from public areas and no objection is raised regarding their inclusion. At the front of the property, two crittall style windows either side of the side access door are to be removed and replaced with double glazed like-for-like replacements. The application also includes a replacement window for the first-floor bathroom. The plans show this would match the existing style and is considered acceptable.

Tilted solar panels are proposed for the rear section of the garage roof and existing ground floor extension. The installation of solar panels is covered by Policy EM5 of the Estate Management Scheme. At present, Policy EM5 of the states that 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. However, considering the climate emergency the council declared in 2019, the council has recently updated its position regarding solar panels, and it has been agreed that they should now be allowed on front facing roof slopes. It is important that proposals for solar panels on front elevations follow the same criteria that has been established for rear facing installations. It is important that proposals for solar panels on front elevations follow the same criteria that

	<p>has been established for rear facing installations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where possible, panels should be set out in a rectangular form to avoid overly fragmented edges; - Panels may be allowed on more than one roof plane, however, inappropriate multiple ‘pepper potted’ installations must be avoided; - Panels must not dominate the building and should be set down from roof ridge and set in at a suitable distance from roof edge. <p>The applicant has provided drawings that show “sight lines” of the solar panels from the street in order to demonstrate their limited visibility from the road despite their tilted positioning. Given the setback nature of the solar panels, it is considered that they would not form a prominent feature of the garage roof or unduly affect the street scene.</p> <p>The application is also seeking retrospective consent for an EV charging point that is fixed to the side of the garage. The EV charging point is visible from the street, however, it’s impact upon the character of the property and street scene is minor.</p> <p>Finally, a timber shed is proposed for the rear garden. The erection of new structures within the Estate Management Scheme area is covered by Policy EM2 which looks to protect the planned layout of the Garden City by ensuring that proposals for new buildings and structures respect the visual appearance of the area in terms of their siting and scale, so they do not result in visually over prominent or discordant additions. In addition, all applications for new buildings should not harm the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers and the immediate area.</p> <p>The proposed shed would measure approx. 8ft x 6ft and would be positioned at the bottom end of the garden and away from the main dwelling areas of neighbouring homes. The shed would not be visible from surrounding public areas and would not over dominate the rear garden.</p>
<p>Impact on neighbours</p>	<p>The property is a detached dwelling. The proposed development would not cause any detrimental overshadowing to neighbouring occupiers. It would not cause any adverse loss of daylight or sunlight or be unduly dominant from any neighbouring properties.</p> <p>In terms of privacy, the proposed rear and front facing openings, given their separation distance and orientation, would not result in the overlooking of the adjoining neighbours.</p> <p>The rooflight window to the south roof slope would serve an ensuite. The rooflight window to the north roof slope would face towards number 3 Densley Close and serve a landing. However, there are already existing windows on the first-floor levels on each of these elevations that currently provide views to the north and south. The new rooflight in the roof slopes would not result in any additional, significant overlooking above what is already possible by the side facing windows at first floor.</p>
<p>Landscaping issues (incl. hardstandings)</p>	<p>The application proposes to create a new access to the rear garden by removing a section of hedgerow to the side of the main house and installing a gate. A route to the gate will be created by installing a footpath from the front of the house to the new access point. Only a minimal section of hedgerow would be removed to allow a gap for the gate and the additional hardstanding upon the front for the formation of the path would not result in a harmful loss of green landscaping.</p>

Any other considerations	None.
Conclusion	
<p>The proposed garage conversion, loft conversion, alterations to windows and doors and EV charging point are considered in keeping with the design and appearance of the existing building that will not have a detrimental impact on the amenities and values of the surrounding area or the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers.</p> <p>The proposed solar panels will sit comfortably within the parameters of the roof flat roof and will not be overtly visible from public areas despite the tilted positioning.</p> <p>The proposed shed would not result in visually over prominent or discordant structure and will not harm the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers.</p> <p>The creation of the new rear access will not result in a harmful loss of hedgerow or green landscaping within the front garden.</p> <p>The application complies with Policies EM1, EM2, EM3, EM4 and EM5 of the Estate Management Scheme.</p>	

Conditions:

1. All works carried out in pursuance of this consent shall be and remain part of the Premises and shall be subject to the terms and conditions of the conveyance in all respects as if such works had at all times formed part of the Premises.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of the Leasehold Reform Act 1967 Estate Management Scheme for Welwyn Garden City.

2. This consent or copy hereof shall be annexed to the Conveyance.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of the Leasehold Reform Act 1967 Estate Management Scheme for Welwyn Garden City.

3. There shall be no encroachment over the boundary of the plot either above or below ground level, nor any interference with the foundations of the adjoining property without the agreement of the adjoining owner or lessee.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of the Leasehold Reform Act 1967 Estate Management Scheme for Welwyn Garden City.

4. This consent now issued is given by the Council only in accordance with the requirements of the Welwyn Garden City Estate Management Scheme only.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of the Leasehold Reform Act 1967 Estate Management Scheme for Welwyn Garden City.

5. The brickwork, bonding, mortar, roof tiles, cladding and architectural detailing (including soffits, eaves, external pipe work and guttering) of the approved extension/alterations shall match that used in the existing dwelling.

REASON: To protect the character and appearance of the original building and the amenities of the area in accordance with the requirements of the Leasehold Reform Act 1967 Estate Management Scheme for Welwyn Garden City and Policy EM1.

6. Only that part of the hedge identified for the approved gate access shall be removed and the remainder shall be retained.

REASON: To protect the visual amenity of the area in accordance with the requirements of the Estate Management Scheme and Policy EM3.

7. With the exception of the ground floor rear facing windows, all other external window frames, glazing bars, sills, door, door surrounds and other external decorations associated with the fenestration hereby approved shall not be any colour other than white.

REASON: To protect the character and appearance of the original building and the amenities of the area in accordance with the requirements of the Leasehold Reform Act 1967 Estate Management Scheme for Welwyn Garden City and Policy EM1.

8. All rooflights hereby permitted shall be conservation style rooflights set as flush as practicable within the roof slope.

REASON: To protect the character and appearance of the original building and the amenities of the area in accordance with the requirements of the Leasehold Reform Act 1967 Estate Management Scheme for Welwyn Garden City and Policy EM1.

DRAWING NUMBERS

9. The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
DC 101-10		Existing Block Plan	3 October 2022
DC 101-1		Existing Plans and Elevations	3 October 2022
DC 101-OS		Location Plan	3 October 2022
DC 102-10	A	Proposed Block Plan	28 November 2022
DC 102-1	B	Proposed Plans and Elevations	28 November 2022

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

Informatives:

1. If your property is long leasehold, or was previously owned by the Council, there may be covenants contained within your conveyance. This is unrelated to the Estate Management Scheme and you may require additional consent before carrying out any works. It is recommended that you contact estatesteam@welhat.gov.uk to clarify the position.

Determined By:

Mr James Homer
29 November 2022