

Mohns & Sanders

10/1/24

Design Statement

38 Barleycroft Road, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 6QR.

This statement sets out to explain the proposed development for the above project.

Site context

Our clients' dwelling is a 1920's two storey detached property located on the northern side of Barleycroft Road facing Turmore Dale. It is an established residential area sited within the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area and Estate Management scheme area.

Barleycroft is characterised with two storey detached and semi-detached dwellings with a strong degree of a coherent traditional character. The vast majority of properties on this road have been extended over time. The scale of the extension ranges from single storey rear and side extensions to part double, part single storey rear and side extensions. There are a number of loft conversions, too. However, this has not resulted in a heavily built up street appearance due to the generous spacing between the dwellings and the substantial soft landscaping and trees.

The Existing Building

38 Barleycroft Road has received a number of single storey extensions over the years. There is a 1970's style single storey rear extension and a flat roof side extension visible to the front as it obscures the view of an original pitched roof outbuilding – now attached) This outbuilding has also been extended to the rear to form a potting shed.

No 36 Barleycroft Road to the eastern side has been extended with a part double, part single storey rear extension and benefits from a loft conversion. There is a dormer window to the front elevation.

No 40 to the western side has also received a number of extensions, most notably 2 separate double storey rear extensions. The extensions align with No 38 existing rear extension.

The front garden comprises of two off-street car-parking spaces, recently relandscaped (6/2022/2512/EM) and a newly installed traditional style porch. (6/2023/0434/EM) To the northern side is a very large garden of approximately 360sqm. Applications have been granted for the erection of a garden room (6/2023/0968/EM) and a replacement shed (6/2023/2134/EM)

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The Proposed Works

Our application seeks planning permission and Estate Management approval for the erection of a part single, part double storey rear extension, a conversion and extension of the existing side extension / outbuilding and the installation of a dormer window to the rear.

The principal intention behind the proposed scheme is to carefully balance the proposed extension to form a link between the existing extensions at No 36 and No 40.

The proposed single storey rear extensions to either side of the double storey element project further to align with the existing extension it replaces. Thus, the alignment with No 40 is retained. The double storey extension only projects into the garden by 4metres. It therefore frames the views into the garden at ground floor level. This is further underlined by the fully glazed elevation that sits between the two flanking single storey extensions.

At first floor level the width of the extension spans to incorporate the existing rear double storey extension. In doing so an unsympathetic staggered built up is avoided. The new roofline is subservient to the original height of the host dwelling and only a small crown roof is created. This is considered minimal in comparison to the crown roof that is featured at No 40.

To enable the proposed loft conversion a traditional lead clad dormer window is introduced. As opposed to the existing dormer window at No 36 facing the street elevation we are proposing a rear dormer. It would be completely obscured from public view.


The new roofs to the front elevations would mirror that of existing single storey extensions within the conservation area. To soften the appearance along the street scene a parapet is introduced that curves up to the side of the host dwelling. This is a common detail found within many original Garden City houses.

Policy SP9 in particular states that the development proposal will need to respect neighbouring buildings and the surrounding context in terms of height, mass and scale and also be of high-quality architectural design that creates coherent and attractive forms and elevations and uses high quality material.

In order to demonstrate the compliance with both the NPPF and policies SADM15, SP15 as well as Policies SP1 and SP9 of the Council's Local plan we have incorporated a number of the existing features where appropriate.

Paragraphs 199, 201 and 202 of the NPPF outline that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage

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asset, 'great weight' should be given to the asset's conservation. Proposed development should demonstrate that by achieving substantial public benefits any harm to the original dwelling can be outweighed.

These will include:

- The matching of brick work to the existing for all the external walls including brick details around the external corners.
- The matching of roof tiles to the existing for the proposed pitched roof using only reclaimed roof tiles and retention of bonnet ridge tiles
- No changes to existing window positions in the host dwelling
- New openings formed in rear, front and side elevations will relate directly to both the form and proportions already evident in the existing property.
- Introduction of low roof lights that cannot be seen from street level to allow additional daylight
- Added interest of fully glazed single storey rear extension projecting beyond the proposed double storey extension – completely obscured from any public vantage point
- The roofline of proposed double storey rear extension to sit below the original roofline. It steps down by 0.5metre thus demonstrating its subservience to the original roofline.
- The installation of brick parapets with tile creasing to the flat roofs of the single storey extensions
- All new windows are proposed to match the existing in style and proportion including the proposed rear dormer window

Great weight is given to protect Welwyn Garden City's historical significance and unique heritage as a garden city. It is important to preserve and enhance the sense of place. We aim to respect neighbouring buildings and the surrounding context in terms of height, mass and scale. High quality architectural design that creates coherent and attractive forms and elevations using high quality material is even more important to this proposal.

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Conclusion

We are of the opinion that this proposal sets out to meet the requirements for this type of extension within the local planning context. We have set out to eliminate any aspects that would cause unacceptable harm to the surrounding area or diminish the current amenity enjoyed by surrounding neighbours. We have listened to the requirements of the current owners and looked carefully at the surrounding existing extensions. We have stepped in the double storey extension from the side elevation and thus created further space to appreciate the original built form.

The proposed extensions will add considerable flexibility to the current arrangement and at the same time provides additional area in a manner that compliments the existing building.

We have demonstrated above that in an area of vernacular style the proposed extension will not harm the significance of its heritage setting. We have scaled the proposed extension in a manner that is respectful to the original dwelling. Furthermore, we are intentionally preserving the existing gaps between No 36 and No 40 and thus are contributing to the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation area.