

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – ESTATE MANAGEMENT REPORT

APPLICATION No: W6/2014/0588/EM

SITE ADDRESS: 7 Densley Close, Welwyn Garden City

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT: Erection of two, two storey side extensions

RECOMMENDATION: Refusal

1. SITE AND APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:

The application site comprises of a two storey dwellinghouse with a tall pitched roof with front and rear dormers creating a three storey dwellinghouse internally. Either side of the dwellinghouse is a flat roofed, single storey extension.

The application plot is square in shape located towards the end of the cul-de-sac. With the exception of the projecting single garage, the dwelling is set back from the highway with a small canopy roof above the front entrance. All the existing windows have a horizontal glazing bar design.

The proposal seeks estate management consent for a two storey side extension either side of the existing dwelling with two rooflights upon the proposed rear roofslope.

2. SITE DESIGNATION: The site lies within the Estate Management Scheme area under the Leasehold Reform Act 1967

3. RELEVANT EM HISTORY:

W6/1991/5346/EM - Single storey side extension and conservatory. Granted 14 October 1991

W6/1998/5403/EM - Re-siting of existing boundary hedge. Granted 9 November 1998

W6/1999/5039/EM - Extend existing crossover and hardstanding. Granted 4 May 1999

W6/2013/1279/EM - Demolition of existing side extension and erection of single storey side extension along with alterations to roof and windows at single storey level. Refused 21 August 2013

W6/2013/2246/EM - Demolition of existing side extension and erection of single storey side extension along with alterations to roof and windows at single storey level. Granted 19 December 2013

4. CONSULTATIONS:

None

5. NEIGHBOUR REPRESENTATIONS:

Nine representations have been received from the public which may be summarised as:

- The proposed extensions would be out of keeping with the character of the present house,
- It would badly affect the architectural continuity and ambiance of this conservation area,
- Would constitute an over-development of one of the area's largest houses,
- Unclear how the proposed works will be carried out without skips and vehicles intruding into the public highway and obstructing access to properties 8 and 10 Densley Close,
- The proposed side extensions will not be in keeping with the existing first floor and second floor levels. The roofline on the two new extensions will not line up with the existing roofline at both the top and bottom of new roofs,
- With parking for up to 3 cars on the drive it would be inappropriate to extend the current dwelling from a 4 bed house to a 6 bed house. The current parking facilities would be insufficient, and we would not like the front garden to be converted so it is entirely used for parking,
- It will be against the ethos and the spatial arrangements of the town's design.
- It will set a precedent where the uniqueness and character of the town would be open to compromise,
- It looks like a block of flats rather than a family property which characterises the surrounding area,
- Proposed extensions will result in a visually overbearing dwelling in a cul-de-sac of this size,
- The provision of so many en-suite bedrooms might indicate an intention to rent out rooms, in which case the possibility that tenants would be less supportive of the local ambience should be considered, including the need to respect the parking requirements of the surrounding properties.

6. TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS

None

7. MAIN EM ISSUES AND POLICIES:

The main planning issues with this application are:

- a) Whether the proposal maintains and enhances the amenities and values of Welwyn Garden City and neighbouring occupiers (Policy EM1)

8. ANALYSIS:

- a) Whether the proposal maintains and enhances the amenities and values of Welwyn Garden City and neighbouring occupiers

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.

The application site sits within a residential area to the west of the town. Densley Close is a residential cul-de-sac comprising largely of detached properties situated within similar sized plots. The application dwelling is two storeys in height with dormer windows within the front and rear roofspace giving a three storey appearance. The dwelling has been extended upon previously by virtue of single storey, flat roofed extensions either side of the dwelling and a rear conservatory.

The proposal seeks estate management consent for a 3.9m wide extension either side of the existing dwelling at first floor above the existing single storey side extensions incorporating a pitched roof above. The pitched roof will be set below the ridgeline of the main roof by approximately 0.5m. The proposed first floor side extension will provide three ensuites and walk-in wardrobes. The proposed pitched roof will also provide two additional ensuites with a roof light upon the rear roof slope of both side extensions.

Whilst a minimum of 2.35m separation space will exist at first floor level along the shared boundary with No.5 Densley Close and at least 4.8m at first floor level with 19 Scholars Mews, the proposed side extensions at 3.9m wide are considered to add additional bulk to the existing dwelling which would fail to appear as subordinate in scale and design to the existing dwelling. Furthermore, the proposed set back from the front elevation of the existing dwelling by approximately 1.3m is not considered a sufficient enough set back to appear subordinate in scale, creating side extensions of approximately 5.1m in depth.

A projecting flat roof design feature exists on both the front and rear elevation of the existing dwelling and therefore the eaves design of the proposed side extensions would fail to appropriately reflect the eaves design of the existing dwelling to the detriment to the design and character of the existing dwelling.

The proposed windows upon the front and rear elevation of the proposed side extensions are considered to be of a scale and design to appear in keeping with the scale and design of the existing first floor windows.

To conclude, the scale and design of the proposed side extensions would add additional bulk to the side of the dwelling that would fail to appear subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling and would be visually prominent within the streetscene, by virtue of their width and depth, to the detriment of the amenities and values of the Garden City. Furthermore, the eaves design of the proposed side extensions would fail to appropriately reflect the eaves design of the existing dwelling to the detriment of the design and character of the existing dwelling. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy EM1 of the Welwyn Garden City Estate Management Scheme.

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.

The dwellings most impacted by the proposal are neighbouring properties, No.5 Densley Close to the north and No.19 Scholars Mews to the south.

No. 5 Densley Close is a two storey dwellinghouse with a single storey flat roofed side extension which forms the shared boundary with the application dwelling. In addition to the 2.35m separation space of the proposed side extension from the shared boundary with No.5, the first floor element of No.5 is set back from the shared boundary by approximately 6m. The only window which exists along the side elevation of No.5 is a dormer window which has obscure glazed windows. Two windows are proposed upon the first floor northern elevation of the proposed extension which will form two ensuites. To protect privacy and prevent direct overlooking to the neighbouring dormer window, it would be appropriate to condition these two windows to be obscure glazed and non opening below 1.8m.

In respect of loss of sunlight/daylight/skylight, No.5 is orientated to the north of the application dwelling and whilst the proposed extension may result in some overshadowing within the rear garden, the proposal is not considered to result in a detrimental impact upon loss of sunlight/daylight/skylight by virtue of the separation space.

The neighbouring property to the south east, No.19 Scholar Mews is a two storey detached dwellinghouse with the front elevation orientated to face the north east. Whilst the proposed extension will be visible from the windows on the front elevation of No.19, its orientation facing north east in addition to the proposed extension measuring approximately 17m from the corner of No.19, the visibility of the proposed extension is not considered to be overbearing. Furthermore, due to the siting of No.19 to the south of the application dwelling and the distance of the proposed extension, the proposal is not considered to result in a detrimental loss of sunlight/daylight/skylight to warrant refusal. No windows are proposed upon the side elevation of the proposed extension, resulting in no loss of privacy/overlooking to No.19.

The proposal as a whole is not considered to result in a detrimental impact on the amenity of adjoining properties and therefore it complies with Policy EM1 of the Estate Management Scheme.

9. CONCLUSION:

The proposal is not considered to result in a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of adjoining properties.

The scale and design of the proposed side extensions would add additional bulk to the side of the dwelling that would fail to appear subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling and would be visually prominent, by virtue of their width and depth, to the detriment of the amenities and values of the Garden City. Furthermore, the eaves design of the proposed side extensions would fail to appropriately reflect the eaves design of the existing dwelling to the detriment of the design and character of the existing dwelling. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy EM1 of the Welwyn Garden City Estate Management Scheme.

10. RECOMMENDATION: REFUSAL

1. The scale and design of the proposed side extensions would add additional bulk to the side of the dwelling that would fail to appear subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling and would be visually prominent within the streetscene, by virtue of their width and depth, to the detriment of the amenities and values of the Garden City. Furthermore, the eaves design of the proposed side extensions would fail to appropriately reflect the eaves design of the existing dwelling to the detriment of the design and character of the existing dwelling. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy EM1 of the Welwyn Garden City Estate Management Scheme.

REFUSED DRAWING NUMBERS:

3018-OS1 & 3018-OS2 & 3018-E01 & 3018-E02 & 3018-P02 received and dated 19 March 2014

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