

7 MAY 2014

RECEIVED

Re: N6/2014/0539/FP and W6/2014/0588/EM

Erection of 2 x two-storey side extensions at 7 Densley Close, Welwyn Garden City

I would like the Council to consider the following points and reject the application for the above proposal as not being sympathetic in size or design to the original house or to the amenity of the close and surrounding conservation area.

The size of the proposed 2 x two-storey extensions, taken together with the existing ground-floor extension, appears out of proportion to the size of the original house as well as to the width of the plot.

In this small close where opposite houses have balance and symmetry, a formality of layout which gives the close its character, the proposal completely changes the shape and symmetrical design of the original house, thereby losing the balance with its opposite neighbour.

Under Extensions and Alterations Policy EM1, the proposal also "reduces the existing and original space at first-floor level and above, between the flank wall and side boundaries". This is particularly noticeable on the north side, where No.7 and No.5 have adjoining garages and side entrances, so not only is the space at first-floor level and above reduced but the symmetry of that space is lost.

Both two-storey extensions just 'look wrong' with lack of cohesion with the original house:

- a) that on the north side extends partway over the garage so the building line is not carried upwards/downwards, emphasised further by the forward projection of the garage, and the window is not in line with the side entrance door;
- b) on the south side, the window is not in line with the lower French doors, which themselves are not in line with the windows and door of the original house;
- c) the areas left not covered by the upper extensions are not equal and balanced;
- d) the off-centre positioning of the extensions against the gable ends is contrary to the symmetry of the original house and does not fit well with the unusual style of roof.

Neither upper extension appears to be supported from below.

The proposed additional accommodation and enhanced facilities are likely to lead to an increase in traffic flow and possible parking problems in this small close. The widened road space in front of No.7 and its opposite neighbour is a turning area so presumably should be kept free of parked vehicles. An increase in off-road parking at No.7 would mean paving over the front garden and further detract from the amenity of the close.

Whilst accepting this is not the intention of the present owner, once the proposed increase in accommodation and ensuite facilities to five of the six bedrooms are in place, in addition to a family bathroom, there is a real possibility of multiple occupancy in the future - I believe up to six unconnected people are allowed to share accommodation without further reference to the Council. This would make increased traffic flow and parking problems much more likely.

More specifically, I object to the windows in the gable end of the north-side extension. These are directly opposite my bathroom window and overlook my back garden. Currently designated as ensuite rooms, the glass would presumably be frosted but I understand this designation is not fixed and can be changed subsequent to planning permission and also, therefore, the requirement for frosted glass. There are windows to the front and rear of each side extension so, with extractor fans and adequate lighting, I suggest there is no need for these windows. There are no corresponding windows in the gable end of the south-side extension. I would, therefore, ask the Council to refuse permission for the windows in the gable end of the north-side extension should it be in favour of the proposal overall.

Thank you for taking the above concerns into account when considering this application.

Joan Spivey

5 DENSLEY CLOSE.