

8 Densley Close, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 7JX

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
FOR PROPOSED EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS**



Front view of house

Introduction

No. 8 Densley Close Lane is an elegant detached house built in the mid 1930's in a Close of similar large detached properties, close to the centre of Welwyn Garden City.

Planning History

The house was built in 1935 and remains largely unaltered in appearance, although it has been neglected in recent years and now requires extensive refurbishment.

The original detached single garage to the front of the house has been converted to a study and has been linked to the house by a poorly-built side extension with a polycarbonate roof and poor insulation.

A detached double garage has been built to the other side of the property.

The original metal framed windows have been replaced in the last decade with new double glazed white plastic framed windows.

Proposal

The application comprises the following works:

- Demolition of the existing detached double garage.
- Construction of a new attached double garage / workshop, linked to the house by a ground floor study and wc extension.
- A rear ground floor extension to the kitchen / breakfast room.
- Removal of the pitched polycarbonate roof to the existing breakfast room extension and its replacement with an insulated flat roof, including raising the height of the brick side wall to suit.
- Installation of a Velux rooflight to the side (south) elevation.
- Installation of 4 no. Velux rooflights to the rear (west) elevation.
- Internal alterations to create a more open plan ground floor layout and a small flat for an au-pair.
- Internal alterations to provide additional bathrooms.

Design

The original house was designed by Louis de Soissons in an elegant 1930's style, which is reflected in the proposed scheme. Unusually for the area, the house is not neo-Georgian in style, but has a more sophisticated 1930's character, with a symmetrical arrangement of windows and doors to the front and rear elevations and distinctive lozenge shaped feature windows at first floor level.

The second floor dormer windows are part of the original design.

The house is larger than its neighbours, but is formally placed at the end of this attractive Close, where it balances the scale of No. 7, a similarly proportioned but somewhat plainer 1940's three storey house and the heavily extended gable-fronted house, No.10, which terminates the Close.

The proposed kitchen extension at the back of the house has been designed with a symmetrical rear elevation, with 3 pairs of glazed doors reflecting the 3 sets of existing glazed doors to the dining room and living room.

The 4 proposed Velux conservation rooflights to the rear elevation are also symmetrically positioned, to respect the design of the existing house.

The proposed study extension at the front of the house has been designed to repeat the scale and form of the existing study wing (former garage) at the northern end of this front elevation, creating an attractive symmetrical forecourt design which echoes the formality of the house. The existing neglected front garden will be professionally landscaped to acknowledge this symmetrical formality.

The existing detached double garage is unattractive and poorly built. The proposed new double garage will be larger, to incorporate a small workshop area and to provide cycle storage for the owners' 3 young sons. The proposed extension of the garage necessitates the removal of an existing multi-stemmed hornbeam in the rear garden, the removal of which is dealt with in a separate report by an arboriculturist.

The use of matching facing bricks will ensure that the extensions blend well with the original house. The new windows will be double glazed white plastic framed units to match the existing. The flat roofs will be laid with a grey single ply Sarnafil membrane, hidden behind the raised parapet wall. The existing refelted dormer windows will be refurbished and clad in lead.

Parking

The existing house has an existing double garage and three further off road car spaces, a total of 5 car-spaces.

The proposed scheme comprises a larger attached double garage, incorporating a workshop / cycle storage area, and the three existing off-road parking spaces, a total of 5 car-spaces.

To provide access to the large rear garden, a rear garage door is provided to the proposed garage, to allow for the use of a small ride-on lawnmower.

The workshop area of the proposed garage extension is set back from the front boundary, behind the existing 1800mm high close-boarded fence, in order to maintain the symmetry of the front elevation and to minimise the impact on the garden of No.10.

Access

The existing house has a raised ground floor and does not have level disabled access, but adaptations can be made if this is found necessary in the future.

Sustainability

The existing house is poorly insulated and energy inefficient. The applicant has appointed a London practice to prepare a scheme to improve the insulation levels and energy conservation of the property, to achieve a Silver Award standard, which is very high for an existing property.

Conclusion

The long overdue refurbishment of this once elegant house and its gardens will complement the setting of Densley Close.

The scale and design of the proposed extensions are in keeping with the existing house and the surrounding properties and are sufficiently subservient as to maintain the integrity of the original property.

We therefore believe that the proposed extensions preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

Photographs



Rear view of house



Side view of house



View of existing front study wing, with No 6 in background



Rear view, with No 6 in background



View of garage and weeping ash tree, with No 10 in background



View of existing garage and ash tree



Boundary fence between garages of No's 8 and 10



View of rear garden



Existing multi-stemmed hornbeam behind garage



View of rear garden and back of garage



Sloping polycarbonate roof to existing breakfast room



View of No 7 Densley Close