

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**  
**DELEGATED REPORT**

<b>APPLICATION No:</b>	<b>W6/2012/2557/EM</b>
<b>APPLICATION Site:</b>	<b>20 Walden Road, Welwyn Garden City</b>

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE:**

The application site is a plot measuring approximately 55m deep and 10m wide located to the north of Welwyn Garden City town centre. The plot features a two storey semi-detached property with detached garage, with similar properties characteristic of the street scene.

The property is bounded by another and its rear gardens (No.18) to the west, Walden Road to which it fronts to the north, green space to the south and by the plot of the adjacent property of No.22 to the east. The existing property has been extended, featuring a part single and part two storey rear extension at the west and east side of the rear elevation respectively.

The plot features a detached garage set back from the front building line, and extending beyond its rear elevation building line by approximately 4.5m. The garage forms the boundary with the plot of No.18 at this point, forming a symmetrical pitched roof double garage.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:**

The proposal seeks to demolish the existing detached garage on the site and erect a replacement garage and single storey rear conservatory, and infill the gap between the garage and house.

The existing garage features an original and extended component. The original element measures approximately 2.6m wide, 5.5m deep, and 2.1m high at eaves height on its west elevation (adjacent to the house), extending to 4.1m high at the central ridge height shared with the adjoining garage to No.22. Its rear element is stepped down approximately half a metre behind the original garage, extends a further 4.8m deep along the same width, and measures approximately 1.7m and 2.2m high to the eaves and pitched roof ridge height respectively. The side and front elevations of the original garage are set back approximately 1.1m and 4.4m from those of the main dwelling house. Windows feature on the rear elevation of the original and extended garage element, and windows and a door feature on the west side of the rear garage element. The garage features white timber doors at its front, and dark stained timber weatherboarding and roof tiles.

The proposed replacement main garage building would measure approximately the same width as existing at 2.6m wide and 7.7m deep. Its extra length would be accommodated towards the front where it would project approximately 800mm further than the front elevation of the existing garage, culminating approximately 3.6m from the front elevation building line of the main dwelling house. It would measure approximately 2.8m and 4.1m high to eaves and roof ridge height respectively. It would feature materials to match the existing dwelling house. Whilst no specific reference is made to the use of replacement timber cladding in the application form, the Design and Access Statement submitted with the parallel (approved) planning application (N6/2012/2556/FP) states that this is proposed and this appears evident on the submitted plans.

The rear conservatory would extend to the rear of the garage along the same width by approximately a further 3.9m, stepping down approximately half a metre mid-way through its depth. Adjacent to the rear elevation of the property, this element would measure approximately 1.6m and 2m high to eaves and pitched (glass panelled) roof ridge height, and 2.1m and 2.6m high respectively towards the rear where the ground steps down. As per the main garage, notwithstanding a primarily glass frontage on the west side elevation and rear elevation of the rear conservatory, it would feature materials, including brickwork, to match those of the existing dwelling house on its remainder.

The proposal would also involve infilling the approximate 1.1m gap between the garage and the house, from flush with the rear elevation to approximately 1.3m short of the front elevation of the garage, with a door at the front and rear end. This element would measure approximately 2.5m high adjoining the side of the garage, and feature a slope rising to approximately 2.9m where it would adjoin the side elevation of the main dwelling house. It would feature materials to match the existing dwelling house.

A parallel application (ref. W6/2012/2560/EM) is also under consideration at the adjoining property at No.22, which symmetrically features a shared ridge with the application site, for a replacement garage at that property which would retain the same footprint to the side and rear and project approximately 800mm forward of the existing garage, flush with the proposed garage.

**ESTATE MANAGEMENT HISTORY:**

W6/2005/1496/EM – Erection of first floor rear extension – Approved 26/01/2006

W6/2001/1606/EM – Single storey rear extension – Approved 21/01/2002

W6/2001/1267/EM – Single storey rear extension – Approved 29/10/2001

**SUMMARY OF POLICIES:**

1967 Leasehold Reforms Act – Estate Management Scheme:

Estate Management Scheme Policies October 2008:

EM1 – Extensions and alterations

**CONSULTATIONS:** None

**TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS:** None

**REPRESENTATIONS:**

None, period expired

**DISCUSSION:**

The main issues are:

- 1. Whether the proposal accords with the Policy EM1; and**
- 2. Other Material Planning Considerations**

**1. Whether the proposal accords with the Policy EM1**

The character and appearance of much of Welwyn Garden City has a quality that consists of carefully designed layouts with formal and symmetrical patterns where the design and detailing of architecture is in groups and individual buildings.

Therefore in order to preserve the unique architectural heritage of the town and its buildings the Council expects that all applications for extensions and alterations respect and do not harm the character and appearance of the building and the street scene.

Policy EM1 of the Estate Management Scheme applies and refers to extensions and alterations and seeks to preserve the unique architectural heritage of the town and its buildings. It states that extensions and alterations to existing buildings 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 amenities of adjoining occupiers. In addition, the policy states that extensions or alterations should not materially affect the residential amenities of adjoining residents through loss of day/sun/skylight, loss of privacy and outlook.

The street scene is characterised by similar properties allowing for subtle variations in architectural detailing, with garages and small side extensions prevalent. The proposal would effectively replace the existing garage which is visible from the street scene and the additional extension to that garage to its rear, which is not readily discernible from the street scene. The replacement garage would measure approximately 700mm higher at its eaves than the existing garage, and accordingly this would create additional mass and scale at this element which would be visible from the street scene. However, as it would feature a ridge height to match the existing ridge height, shared with the adjoining garage, the associated increase in scale and mass by virtue of raising the eaves 700mm is not considered to result in a readily discernible increase from the street scene in this regard. This would be further mitigated by the use of materials to match the existing dwelling house and garage. In this regard, notwithstanding a reference in the Design and Access Statement, as no specific reference is made in the application form to the use of replacement wooden cladding on the replacement garage as per the existing, and in order to ensure a high quality finish in keeping with the design, appearance, materials and architectural detailing used in the existing building as required by policy EM1, a suitable condition to require material samples of external surfaces to be submitted for approval prior to development is considered necessary should

permission be granted. This condition could ensure that appropriate weatherboarding is used in this element of the extension.

The parallel application (ref. W6/2012/2560/EM at No.22 which symmetrically features a shared ridge with the application site has not yet been determined. Whilst that application would match the increased eaves height and forward projection of this proposal, as that scheme has not been determined, this application is considered on the basis of its impact on the existing development at No.22. In this regard, the increase in eaves height, whilst noticeable, is not considered prominent when read from the street scene of Walden Road. From here, the additional 700mm height of eaves on the application site would not appear detrimental to the design, appearance or architectural detailing of the shared garage design due to the same height roof ridge and through the use of appropriately matching materials. It would project a further 800mm than the adjoining garage frontage and whilst not an ideal design, at less than a metre deep and through the use of matching materials, the depth difference, whilst apparent from the side vistas, would not be overly prominent, particularly from close by or direct views from the street scene of Walden Road as to detract from the design, appearance and architectural detailing of the dwelling house or to cause harm to the amenities or values of the Estate Management area sufficient to warrant refusal. The proposal would therefore accord with policy EM1 in this regard.

The rear conservatory would feature the same width and depth as existing and its height from eaves to pitch height would be shorter than the existing element (by 100mm-200mm) closest to the main garage and slightly taller (by 400mm) at its rear where the land slopes down. It would feature materials to match those of the main dwelling house and glass would feature on the roof, rear elevation, and the side elevation which fronts the internal rear garden only. Furthermore, it would not be discernible from the street scene due to its location at the rear of the garage and lower topography. Accordingly, due to its limited footprint, location, and limited scale and associated mass, in addition to the materials proposed, this element is considered subordinate to and in keeping with the original dwelling house and its design and appearance (taking into account subsequent additions) and would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities and values of the surrounding area, in accordance with policy EM1.

The infill element of the proposal would, by virtue of its limited dimensions at 1.1m wide and 5.6m deep (6m<sup>2</sup>), and limited height at single storey, be clearly subordinate to the original dwelling house, even when taking into account its subsequent expansion. Furthermore, it would feature materials to match the existing dwelling house, in keeping with its design as required by policy EM1. Whilst the proposal would infill the only gap on this side of the frontage of the property, between the house and garage, in light of the existing character of the surrounding area which features adjoining garages and side extensions, and due to the forward facing projection of the group of properties of which the application site forms, in addition to the small scale of infill proposed, this element of the proposal is not considered to result in a detrimental impact on the amenities and values of the surrounding area. It would therefore accord with policy EM1 in this regard.

The impact of the proposal on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings is considered in terms of how the proposal impacts properties in terms of overshadowing and the level of access to day/sun/sky light afforded by the proposal, whether the proposal would be overbearing and cause loss of outlook, and in terms of overlooking/privacy.

The proposal would be of a similar scale to existing in terms of the garage and rear conservatory (existing rear garage element). The maximum height increase of approximately 400mm of the conservatory over the existing rear garage element, combined with the same footprint and position adjacent to the rear of the adjoining garage at No.22, the presence of the garage of No.22 (both existing and proposed) between it and the rear habitable rooms at No.22, and the distance to those habitable rooms of approximately 11m ensure that it would not cause a detrimental impact to the amenities of the occupiers of No.22 with regard to the aforementioned criteria. With regard to No.18, its glass elevation on the west side would be at ground floor and coupled with a distance of approximately 10m from the rear elevation of that property, and boundary treatment between, mean that it would not cause a detrimental impact to the amenities of the occupiers of that property either. The proposal would therefore accord with policy EM1 in this regard.

The replacement main garage would be approximately 700mm higher at eaves height. However, the main roof and ridge height would remain the same. It would be sited at the side of the application site dwelling house and existing/proposed garage of the same ridge height at No.22, and accordingly, the increased mass by virtue of raised eaves is not considered to cause such a degree of overshadowing or overbearing effect or loss of light to the occupiers of No.22 over the existing buildings as to cause a discernible detrimental impact to the amenities of its occupiers. In light of its distance adjacent to the existing garage at No.22 behind which the majority of its mass would lie, and distance of approximately 5m from the front elevation of No.22, the proposed garage and its additional 800mm forward projection is not considered to result in a discernible loss of light, overbearing effect, loss of outlook or other detrimental loss of amenity to the occupiers of No.22 either, and would not be visible or discernible to the residents of No.18 on the other side of the main dwelling house. The proposal would therefore accord with policy EM1 in this regard.

Due to the limited additional mass afforded by the replacement garage and conservatory, and the infill element by virtue of its scale, in addition to appropriate use of materials, the proposal is considered in keeping with the design, appearance, materials and architectural detailing of the main dwelling house. It would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities and values of the surrounding area or the residential amenities of adjoining occupiers. It therefore accords with policy EM1.

## **1. Other Material Planning Considerations**

**Protected Species:** No impact.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The proposal would be in keeping with the visual appearance and character of the property and the surrounding area and would not have a detrimental impact on the residential amenities of the adjoining properties and therefore complies with Policy

EM1 of the Estate Management Scheme. In addition, there is not a reasonable likelihood of protected species being present.

**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**

**CONDITIONS:**

1-5 EM01

- 6 C.13.1 The development/works shall not be completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details: drawing number: 2840-P01 & 2940-OS1 & 2940-OS2 received and dated 6 December 2012 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved drawings and any changes must be agreed in advance in writing by the local planning authority.

**Pre Development**

- 7 EM02 Material samples

**SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE GRANT OF PERMISSION:**

It is considered that the proposed development does not have an unacceptably harmful impact on the amenities and values of the area in which it is located. It is therefore in compliance with the Estate Management Scheme.

**INFORMATIVES:**

None

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