



35 Sherrardspark Road

2012/2652

PLANNING
DEPARTMENT

19 DEC 2012

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

AMA Design 2012

This design and access statement forms part of the planning application for the conversion of a loft space into living accommodation at 35 Sherrardspark Road.

The statement is required as the property falls within the Conservation Area of Welwyn Garden City.

This application is made following the withdrawal of previous planning application no. N6/2012/1688/FP and this design and access statement comprises part of a re-application based on a revised design.

The principal changes to the design since the previous application are:

- Change from 2 smaller windows in gable end to a single larger window
- Dormer window to be obscured glazed and non-opening in response to neighbours concerns and to eliminate overlooking
- Dormer window reduced in size and scale
- Arrangement of dormer window glazing changed to remove solid panels either side of window frame

In arriving at the revised design great care has been taken to consider the concerns with the previous proposals and ensure the proposals conform to the current planning policies.

Design Statement

The Proposal involves the conversion of an existing loft space into usable living accommodation. As shown on the drawings submitted as part of the application it is proposed that a new bedroom & en-suite bathroom are created within the existing loft space, accessed via a new staircase which is located above the existing staircase for the property.

By positioning the new stair over the existing stair, the design remains loyal to the original layout for the property. To allow for an appropriately sized and located dormer window the new stair is reduced in size from the existing but aligned directly over it to provide clear and legible circulation throughout the dwelling house.

In order to meet headroom requirements to comply with the Building Regulations, a new dormer window is required over the new stair case.

Following the withdrawal of the previous application careful consideration has been given to the proposed dormer window. It is noted that current planning policies that apply to dormer windows are:

Supplementary Design Guidance (February 2005) Policy 5.2 vi)

“Dormer windows should be contained within the roofslope, be subservient to the roof of the property and be in proportion to the existing fenestration of the property. They must not extend above the ridge height of the existing dwelling

and the dormer cheeks should be at least 1 metre from the flank wall of the property or of the party wall with the adjoining property.”

Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005) Policy R22 - Development in Conservation Areas
“Within the Conservation Areas, as shown on the Proposals Map, any proposals for new buildings or extensions and alterations to existing buildings will only be permitted where they would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, in terms of siting, form, scale, materials, detailing and landscaping.”

The proposed dormer window is fully compliant with policy 5.2 vi as demonstrated on the attached drawings.

In order to arrive at a design for the dormer window that can be considered to “preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area” the Conservation Area Appraisal (September 2007) was considered along with a detailed study of existing 2nd floor dormer windows visible from the street in the local area, the report accompanying this application shows a summary of the 9 windows studied.

It is noted that out of the nine studies the majority were larger (either wider or taller but not both at the same time) than the corresponding first floor window, most had narrow dormer cheeks with the window frame directly abutting them and most were leaded with white painted window frames.

Several of the windows studied had gained planning permission prior to 2005 and whilst there were no planning records relating to the others, all were in place at the time of the 2007 conservation area appraisal. Page 34 of the appraisal includes a photograph of no. 18 Roundwood Close clearly showing the dormer window.

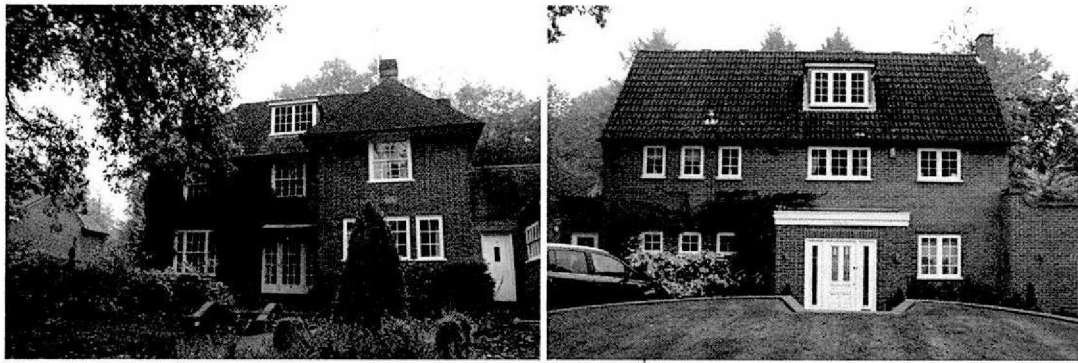
As part of the appraisal several areas of concern to the conservation area are raised and there is a further summary of issues raised by stakeholders. Where works have been carried out that are considered to be of particular concern to the character or appearance of the conservation area they are clearly identified. There is no mention of any of the existing dormer windows in the appraisal.

Therefore, in order to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area the dormer windows studied have been used as a reference. It was considered that the most relevant of the studied windows were those at 44 and 45 Sherrardspark Road. These are both visible from the same stretch of road as 35 Sherrardspark road and feature prominent dormer windows which are aligned with the windows below keeping the order and presence of the building above the eaves line

The proposed dormer window follows the same order and relationship of these dormer windows to the attached building. This new window is also positioned in line with windows on the first and ground floor of the property to provide visual symmetry in keeping with the aesthetics of the original house. The window frame directly abuts the

dormer cheeks which are kept as narrow as possible whilst still maintaining an acceptable level of insulation (in line with current sustainability policy)

The proposed external materials of the dormer window – lead flat roof & cheeks & white painted timber window – are in keeping with other dormer windows already installed in the vicinity of the property; in keeping with the existing established aesthetic of the streetscape.



No.s 44 and 45 Sherrardspark Road showing their existing 2nd floor dormer windows

In response to concerns raised by a neighbours objection letter of 3rd September it is proposed that the dormer window has obscured and non-opening glazing. This is to address any privacy issues that may be experienced by the location and orientation of the dormer windows whilst still providing natural daylight to the new accommodation.

In addressing further points raised in the objection letter, and having spoken to one of the householders concerned (owner of 10 Mandeville Rise) as well as checking Council planning records for refused applications my client believes the sentence *“It’s our understanding that applications for roof dormer windows at numbers 10 and 16 Mandeville Rise were denied in 2011 as they affected both privacy and the roof line and that 12 Mandeville Rise applied for a roof dormer window which was denied some years ago for similar reasons in spite of other dormer windows in the area.”* to be incorrect and misleading. No records relating to any dormer window applications are present.

In addition to the dormer window it is proposed that a new window is positioned on the gable end of the property; this window has been designed to follow the proportions of the lower windows on this facade.

This window is proposed to have clear glazing as it overlooks the street and therefore does not affect the privacy of neighbouring properties.

ACCESS Statement

Ample car parking is provided for a 5 bedroom house through 2 driveway spaces and a further space in the internal garage making a total of 3 spaces.

As the proposals involve the second floor of the property, the new accommodation will be accessed via a new staircase from the first floor.

This new staircase is designed to match the existing stair, replicating the existing access arrangement to the first floor.

Sustainability & biodiversity Statement

As identified within the biodiversity checklist, the house is located close to Sherrards Park, an SSSI.

It is anticipated that the proposal will have no impact on the environmental quality of this important site, as the new accommodation is to be located within an existing building, with the only external alteration being a modest dormer window.

Care will be taken to minimise noise and disruption during construction to ensure that there are no impacts on the surrounding area; with the majority of building work being undertaken from the interior of the property.

The existing house is in an excellent state of repair, with recently refurbished windows and external woodwork; as such it is unlikely to provide any shelter for birds or bats.

The refurbished loft space is designed with high levels of thermal insulation & as such will significantly improve the energy efficiency of the existing house.

ESTATE MANAGEMENT POLICY LETTER OF JUSTIFICATION

As identified within the design statement above, the proposal is fully in accordance with the Welwyn Garden City Estate Management Scheme Area Policy EM1 – Extensions and Alterations.

Care has been taken to respect and enhance the original character of the house; through the specification of windows and materials in keeping with the house and its vicinity. Care has also been taken in the sizing detailing and location of windows to maintain privacy, whilst making the most of natural day-lighting to the new accommodation.