

---

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 March 2020

**by G Pannell BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020**

---

**Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/D/20/3244891**

**49 Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City AL8 6LG**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mrs Helen Rock against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.
  - The application Ref 6/2019/2362/HOUSE, dated 24 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 19 November 2019.
  - The development proposed is two storey side and rear extension.
- 

## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Procedural Matters

2. Within the evidence before me reference has been made to the Council's emerging Local Plan, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council – Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission August 2016. However, as I am unaware of the extent and content of unresolved objections to the plan, I can only afford the plan as a whole limited weight in my decision. I have relied upon the policies within the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 in coming to my decision, except where the Council have relied solely on the emerging plan policy.

## Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area.

## Reasons

### *Character and appearance - dwelling*

4. The appeal site is a detached two storey dwelling located within the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area. The estate is characterised by two storey dwellings of differing designs and styles, which results in an organic form of development although the dwellings follow a defined building line, in relation to their position to the road. As such, the group of dwellings are not uniform or symmetrical, and this contributes to the overall variety of the street scene.
5. The proposed extension would be located to the side of the dwelling, set back from the front wall of the host dwelling, with a lower roofline. In these ways the proposal would be subservient to the host property. However, the side

extension would not be proportionate in width to the original side projection, unbalancing the original dwelling. The proposed rear extension due to its overall width would dominate the rear elevation of the dwelling. In addition the introduction of three gable ends lead to both a cluttered appearance, and one which is not in keeping with the original design of the dwelling. Overall, I find that the development would not result in a sympathetic and proportionate addition and would detract from the overall character and appearance of the host dwelling.

6. In conclusion the proposal would cause an unacceptable degree of harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling, in conflict with policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 which requires all developments to be of a high standard, having regard to the character of the area and the Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 which sets out how extensions should be designed to complement and reflect the design and character of the dwelling.

#### *Conservation Area*

7. The site is located within the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area, the significance of which is derived from the carefully designed layouts with formal patterns where the design of architecture is in groups and individual buildings.
8. Having regard to the contribution that the individually designed buildings make to the significance of the Conservation Area, any alterations to them need to be sensitively designed in order to preserve its character and appearance.
9. The introduction of a side extension as proposed would alter the character of the existing dwelling and result in an unbalanced appearance to the frontage. It would be an incongruous addition, which would fail to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area. In addition the proposed rear extension would result in a cluttered appearance to the rear elevation, which would detract from the original design of the dwelling. Whilst views of the rear from the public realm would be limited, this does not obviate the need for the development to be of high-quality design. Given the significance of the Conservation Area is derived from the individually designed buildings, I consider that the extensions would result in harm to the significance of the Conservation Area.
10. Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Given that the proposal would be of a relatively small scale, I find the harm to the setting of the Conservation Area to be less than substantial in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
11. Under such circumstances, paragraph 196 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this case, the proposed development would lead to some benefits during the construction phase, which would support the local economy. However, these benefits would be modest and therefore, there is no public benefit sufficient to outweigh the harm.
12. Whilst the appellant has outlined personal benefits associated with the scheme, namely being able to stay within the area and improvements to the quality of accommodation within the house, I do not consider that this would be a public benefit sufficient to outweigh the harm.

13. I conclude that the development proposed would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Welwyn Garden Conservation Area. This would be contrary to emerging policy SADM15 of the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council – Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission August 2016, which requires proposes to respect the character and appearance of the asset. This policy is broadly consistent with the Framework and therefore can be afforded significant weight.

**Conclusion**

14. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*G. Pannell*

INSPECTOR