



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2025

by **K Winnard Solicitor LL.B Hons**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/D/24/3347179

5 Selwyn Crescent, Hatfield AL10 9NL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Martyn Bridgeman against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Council.
 - The application Ref is 6/2024/0636/HOUSE.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two storey side and rear extension, internal alterations, alterations to the roof to include a rear dormer, front rooflights and hip to gable roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council changed the description of the development. I have adopted this description as it describes the development more accurately. I note that this description has been utilised by the agent for the appellant within the appeal form.
3. In December 2024, the Government published its revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). In this instance, the issues most relevant to the appeal remain unaffected by the revisions to the Framework. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action..

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property (No 5) is a semi-detached dwelling located in a residential area where the properties are similar in size, scale and design. Several of the properties have been extended and whilst there is variety in the size and design of the extensions, the street itself retains a generally cohesive character of semi-detached development in a mature setting.
6. The proposal involves the construction of a first floor side extension projecting to the rear of the dwelling to link with a first floor rear extension to accommodate a bedroom. In addition, it also provides for the construction of a new gable wall to the side of the dwelling to accommodate a dormer conversion. Together these would

result in a sizeable addition to No 5. They would appear disproportionate and unsympathetic and add considerably to the bulk and scale of the side of the dwelling. Notwithstanding the one metre gap from the adjoining flank boundary in accordance with recommendations contained within the Welwyn Hatfield Supplementary Design Guidance (Design Guidance), the proposal would result in a mass of built form which would be dominant in the street scene resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the area.

7. The appellant cites a number of other extensions to properties on Selwyn Crescent in support of the proposal. Whilst these demonstrate a variety of designs, in general most of these extensions reflect the design of the original dwelling and are of a subservient form. Particular attention has been drawn to a dormer roof development at No 9 Selwyn Crescent. Whilst I observed this property on site I am not aware of the full circumstances surrounding this development. However it is an isolated feature within the streetscene and as such it does not change the overall character and appearance of the area. In any event, the existence of this development does not justify development which would otherwise be harmful. As such this development only merits limited weight and does not lead me to a different view in this case.
8. I acknowledge that a Lawful Development Certificate for a hip to gable loft conversion with rear dormer and rooflights to the front roofslope has been granted and that this represents a realistic fallback position for the appellant. However, this scheme would be smaller and the gable conversion, due to its scale and siting further away from the side of the dwelling, would not be as prominent within the streetscene. As such, I give this fallback position limited weight.
9. I note that the Council has concluded that there would be no harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings subject to the imposition of conditions relating to obscure windows. I note also that no concerns are raised in relation to parking issues as a result of the proposal. However, the absence of harm in these respects does not weigh in favour of the scheme.
10. I therefore conclude that the development would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of No 5 and the area. As such the development is contrary to Policy SP9 of the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Local Plan 2016-2036 (adopted 2023) and the Design Guidance. Together these require development to relate well to the character and appearance of the existing property and its surroundings in terms of mass, scale and height. It would also fail to comply with the Framework which requires development to be sympathetic to local character.
11. For the reasons given, I hereby dismiss the appeal.

K Winnard

INSPECTOR