



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 February 2025

by **D J Barnes MBA BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/24/3357789

20 Park Hill, Harpenden, Hertfordshire AL5 3AT

- 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 Professor Robert Toulson against the decision of St Albans City and District Council.
 - The application Ref is 5/24/1071.
 - The development proposed is the erection of energy efficient upgrades to the existing house; demolition of existing garage and conservatory; erection of a two-storey side extension and one-storey outbuilding in the rear garden
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The revised National Planning Policy Framework was published in December 2024 but does not raise any new matters which affect the assessment of this appeal scheme.

Main Issue

3. It is considered that the main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area, in particular the streetscene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a 2-storey semi-detached dwelling located within a primarily residential area where there is variety in the design and form of dwellings. There are detached, semi-detached and terraced properties which are generally 2-storey in height with a mix of hipped and gable roofs.
5. Although there are variations in the design of properties within the surrounding area, the dwellings of a similar age as the property within this part of the streetscene are set back from the road to the rear of the footway with front gardens which are landscaped and used for parking. The design of these dwellings, including the property, has an Arts and Craft influence exhibited by the projecting front bays, timber details and fenestration. Some of the dwellings, including 19 Park Hill which is the other semi-detached dwelling, have been altered but these additions and extensions reflect the general style and character of the host properties.

6. The appeal scheme includes an extensive remodelling of the property which would increase its width, replace a cat-slide roof with a gable feature and introduce a varied design of the roof. The other element of the proposed development includes the erection of an outbuilding of a similar style as the proposed development. The appellant claims that the design has been influenced by maximising energy performance, including the orientation of the roofslopes to maximise solar gain for the proposed PV panels.
7. Although there would be front gable features, the design of the resulting property would not echo the style of the original property and the neighbouring dwellings, in particular the roof form, the side elevation's massing and fenestration and the contemporary detailing which would both be visible from the road. The resulting property would appear an incongruous and conspicuous form of development which would detract from the character and appearance of this part of the streetscene. Further, and although No. 19 has already been altered the design of the resulting property would detract from the character and appearance of this pair of semi-detached dwellings.
8. By reason of its siting, the proposed outbuilding would not result in any unacceptable harm to the streetscene or the wider residential area. Indeed, it was noted during the site visit that to the rear of the property is an altered dwelling which has a contemporary designed rear extension. However, the lack of harm associated with the proposed outbuilding does not outweigh the unacceptable harm which has been identified associated with the remodelling of the appeal property.
9. For the reasons given, it is concluded that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, in particular the streetscene, and, as such, it would conflict with Policies 69 and 72 of the St Albans District Local Plan Review and Policies ESD1 and ESD2 of the Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan. Amongst other matters, these policies require development to take into account the scale and character of its surroundings, including by maintaining or enhancing the character of the area. Further, for residential extensions to both relate to the domestic scale, character and appearance of the street, and be compatible with the original building, including by reason of roof form. Accordingly, it is concluded that this appeal should be dismissed.

D J Barnes

INSPECTOR