



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 29 April 2025 by L Clark MSc MRTPI

Decision by John Morrison (BA) Hons MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd May 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/C1950/D/25/3359211

36 Applecroft Road, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL8 6LA

- 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 Joe Acton against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Council.
 - The application Ref is 6/2024/2021/HOUSE.
 - The development proposed is the erection of carport, construction of brick steps to primary front door and replacement of secondary front door with window and removal of steps
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Appeal B Ref: APP/C1950/D/25/3363328

36 Applecroft Road, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL8 6LA

- 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 Joe Acton against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Council.
 - The application ref is 6/2025/0130/HOUSE.
 - The development proposed is the construction of brick surround to primary front door to match existing, with reconstruction of associated steps and construction of timber framed carport.
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Decision

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B is dismissed insofar as it relates to the construction of a brick surround to the primary front door to match the existing with reconstruction of associated steps but allowed in so far as it relates to the carport and so planning permission is granted for the construction of a timber framed carport at 36 Applecroft Road, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL8 6LA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 6/2025/0130/HOUSE subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with sheet numbers 002 rev P3, 100 rev P3, 101 rev P3, 300 rev P3 and 301 P3 insofar as they relate to the carport only.

Appeal Procedure

3. The site visits were undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeals.

Preliminary Matter and Main Issue

4. The descriptions above have been taken from the application forms which also include additional explanatory text. I have taken it into account but for ease of identifying the development to which the appeals relate, I have omitted it from the banner headers above. This has not changed anything fundamental nor prejudiced the ability of any party to make their arguments in respect of the appeal schemes. The main issue in respect of both is, in each case, whether the proposals would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site is a semi-detached dwelling on a corner plot where properties have a similar appearance. It has been extended substantially to the side in a subordinate manner. Architectural features on properties nearby include brick detailing and window and door openings which are well preserved. This lends a pleasant traditionality to the street scene. Dwellings are set back in a linear form and there is a verdant and semi enclosed appearance in places, especially on corner plots which are often shielded from view by mature trees and hedging. All of these factors contribute positively to the significance of the CA.
6. The replacement of the front door in Appeal A would erode the originality of the dwelling and unbalance the appearance and historic integrity of the semi-detached properties. The addition of the extension has already partly diluted some symmetry between the two dwellings, but its subordinate appearance ensures that their original form as a pair is still readable. This legibility would be undermined if the original door were to be replaced with a window. For appeal B, the brick detailing around the original door is a defining feature of many of the properties within the area which gives the original entrance a focal sense of priority and primacy. The inclusion of brick detailing around the secondary door would therefore increase its prominence, detracting from the primacy of the original door and unacceptably affecting its traditional originality.
7. The proposed carport for Appeal A would be almost the height of the eaves of the dwelling and would extend substantially above the roadside hedge. Consequently, it would compete for visual dominance within the street scene. In both appeals, neither the character or appearance of the CA would be preserved nor enhanced by these elements of the schemes.
8. Due to the scale of the development in context, the harm I have found above would be less than substantial but still attract great weight. As directed by paragraph 215 of the Framework, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits. Those that have been advanced are personal relating to access for occupants and private deliveries and therefore they would only attract limited weight. The harm I have found would not therefore be outweighed. Consequently, there would be conflict with Policies SP15, SADM15, SP1 and SP9 of the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Local Plan 2023 (LP) which are concerned with development responding to key characteristics of a garden city amongst other things.
9. For Appeal B, the height and footprint of the carport has been substantially reduced and would sit comfortably at a low level without competing for visual dominance. It would be set to the side of the property tucked behind the existing mature trees and hedging that border the site. Views of the carport would therefore be restricted, and

it would not block views of the dwelling itself retaining an uninterrupted frontage between the building and the roadside. This is further supported by the lightweight design of the structure that would be unimposing and assimilate into the verdant backdrop. The carport proposed in Appeal B is therefore acceptable and would preserve the character and appearance of the CA. It would therefore meet the criteria of Policies SP15, SADM15, SP1 and SP9 of the LP. The aims of which I have set out.

Conditions

10. Other than the standard time limit condition, it is necessary to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans for certainty and enforcement purposes. The existing hedging and mature trees at the site are adequate to retain the lush appearance and therefore a condition to require the hedging to be maintained at a higher level is not necessary. Further, and by virtue of the trees being within the CA, they would have additional protection.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. For the reasons given above, Appeal A and elements of appeal B would conflict with the development plan and there are no sufficiently weighty material considerations to indicate a decision other than in accordance therewith. I therefore recommend that they should be dismissed. The carport that forms part of Appeal B would comply with the development plan. I therefore recommend that appeal B be partly allowed, subject to the conditions mentioned.

L Clark

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis, appeals A and part of B is dismissed. The carport on appeal B is allowed, subject to the conditions set out above.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR