



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 May 2025

by **D Ellis MPlan MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/24/3357984

3 Barrells Down Road, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 2ST

- 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 A Groom against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 3/24/1367/HH.
 - The development proposed is construction of a two-storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is set on a corner plot on the junction between Barrells Down Road and Elm Road and comprises a two-storey detached dwelling. The properties in Barrells Down Road and Elm Road are a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings which have a variety of designs and sizes. The ridge heights of the properties in Barrells Down Road step down to follow the level of the street. The comparative sense of openness that exists at present, as a result of the side garden area, provides a welcome visual relief in an otherwise densely packed urban layout.
4. The existing dwelling is much wider than most of the dwellings in the area. The extension would be approximately half the width of the existing dwelling, which would add considerable bulk and massing to the side of the property. The extended dwelling would have an excessively wide appearance which would jar with the surrounding properties.
5. In this case, the extension would be highly visible given the prominent corner location of the appeal site. The substantial bulk and width would also reduce the size of the side garden area, which would impact negatively on the sense of openness. For these reasons the proposal would not respond well to its context and would detract from the character and appearance of the area.
6. The proposed extension would be slightly set back from the existing front and rear elevations and the ridge line would be marginally lower than that of the main property. As such the extension would respect the step-down of the ridge lines in the street. Furthermore, although the proposed side elevation would lack any

fenestration, this would be in keeping with other side elevations in the vicinity. The absence of harm in relation to these points is a neutral factor in my determination of this appeal.

7. My attention has been drawn to the properties at 7 Elm Road and 34 Chantry Road and those in Squirrel Close, which the appellant asserts are of similar widths to the appeal property. However, none of these properties are on corner plots and the properties in Squirrel Close are set behind, and are largely screened by, properties on Barrells Wood Road. Furthermore, I have not been provided with any details of side extensions, and any associated planning permissions, at these properties. I am therefore not persuaded that these other properties are directly comparable to the appeal property or that they justify the appeal proposal.
8. Overall, the proposed extension would be an incongruous addition to the dwelling as a result of its bulk, scale and width and, consequently, it would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies HOU11 and DES4 of the East Hertfordshire District Plan (2018), insofar as they require the size, scale, and mass of a development to respect the character, appearance and setting of the surrounding area.

Other Matters

9. The appeal site lies just outside but adjacent to the Bishop's Stortford Conservation Area (CA). The Council's Conservation Officer states that the stepping-down of the properties in Barrells Down Road contributes positively to the setting of the CA in this location. As stated above, the proposed extension would maintain the step-down in ridge heights in the street. As a consequence, the proposed extension would not significantly affect the manner in which the CA is experienced and would not harm the significance of the heritage asset through development in its setting. However, this does not alter the harm identified above.
10. While the proposal would improve the habitable accommodation for the appellant, this would not outweigh the harm above.

Conclusion

11. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and the material considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework, do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

D Ellis

INSPECTOR