Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 April 2025 by A Morrison MTCP MRTPI

Decision by Martin Seaton BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/25/3361270
19 Walkern Road, Watton At Stone, Hertfordshire SG14 3RQ

- 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 Louis Mills against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
- The application Ref is 3/24/1938/HH.
- The development proposed is a single storey front porch, with double storey rear extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey front porch, with part single storey and part double storey rear extension at 19 Walkern Road, Watton At Stone, Hertfordshire SG14 3RQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 3/24/1938/HH, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:

    1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

    2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

    P 100 C Location Plan, P 104 C Proposed Floor Plans and Proposed Elevations, A3101 Block Plan and A3102 Proposed Roof Plan.

    3) The external materials of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. Notwithstanding the description of development above as a double storey rear extension, which is taken from the application form, it is clear from the plans and accompanying details that the development comprises a part single storey and part double storey rear extension. I note that the Council dealt with the proposal on this basis and the appellant has also adopted the revised description of development within the submitted Grounds of Appeal. I shall do the same.

4. An amended Block Plan drawing reference A3101 and Proposed Roof Plan drawing reference A3102 have been submitted superseding the Site Plan and

Proposed Roof Plan on drawing reference P 104 C following the identification of a discrepancy with regards the depth of the proposed rear extension. In correcting this error, the appellant has confirmed that the depth of the proposed rear extension is correct on the proposed floor plans and proposed elevations as originally submitted and determined by the Council. In accepting the revised plans, I am satisfied that in seeking to rectify a clear error in the submitted plans that no party has been disadvantaged and shall therefore determine the appeal on the basis of the originally submitted location plan and proposed floor plan and proposed elevations, together with the amended block plan and proposed roof plan.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal site is a two-storey detached dwelling positioned within a generous plot, set well back from and elevated above Walkern Road. The house is characterised by a hipped main roof which includes a shallow projection across part of the rear elevation. The front elevation has a symmetrical form, whereas two separate single storey additions to the rear contribute to a less orderly and piecemeal appearance.

7. The immediate property to the north of the site is situated comparatively further back into its plot, such that its principal elevation is set behind the appeal building's main rear building line. This adjacent dwelling's deep flank elevation abuts the mutual side boundary, in doing so forming a considerable neighbouring mass. This relationship contrasts with the prevailing spacious, edge of village character of the area, which mainly comprises of traditional detached houses of a variety of size and design.

8. From a review of the evidence, I note that there is no dispute between the parties regarding the front porch and single storey rear extension elements of the scheme, and I see no reason to disagree with these conclusions. My main assessment will focus on the two storey rear extension.

9. The two storey element of the proposal would be of a matching form to the existing hipped rear projection, with corresponding eaves and ridge lines. By virtue of this sympathetic design, including a balanced arrangement of complementary windows and doors, I am satisfied that the extension would positively contribute to the essential character of the house, enhancing its appearance at the rear. The use of matching materials would also respect the design of the building and could be controlled by condition.

10. I recognise that the extension would be of a sizeable depth, but the enlargement's limited width across less than half of the rear elevation mitigates its mass. It would be discreetly sited adjacent to the neighbouring deeper flank elevation, thereby preserving the spaciousness to the opposing southern side boundary. Furthermore, a large garden area beyond would still be retained. On this basis, whilst the development would not be strictly subservient in some of its dimensions, its overall scale and bulk would not appear unduly dominant in the context of the host dwelling.

11. The positioning and proportions of the extension are such that it would be of only limited visibility from the street scene. On account of its respectful scale, siting and design, the development would appear suitably integral to the building as a whole in any such views from the public realm. Its overall form would generally complement rather than conflict with the varied styles of other houses in the locality.

12. As a result of the above, I conclude that the proposed scheme would not lead to harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the surrounding area. The development would therefore satisfy the requirements of Policies VILL1, HOU11 and DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018. These policies mutually seek to ensure that householder extensions are well designed, are of an appropriate size, scale, mass, form and siting which is respectful of the character of the site and surrounds, and generally appear as a subservient addition to the dwelling.

Conditions

13. In addition to conditions related to the timeliness of the development and the identification of plans, a condition is necessary requiring materials to match those used on the existing house such to aid the development's integration to the house.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed.

A Morrison

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is allowed.

Martin Seaton

INSPECTOR