



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 June 2025 by E Street BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 JULY 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/25/3364465

45 Ambrose Lane, Harpenden, Hertfordshire AL5 4BU

- 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 and Mrs Coulson against the decision of St Albans City Council.
 - The application Ref is 5/2024/2228.
 - The development proposed is described as “two storey rear extension to an existing dwelling with additional windows to the side elevation”
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

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.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of Number 47 Ambrose Lane (No 47) with particular regard to outlook.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is a semi-detached dwelling which has been previously extended at ground floor level. The building is within a close set of three lots of semi-detached dwellings of a similar nature, some of which have been previously extended at a two-storey level. The building line of the group is slightly staggered with the appeal unit being set back from No 47.
5. The two-storey side extension would address the boundary of No 47 albeit with a slight stand-off. Notwithstanding the separation, the overall form of the proposal would be obvious when viewed from within No 47 and the garden. The primarily blank elevation in combination with its height and length would present an oppressive façade with no visual interest and would appear larger than the other examples in the local area. It would be viewed at both ground and first floor level and further impinge on some of the existing open views experienced therefrom. The staggered relationship of the dwellings would emphasise the impact of the proposal on the outlook from the garden, especially as the primary seating area would be directly affected and experience a strong feeling of enclosure.
6. The siting of the proposal would form a similar relationship between the two buildings as originally built with an overlapping and exaggerated staggering effect.

However, the acceptability of this in the past would have been under a different set of circumstances and bares little relevance now. This proposal may give a similar outlook; however, this evidence alone is not enough to say that this harm would be acceptable based on the above assessment.

7. Resultantly, the proposal would cause harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 47. It would therefore conflict with Policy 72 of the St Albans Local Plan Review 1994, the Council's Design Advice Leaflet 2 and the relevant guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 which, amongst other things, seek to ensure that living conditions of the occupiers of properties are protected.

Other Matters

8. The Council state that the proposal would not have an impact on the light perceived by the occupiers within the building and garden of No 47 based on the daylight assessment submitted and I have no reason to disagree with their conclusion. Even though No 47 support the proposal, this would result in a lack of harm and thus a natural matter in any balance.
9. The Council is satisfied that there would be no harm to the setting of the Harpenden Conservation Area by virtue of the overall design and siting to the rear of the building. With this and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in mind, I have no reason to disagree with their conclusions.

Conclusion and Recommendation

10. For the reasons given above, the appeal scheme would not comply with the development plan, and I have been given no other compelling reason, taking into account other material considerations advanced, to deviate therefrom. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

E Street

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

John Morrison

INSPECTOR