



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 October 2025

by **B J Sims BSc (Hons) CEng MICE MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/D/25/3369933

110 Guessens Road, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6RS.

- 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 P Gilbert against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 6/2025/0848/HOUSE
 - The development proposed is the erection of a first-floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect the side extension would have on the character and appearance of No 110 Guessens Road itself and of the local street scene within the context of the surrounding Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. The proposed first-floor side extension, set back over the existing single-storey attached garage, would achieve a relatively harmonious and subordinate visual relationship with the main dwelling when viewed and perceived strictly within the front elevation of the house. This would virtually mirror the front elevation of No 137 opposite, which shares the distinctive architectural style of the appeal property and several others around the adjacent junction of Guessens Road with Handside Lane.
4. Importantly, however, due to its rearward extent and appropriately subordinate overall height, the extension would have a flat-topped or crown roof. This is not a feature visibly shared in any front or side extension added to No 137 or any of the neighbouring group of similar dwellings. A crown roof has only previously been permitted over a relatively unobtrusive rear extension to the appeal property itself.
5. In contrast with this, the crown roof would be publicly visible as a significant departure from the prevailing architectural form of the main host dwelling and the other similar properties nearby, where the subordinate elements do not appear to have a crown roof profile. This roof form is generally resisted in adopted Council design guidance and I consider, in the present case, would be significantly harmful to the character and appearance of both No 110 Guessens Road itself and the wider local street scene.

6. It follows that the proposed development would also fail to preserve or enhance either the character or appearance of the Welwyn Garden City CA, the desirability of which is a long-established tenet of planning law. This amounts to less than substantial harm to the designated heritage asset with no overriding public benefit, in terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
7. For these reasons, I take the view that the proposed development would be in unacceptable conflict with the relevant Policies SP9, SP15 and SADM11, of the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Local Plan with respect to design quality and the protection of designated heritage assets within the historic environment. These policies are all consistent with the NPPF.
8. I am aware that this proposal seeks to resolve the dismissal of a previous appeal for an extension to the property and I have taken account of every other point raised. However, there is nothing of such significance as to divert me from the conclusion, based upon the individual merits of the present case, that this appeal should be dismissed.

B J Sims

INSPECTOR