



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 October 2025

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/A1910/D/25/3373620

14 Gaveston Drive, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 1JE

- 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 A Robertson against the decision of Dacorum Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/01159/FHA.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a first-floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a first-floor side extension at 14 Gaveston Drive, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 1JE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/01159/FHA, 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 approved plans: Drg Nos 100 Rev A, 101 Rev A, 200 Rev N, 201 Rev J and 202 Rev B.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the living conditions at 12 Gaveston Drive with regard to visual impact.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a two-storey detached dwelling with a side attached garage which extends close up to the shared side boundary with No 12 and is set within a wider residential neighbourhood of similar type and aged properties. The proposal would project the dual pitched roof form of the existing dwelling sideways over the majority width of the garage to provide enlarged living accommodation at first-floor level.
4. The neighbouring dwelling at No 12 is set away from the shared side boundary. As such, there would be a separation distance of over 3m between the extension and the two-storey scale of No 12. The Council accepts that this would be sufficient to

avoid any undue terracing effect within the street scene. I have no reason to disagree and saw for myself examples of other similarly extended properties nearby.

5. No 12 has two flank windows facing the appeal site. Both are positioned close to the front elevation. The ground floor window is a secondary source of light and outlook to a room also served by a forward-facing window. The first-floor window is the sole source of light and outlook to a bedroom.
6. The planning application was accompanied by a consultant's Daylight/Sunlight Report dated May 2025. The Council accepts its conclusions that as a result of the extension the adjoining property would not experience noticeable reductions in levels of daylight or sunlight, including specifically to the side facing first-floor bedroom. I have no reason to disagree.
7. In terms of outlook, the ground floor window already faces the flank wall of the adjacent garage. This relationship would not change. At first-floor level, the bedroom window has a more open outlook, but not significantly so, and nevertheless faces towards the side elevation of No 14, where the two-storey profile of the building would be most dominant. This would not substantially change with the extension merely pulling the built form of No 14 closer, with a height and mass equivalent to the two-storey scale of the existing. With a gap of around 3m, I am not persuaded that the extended form of No 14 would appear so unacceptably close in the outlook from this bedroom window, or that its visual presence would be either severe or out of keeping with the spatial qualities of the surrounding development pattern. Moreover, given the forward siting of the window on the side wall, an oblique outlook beyond the envelope of No 14 towards the road would be maintained. Whilst there would be an inevitable closing of the gap, I am not persuaded that there would be any impact upon No 12 that would be significant or demonstrably harmful.
8. I note the neighbour's comments with regard to detail lacking on the proposed plans. However, the elevations presented as part of the planning application clearly show the height and position of the proposed alterations, including a very slightly raised parapet to the side of the garage to align and run contiguous with the same upon an existing single-storey rear extension. I have considered the appeal based upon the information shown on the plans, including a pitched roof over the first-floor extension, and a flat roof to the side over the residual ground floor element, which is unambiguous.
9. Overall, I am satisfied that there would be no harm to the living conditions at 12 Gaveston Road. As such, I find no conflict with Policy CS12 of the Council's Core Strategy 2006-2031, adopted in 2013, as far as it seeks to ensure development, amongst other things, avoids visual intrusion, loss of sunlight and daylight, loss of privacy and disturbance to surrounding properties. Based on my findings I am unable to identify any conflict with saved Appendix 3 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011, adopted in 2004, which provides guidance for the layout and design of residential areas, or with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed places.

Conditions

10. In the event of the appeal succeeding the Council has suggested three conditions. In addition to the standard time limit condition, a condition requiring the

development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is necessary for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. A further condition is also necessary to ensure that the development is carried out in materials to match the existing in order to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR