



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 November 2025

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/25/3373567

1 Falconers Park, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, CM21 0AU

- 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 Joe O'hanlon against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 3/25/0799/HH.
 - The development proposed is Demolition of existing garage & double side extension on both sides of house and single rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the demolition of existing garage & double side extension on both sides of house and single rear extension at 1 Falconers Park, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, CM21 0AU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 3/25/0799/HH, 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: 3238 ELA/1 A; 3238 ELA/2 A; 3238 ELA/4 A; 3238 ELA/6 A; 3238 ELA/13 A; 3238 ELA/14 A and 3238 ELA/17 A.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal concerns a two-storey, detached dwelling. The dwelling sits fairly centrally within its large plot and is set well in from the side boundaries of the site.
4. The dwelling is sited at the entrance into Falconers Park which is characterised by detached dwellings set within spacious plots. I saw at my site visit that the dwellings on both sides of the road are mixed in character and appearance, displaying a variety of architectural styles and designs.
5. Policy DES4 of the East Herts Local Plan (2018) (EHLP) amongst other things, seeks to ensure that all development proposals are of a high standard of design and layout to reflect and promote local distinctiveness and to make the best

- possible use of the available land by respecting or improving upon the character of the site and the surrounding area.
6. Policy HOU11 of the EHLP requires extensions to be of a size, scale, mass, form, siting, design and materials of construction that are appropriate to the character, appearance and setting of the existing dwelling and/or the surrounding area. It also states that extensions should 'generally appear as a subservient addition to the dwelling', although this implies to me that there may be instances where a different design approach could be appropriate.
 7. The proposed two storey side extensions together with the single storey rear extension would represent sizeable additions to the existing dwelling. However, the proposal is part of a re-modelling of the existing dwelling, with amongst other alterations, the removal of its existing two storey bay and a centralisation of the main entrance on the front elevation. The proposed side extensions would be dominant additions, with matching front gables that extend slightly forward of the dwelling, fundamentally changing its appearance.
 8. However, the existing dwelling is of no particular architectural merit. It is located in a road that comprises of dwellings of individual designs and external appearance, resulting in little uniformity. The existing dwelling contrasts in terms of its design to the adjacent dwelling at 2 Falconers Park which has two front hipped gables, and those on the opposite side of the road which are also contrasting in their size, design and appearance and include a property with two prominent front gables. I therefore find that in terms of the design approach, the re-elevating of the existing dwelling together with the proposed side extensions would not be materially harmful to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling or the surrounding area.
 9. The proposed side extensions would be set in from both side boundaries. Whilst the extension would be within 1 metre of the side boundary with 2 Falconers Park, I concur with the Council that this would not be harmful to the street scene, having regard to other spatial separation distances in the road. An appropriate separation distance would be retained between the flank elevation of the extension and the boundary of the site with Hand Lane such that it would not be unduly prominent in the street scene. Indeed, at my site visit I saw that other dwellings in neighbouring roads are similarly visible from Hand Lane.
 10. The proposed single storey rear extension would extend beyond the rear elevation of the host dwelling and both side extensions. However, given its modest depth of 4 metres and its low, flat roof profile, it would not be overly dominant when viewed from outside of the site.
 11. The extensions would combine to result in a large dwelling but the overall size, scale, mass and form of the proposed extensions would respect the scale and proportions of the existing dwelling, its plot and houses within the immediate area. The proposed materials would comprise of cladding (as on the existing dwelling) and rendering. There are several examples of dwellings with painted rendering along Falconers Park and the proposal materials would not result in material harm to the character and appearance of the appeal property or the surrounding area.
 12. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling or the surrounding area. Thus, the proposal would comply with Policies HOU11 and DES4 of the EHLP and the

high-quality design objectives set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

13. The Council confirm that the site is within the Sawbridgeworth Neighbourhood Plan area (NP). However, the Council has not identified any conflict with the NP policies and I have determined the appeal on this basis.

Conditions

14. In addition to the standard implementation condition, the approved plans condition is imposed for certainty.

Conclusion

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

J Davis

INSPECTOR