



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 October 2025

by **Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/25/3371375

12 Hallingbury Road, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 5LA

- 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 William Rusack against the decision of East Herts Council.
 - The application Ref. is 3/25/0624/HH.
 - The development proposed is a dormer to each side and the rear of the existing roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Hallingbury Road street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal scheme is for three dormers, one to each flank and one to the rear, all to facilitate a loft conversion. In the Council's view, these roof additions together with the existing dormers would result in *'a significant level of bulk and massing to the roof of the building, resulting in a convoluted and unbalanced appearance'*.
4. I observed on my visit to the property and its surroundings that the street scene of Hallingbury Road has a wide variety of dwelling types and designs with many including loft conversions, including those identified in the grounds of appeal. It is this variety, including the permitted conversions, that the appellant cites in justification of the appeal scheme, arguing that the alterations and additions approved by the Council effectively set a local precedent for the appeal scheme.
5. However, whilst I may have not seen all the examples mentioned, I could find only one that illustrates how the occupiers' understandable wish for additional accommodation has been noticeably harmful to the character and appearance of the building, and to some extent, its setting within the street scene. And because each dwelling is of individual design and has its own relationship with the neighbouring properties and the other aspects of its surroundings, it would be wrong to regard these extensions as a precedent for this appeal. In short, the proposal must be determined on its individual merits.
6. The appeal dwelling is a building of a substantial size, and as likely as not this is in large measure because of the previous permissions for extensions documented in the Officers Report. Furthermore, No. 12 is particularly prominent because of the

more modest scale and set-back position of No.10 to the north. Also relevant is that No. 14 to the south is semi-detached with a hip to gable roof addition and of wholly contrasting style and external materials.

7. These factors contribute to No. 12 having a greater presence in the street scene with an attractive appearance derived from a relatively simple design and a coherent architectural composition, even with the earlier additions. However, although the proposed dormers to either side of the main roof would be balanced, they would appear as awkward alterations to its visually pleasing hipped form and give the building a top-heavy appearance in views both from the front and rear. And because of these additions, the front and side views of the building would be of a miscellany of roof angles, eaves lines and projections.
8. These are evident in sheet 9 of the submitted plans, albeit I acknowledge that because of the building's setting it might not be feasible to see all the features on one elevation from any vantage point. Nonetheless, with the set back of No. 10, I consider that the Officers Report is correct to observe that the north facing flank elevation would be prominent and perceived negatively from the public realm.
9. As regards the rear elevation, again the view of the side dormers would give the building a top-heavy appearance. And whilst this view of the house would be one of a more ordered built form, the symmetry of the existing three dormers would be spoiled by their relationship with the ostensibly random siting of the proposed rear dormer and the cumulative increase in clutter.
10. However, the rear elevation would for the most part be unseen from the public realm. And bearing this in mind, together with the fact that this aspect is shared with the rectilinear form and large scale of the rear additions to No. 14, I consider that on its own the proposed rear dormer would not be so harmful as to justify the withholding of permission.
11. Be that as it may, as regards the appeal scheme as a whole, there is very little in the Officers Report with which I disagree. Accordingly, I conclude on the main issue that that the proposal would be in unacceptably harmful conflict with Policies DES4 and HOU11(d) of the East Herts District Plan 2018; Policy HDP2b) of the Neighbourhood Plan (First Revision) for this part of the District, and also with Government policy in Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Deigned Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework, revised December 2024.

Conclusion

12. Overall, whilst I am sympathetic to the appellant's urgent need for more family accommodation and recognise that this appeal proposal is a reduced scheme compared to the refused application Ref. 3/24/1968/HH, I nonetheless conclude that proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the property and the street scene of Hallingbury Road contrary to local and national policy.
13. For these reasons, the appeal fails.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR