



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 November 2025

by **Megan Thomas K.C. Barrister-at-Law**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/25/3374924

139 Westfield Road, Harpenden AL5 4LU

- 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 John Godding against the decision of St Albans City & District Council.
 - The application ref. is 5/25/1290.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension and loft conversion, and a single storey side and front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to a roof extension and loft conversion. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to a single storey side and front extension and planning permission is granted for a single storey side and front extension at 139 Westfield Road, Harpenden AL5 4LU in accordance with the terms of the application, ref. 5/2025/1290, 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the single storey side and rear extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans, nos WEST/06, WEST/05, WEST/04A, WEST/02A, WEST/03 & WEST/01 only insofar as they permit development of a single storey front and side extension.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development in the box heading above is a shortened version of the entry on the Planning Application Form as amended. The full description is *“Loft conversion with extension to the roof for an additional bedroom, single storey front porch extension, single storey side extension for utility and store room and rendering of external elevations. Existing relocated front entrance door and new windows will be upvc to match the existing door. A new loft conversion to sit within the existing roof footprint, constructed in timber with composite cladding in oak, the existing gable end will be retained to continue the existing street appearance. The new porch will be constructed in blockwork rendered and*

decorated to match the existing K-Rend finish, new flat roof in green felt with chippings, a 1m passage will be maintained to provide access to and from the rear garden. A new 'velux' window is proposed to the side roof to provide light to the porch and lobby."

Main Issue

3. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located on the north west side of Westfield Road and is at the south western end of a row of 4 terraced houses. The two end terraces (139 and 145) have front facing gables. No.145 has a two storey side extension. The area is predominantly residential.
5. The proposed development is in two distinct parts. A roof extension is proposed with a rear dormer structure which would include a double window with Juliette balcony and a second small window in the rear face of the dormer and a south west facing side window in the roof. The second element is a ground floor front and side extension with a double pitched roof including a new front entrance door.
6. Turning first to the proposed front and side extension, this would have a double pitched roof which, when viewed from the front, would reflect the main gable of the dwelling. It would partially overlap the front of the dwelling but not to a depth, width or height which would dominate the character of the host building. The front/side extension would step in from the common boundary with 137 Westfield Road leaving a passageway through to the rear of the appeal site's rear garden. As a result, the proposed extension would not appear squeezed in but would have a proportionate appearance.
7. I note that the Council has no objections to the ground floor front and side extension and I am also satisfied that it would not harm the living conditions of any neighbours, nor would it harm the character or appearance of the host dwelling or the wider area. Having considered all material considerations relating to the proposed side extension I conclude that it would not harm any planning interests including the character or appearance of the host dwelling or the area. It would not be contrary to policy 69 (General Design and Layout), or policy 72 (Extensions in Residential Areas) of the City and District of St. Albans District Local Plan Review (adopted 1994) or policies ESD1 or ESD15 of the Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033 (made 2019).
8. Turning to the second main element of the appeal proposal, the proposed roof extension and rear dormer would result in a bulky and box-like addition to the dwelling which would appear particularly domineering and top heavy when viewed from the rear. The face of the dormer at the rear would be almost flush with the rear elevation of the main rear wall and the rear dormer would not step in from each end of roof. The proposed large vertical doors with Juliette balcony would significantly exacerbate the top heavy and vertical appearance. Whilst the roof extension would be recessed, it would in part be visible from the streetscene. It would be a sizeable extension and would effectively result in a flat roof which would be incongruous with the host dwelling and its surroundings.

9. I am also concerned that the composite oak cladding would not harmonise with the materials used on the existing dwelling or on the wider terrace.
10. The appellant refers to the potential use of permitted development rights to extend the roof. However, in my view, the proposed roof extension and dormer structure would result in a worse impact on the character and appearance than one allowed using permitted development rights.
11. In relation to the proposed roof extension, rear dormer and loft conversion I conclude that it would unduly harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area and would be contrary to policy 69 (General Design and Layout) and policy 72 (Extensions in Residential Areas) of the City and District of St. Albans Local Plan Review (adopted 1994) and policy ESD1 of the Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033 (made 2019).

Conclusion

12. I have concluded that a split decision is appropriate in this case because the two main elements of the development proposed as part of the appeal would clearly function separately and are not physically linked or dependent on each other. I note that the two windows in the flank elevation wall are existing and so are not affected by planning permission for the front and side elevation. There is no need to fit them with obscured glass or partially fix them shut.
13. Having considered all representations made, for the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the roof extension, rear dormer and loft extension. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to a single storey front and side extension.

Megan Thomas K.C.

Inspector