



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 January 2026

by J Bowyer BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/25/3374080

9 Old London Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 1QE

- 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 Harvey against the decision of St Albans City and District Council.
 - The application Ref is 5/2025/0980.
 - The development proposed is 'single storey rear extension. Demolition of scullery and brick shed.'
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for 'single storey rear extension. Demolition of scullery and brick shed' at 9 Old London Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 1QE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 5/2025/0980, 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: 1292_PL001 Rev A, 1292_PL_010 Rev A, 1292_PL 020 Rev A, 1292_PL_100 Rev B and 1292_PL 200 Rev A.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials shown on plan Nos 1292_PL_100 Rev B and 1292_PL 200 Rev A.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of occupiers at 7 Old London Road in respect of whether or not it would be overbearing.

Reasons

3. The appeal site includes a mid-terrace dwelling with a single-storey projection to part of the rear elevation closest to the boundary with 11 Old London Road, beyond which is a brick shed. The proposed rear extension would replace the existing rear projections and would span the full width of the dwelling.
4. The depth of the extension would exceed 3m, contrary to the general stipulation in Policy 72 of the St Albans District Local Plan Review 1994 ('the LPR') that single storey rear extensions 'shall not normally extend more than 3 metres rearward along a party boundary'. However, a high party wall along the boundary with No 11 would provide screening such that the extension would not affect outlook for occupiers of this neighbour.

5. To the other side, 7 Old London Road includes a three-storey rear projection with a deeper single-storey section, but this is set off the boundary with the appeal site and the extension would therefore extend more than 3m beyond the closest part of its rear elevation. The Council also indicate that the extension would have a height of more than 3m.
6. Be that as it may, I observed that the ground level within the rear garden to No 7 is higher than the ground level on the appeal site which would help to moderate the perception and visual impact of the extension's height from within the neighbouring site.
7. Moreover, there is a ground-floor window to the rear elevation which I understand serves a bedroom to 7A Old London Road. However, this is set in from the boundary, and I observed an outbuilding present in the space adjacent to the rear elevation between the window and the appeal site. The outbuilding is of similar height to the window, and given its position in very close proximity to the edge of the window together with the presence of a wall and trellis with vegetation to the boundary beyond, there would already be a notable degree of enclosure to views from the window. I acknowledge that the extension now proposed would be of greater height and depth than the outbuilding, but in my judgement, this relationship means that it would not lead to a meaningful change to views or a harmful reduction in the outlook currently enjoyed from the window and I find that the extension would not be visually dominant or an overbearing feature in outward views from it.
8. In addition, the presence of the outbuilding means that the area to the rear of the neighbouring building closest to the boundary does not provide usable garden space currently. Although the extension would project deeper than the outbuilding, it would sit alongside a relatively limited proportion of the remaining length of the garden. Together with the difference in ground levels, I find as a result that the extension would not be unduly dominant or cause an unacceptable degree of enclosure to the amenity space to the rear of No 7 so as to detract from its use or enjoyment by occupiers.
9. The Council does not argue that the extension would cause a harmful loss of light to No 7 and I have no firm reason to take a different view.
10. Given these factors, I am satisfied that the depth, height and proximity to the boundary of the extension would not result in an unacceptable overbearing impact on neighbouring occupiers and I conclude that the development would not cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of occupiers at 7 Old London Road. Having regard to the specific circumstances of the appeal site and proposal, material considerations justify a departure from the general expectation within Policy 72 of the LPR that extensions should not normally extend more than 3m rearward along a party boundary. Furthermore, the proposal would accord with Policy 72 of the LPR insofar as it sets out that the light, privacy or amenity of adjoining property shall not be unacceptably harmed. It would also comply with the National Planning Policy Framework which includes requirements for sympathetic development and a high standard of amenity.

Other Matters

11. The appeal site is located within the St Albans Conservation Area ('the CA'), and I have therefore paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing

the character or appearance of this area in accordance with section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

12. The appeal site is part of a terrace of three-storey over basement buildings within the London Road character area of the CA. The elegant proportions and detailing of the buildings within the terrace result in a fine group which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and so the significance of the CA as a designated heritage asset. The Council has additionally identified the appeal dwelling as a locally listed building.
13. The position of the extension to the rear of the dwelling and between neighbouring projections means that it would not be apparent from public viewpoints within the CA. In addition, it would replace existing rear projections which are in somewhat poor condition, and would be of sympathetic design and materials to the host building such that I agree with the Council that the proposal would improve the appearance of the rear of the property. I am satisfied given these factors that the character and appearance of the CA as a whole would be at least preserved and the significance of the locally listed building would not be harmed.

Conditions

14. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of certainty. A condition controlling external materials is necessary to ensure a satisfactory appearance, although I have amended the Council's suggested condition to require use of materials as specified on the plans rather than matching the dwelling given that the proposal includes render to the side wall so as to match the neighbour.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

J Bowyer

INSPECTOR