



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 November 2021

by A.Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16TH December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/D/21/3281042
379 St Albans Road West, Hatfield AL10 9RU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs M Jaufarally against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 6/2021/1107/HOUSE, dated 4 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 21 June 2021.
 - The proposed development is for erection of a single storey rear extension, a two storey rear, front and side extension, a roof extension and insertion of rear box dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the Council's decision notice. In Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development is the same as this description and neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that this description is erroneous. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the Council's decision notice and the Appellant's appeal form.
3. The appellant has indicated to me that they maintain a fall back position with regards the principle of changing the existing hipped roof to gable. I accept that this development could constitute Permitted Development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). However, in assessing this appeal I have based my assessment upon the plans before me and assessed them on their own individual merits with regards the main issues as outlined below.

Main Issues

4. The main issue is the impact of the proposals upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a brick and render semi detached two storey house that fronts onto St Albans Road West. The property is typical of the suburban homes that are located along this part of the road that are generally characterised by hipped roofs, slightly projecting front facades and front

- gardens often bounded with low brick walls or hedges. Most of the properties are symmetrical in design with hips at both ends and a central chimney stack. I consider that this architectural style and the generally consistent forms of the properties along this part of St Albans Road West are an important characteristic of the locality here.
6. To the sides, many properties have single storey extensions of some sort and the appeal property in question has a single storey garage extension here. To the rear relatively long gardens give generous separation between houses. The appeal property appears to have previously had a flat roof rear extension across the back of the house and this appears of a similar size and scale to others in the vicinity.
 7. The proposals would extend to the front, side and rear of the property, as well as increase accommodation within the loft space to create new rooms served by dormers, rooflights and gable windows. The proposal would create several extra spaces and rooms that the Appellant states are needed for an expanding family and elderly relatives.
 8. In assessing the impact of this proposal, I give great weight to the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance that seeks to ensure new development is contextual and of appropriate bulk, scale and design. This emphasis upon good quality design is also reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework).
 9. Although I also give some weight to the needs of the family to extend their accommodation, I consider that the proposals before me would lead to a substantial increase in the scale, bulk and massing of the existing property to such an extent as to dominate both the existing house and to undermine the wider character of the streetscene here.
 10. Whilst the proposed front extension would see a protrusion similar to some in the wider area, I saw on my site visit that very few properties have such large front extensions along this part of St Albans Road. Where they do exist farther afield, their massing is reduced through them retaining the distinctive hip to the end elevation and this is demonstrated clearly in the images in the Appellant's appeal statement.
 11. To the rear the extension would similarly be overly large and dominate the rear elevation of the property. The rear gable would again contradict the overriding character of hipped roofs here and the flat roof dormer would similarly represent an element of poor design that fails to respond to the design qualities and character that are to be found in this area.
 12. Whilst large extensions can often be designed in such a way as to be sympathetic to the area, the proposal before me would ultimately adversely change the character of the existing house and would substantially increase the footprint and amount of development on the site which I consider would be extremely harmful.
 13. In summary this proposal represents an overdevelopment of this site and would overwhelm the existing property. It would also cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the wider streetscene through the introduction

of such a large extension to the front and side and the subsequent removal of the distinctive hipped roof and replacement with gable. As such I consider that the proposal is contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2006, Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 and The Framework.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons above, taking into account all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

A Graham

INSPECTOR