
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 November 2016

by Richard Aston BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 15th November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/16/3157752

22 Cumberland Drive, Redbourn, Hertfordshire AL3 7PG

- 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 Mrs V Coates against the decision of St Albans City & District Council.
 - The application Ref 5/16/1626, dated 16 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is first floor extension.
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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 property and area.

Reasons

3. Cumberland Drive comprises groups of two storey linked detached dwellings of a uniform design and appearance laid out in a relatively regular pattern of development with gaps between the properties at first floor level. The gaps give views of the sky, trees and landscaping to the rear and sides of the properties and in combination with open space gives a sense of openness and spaciousness that positively contributes to the character and appearance of the area.
 4. The appeal property is a two storey dwelling located in a row of three similar dwellings and sits in a prominent location within the street. The side elevation, which has already been extended by a shallow pitched roof single storey extension, is particular prominent within the streetscene.
 5. The use of sympathetic materials and windows would reflect the appearance of the host property. However, the proposal would result in a significant continuation of the mass and bulk of development by extending built form across a large part of the depth of the appeal site. When combined with the scale, form and height of the extension, in such proximity to the boundary, the proposal would result in an unduly dominant and overly prominent addition to the streetscene.
 6. Furthermore, the introduction of further variations to the roof form of the dwelling, in such a prominent location and of differing heights and depths,
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would introduce an overly complicated and awkward roof configuration that would not represent a high standard of design. Overall, the proposal would appear as an incongruous addition that would be at serious odds with the character and appearance of the host property and area.

7. For these reasons, the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and area and would conflict with Policies 69 and 72 of the St Alban's District Local Plan Review 1994 ('LP'). Amongst other things, these seek to ensure an extension relates to the domestic scale, character and appearance of the street, is of a high standard of design and is compatible with the original building. Although the LP pre-dates the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') and is of some vintage, I find these policies are consistent with it. Accordingly, the proposal would also conflict with the design objectives of the Framework.

Other Matters

8. The appellant contends that the character of the street is already changing in character due to the construction of several extensions to adjoining houses. However, I have not been provided with any details of such extensions and therefore I cannot be certain that they are directly comparable to the proposal before me. In any event, each case must be determined on its own merits and this does not alter my view in relation to the main issue.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan, when read as a whole and the Framework. Having considered all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Richard Aston

INSPECTOR