

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 March 2017

By Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

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

Decision date: 27 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P1940/D/17/3166765

83 Carpenders Avenue, Carpenders Park, Watford WD19 5BP

- 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 Keith Robson against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref:16/1912/FUL dated 10 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is applying of white uPVC cladding to existing rendered gable end. Applying white uPVC to existing rear tile hung dormer to both face and cheeks.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The application was submitted by Kevin Flynn of Flynn & Son on behalf of the owner Mr Keith Robson and Mr Flynn is shown as the applicant, but Mr Robson has submitted his own appeal against the refusal of planning permission, following written confirmation of this change by Mr Flynn. I have therefore referenced Mr Robson as the Appellant.
3. The description of development on the application form refers to the 'existing' gable end and 'existing' rear dormer. At the time of the site visit, no works appeared to have commenced in respect of the proposed works to the roof.
4. The Council has issued a Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Development under its reference: 15/2565/CLPD for loft conversion including hip to gable extension and rear dormer at the appeal property. The Council has confirmed that the physical extent of works the subject of the Certificate are similar to those now proposed, but with different materials.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and of the local area.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is a semi-detached property with rendering under a hipped, tiled roof, within a predominantly residential area, characterised by similar pairs of semi-detached dwellings as well as bungalows. Although on my site visit I noted a very small number of examples of the use of upvc cladding on rear dormers, the predominant palette of materials in the local area comprises rendered elevations with tiled roofs. The regular pattern of development with a predominance of traditional materials is a characteristic feature of the local area.
7. The extent of upvc cladding proposed both to the proposed gable end as well as to the full width and returns of the proposed dormer would, in my view, introduce a discordant feature which would appear incongruous in relation to the more traditional materials found on the existing house and in the local area. The proposed use of upvc cladding to the side gable extension would be highly visible, particularly when approaching from the west and an overly prominent and discordant feature in the street scene. I agree with the Appellant that the rear dormer would not be widely seen in the street scene but it would be very open to view from surrounding properties.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and of the local area. This would conflict with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy 2011 and Policies DM1 and Appendix 2 of the Council's adopted Development Management Policies LDD 2013 as well as the National Planning Policy Framework, all of which seek a high quality of design which respects the local context and local distinctiveness.
9. I understand the reasons for proposing the upvc cladding to reduce future maintenance but this benefit does not outweigh the harm I have concluded. I took note on my site visit and have taken into account the other examples that the Appellant has referenced of the use of upvc, both in the immediate locality and further afield. However, none of these persuade me to a different view, given the harm I have concluded in this case.
10. Concerns have been raised by adjoining neighbours regarding the impact of the proposal on their living conditions, with particular regard to loss of privacy and overshadowing. However, the windows at the rear would follow the existing pattern of fenestration with the principal outlook being over the rear garden, and were no other matters of concern and planning permission were to be granted, it would be possible to impose conditions to ensure obscure glazing on the windows proposed on the side gable elevation. On the basis of the limited information before me and taking into account the relationship of the existing dwelling and proposed extensions with the neighbouring properties, I do not consider that there would be a material change in light or overshadowing to the neighbouring properties. The Council has also raised no issue in this regard and referred to the similar scale and form of works the subject of the Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Development.
11. The Appellant has directed a number of questions in his appeal submission towards the Council, including in respect of pre-application discussions, but

matters which the Appellant wishes to raise with the Council fall outside the remit of this appeal, which I have assessed on its planning merits.

12. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, including in representations from surrounding neighbours, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L J Evans

INSPECTOR