

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 April 2017

by J A B Gresty MA MRICS

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

Decision date: 18 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/17/3170622
43 The Drive, Bengeo, Hertfordshire SG14 3DE

- 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 Dr & Dr Wood against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/16/2499/HH, dated 3 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 28 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is a first floor side extension and raising existing flank walls, redesigning of main roof including new rear dormer to form loft conversion, new velux to front roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issues in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached, two-storey house with single-storey accommodation wrapping around one side and the back of the house. It is situated on a residential road which is characterised by detached and semi-detached houses set back from the road behind good sized front drives and gardens. Because of the space at first floor level between the appeal property and the neighbouring houses, the appeal property's side walls and roof elevations are open to view from the road. The appeal property has a distinctive hipped roof which reflects the hipped roofs of the neighbouring properties and other nearby houses on The Drive.
 4. The appeal proposal includes extension of the main house roof, changing the roof from being hipped to having gable ends. To provide additional room within the roof space, the main body of the extended roof would have a flat top to form a crown roof. This would give flat tops to the new gable ends. The south-west facing gable end would be fully open to view from the road and the north-east end would be partly visible above the sloping roof of the proposed side extension which forms part of the appeal scheme. Crown roofs are not a prominent characteristic of The Drive and the flat topped gabled ends of the extended roof would give the appeal property an incongruous and bulky
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appearance which would be at odds with the prevailing pattern of development on this part of The Drive.

5. The appeal scheme would include construction of a flat-roofed dormer in the rear elevation of the main house roof. The dormer would span more than half of the width of the extended roof and, as a consequence of its box-like design and overall size, it would appear as a large and bulky feature which would fail to reflect the design of the host property and would dominate appearance of the rear elevation of the extended roof. Further, the dormer would add to the bulky appearance of the extended roof when viewed from the rear and nearby back gardens. This would add to the unduly prominent and incongruous appearance of the roof as a whole.
6. The third main element of the appeal proposal would be construction of a first floor extension above the single-storey accommodation at the side of the house. The flank wall of the extension would be set back from the boundary, retaining a visual gap between the appeal building and No 41 next door. With regard to its width, the side extension would represent about one quarter of the width of the extended house and would be subservient to the host building. In this respect the side extension would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the host building.
7. Also, the flank of the extension would have a conventional peaked gable which would in part conceal the crown-roofed gable of the extended roof. Whilst the loss of the hipped roof design to this side of the house would not enhance the appearance of the appeal property in the street scene, there are other gabled properties in the local area and I concur with the Council that this would not be reason alone to dismiss the appeal.

Conclusion

8. At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. In this case, the extended roof and dormer would give the appeal property an unduly prominent, bulky and incongruous appearance which would detract from the character and appearance of the host property and local area. In this respect the development would fail to represent sustainable development as sought by the Framework and it would not meet the design standards required by saved Policies ENV1, ENV5 and ENV6 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review. Therefore, on balance and for the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J A B Gresty

INSPECTOR