

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 June 2017

by J D Westbrook BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 23 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/17/3173856

2a Ashendene Road, Bayford, Hertford, SG13 8PX

- 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 & Mrs R Robinson against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/16/2841/HH, dated 22 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 10 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is the replacement of 3 dormers with 1 dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The Council's questionnaire states that the appeal site lies within the Green Belt. However, Green Belt policy was not a reason for refusal, and I do not consider that the proposal would harm the openness of the Green Belt, conflict with any of the reasons for including land within it, or represent inappropriate development in terms of Green Belt policy. On this basis, the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the village of Bayford.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached, chalet bungalow style property, situated within the small village of Bayford at a point close to where Ashendene Road turns to become Well Row. There is a public house opposite, a residents' car park and bus stop to the north east, and residential properties of varying styles and sizes along Ashendene Road to the south west. The dwelling has 4 identical small dormer windows in the front roof slope, all with pitched roofs and a gable front. There are an additional four dormers of similar style in the rear roof slope, and a further similar dormer in the roof slope of the detached double garage building at the northern end of the site. The proposed development would involve the replacement of three of the front facing dormers with a single long dormer. This new dormer would appear to retain the existing three windows, but with cladding between them, and a low mono-pitch roof above.
 4. The uniformity of the dormer windows across the front elevations of the dwelling and the detached garage is a significant and positive feature on the host property and in the street scene. The property is in a prominent position
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within the village and the front elevation and garage are readily visible when approaching from the south west. There are limited views from the north east, but the side elevation, with matching dormers on the front and rear roof slopes, is visible from the open grassed area at the junction of Ashdene Road and Well Row. The proposed dormer would result in an unbalanced appearance to the dwelling which, in this case, would be detrimental to the street scene.

5. The proposed replacement dormer would appear as an alien feature on the front roof slope. It would not match or complement the design or scale of the dormers across the rest of the property, and it would appear as an over-dominant feature within the roofscape and the wider streetscene. As such it would not respect the character and appearance of the existing dwelling or its surroundings, and would not represent a high standard of design. The appellant contends that the proposal would rectify poor use of existing internal space. I have some sympathy with this view, but it does not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings that would be caused by the proposal.
6. In conclusion, I find that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the wider streetscene in the village of Bayford. It would conflict with Policies ENV1, ENV5 and ENV6 of the Council's Local Plan Second Review, which require new development, including dormer windows, to be of a high standard of design and to be appropriate to the design, scale and character of the original building and its surroundings.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR