The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 June 2017

by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 4th July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/D/17/3170755
49 Northaw Road East, Cuffley, Potters Bar EN6 4LU

- 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 Ms N Wheaton against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.
- The application Ref 6/2016/2219/HOUSE, dated 21 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 December 2016.
- The development proposed is 15 December 2016.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the building and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a modest detached hipped roof bungalow set in from and facing northwest towards the road. The plot is roughly rectangular, parking is to the front and an elongated garden extends to the rear. The road is elevated from the appeal site and given this as well as the spacing between the bungalows in the street, the side elevations and roof form are clearly legible.

4. The proposed extension would occupy the full width of the rear elevation and taking advantage of the lower ground levels of the rear garden, it would be close to two storeys in height. This would result in a very wide and shallow gable roof which would not be reflective of the existing and have the appearance of an awkward and overly bulky addition which would dominate the host dwelling. Given the scale of the existing bungalow compared to the extension, the hipped roof design of the former and the aforementioned spacing the extension would be easily identifiable from the street.

5. As a result of this, the proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the building and the area. Consequently, it would fail to comply with saved Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan[1], the Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 and section 7 of the Framework[2]. These policies and additional guidance seek to ensure, amongst other things, that

[1] Welwyn and Hatfield District Plan 2005
[2] The National Planning Policy Framework 2012

new development is of a high quality and contextually appropriate design and appearance and respects local character.

6. I note the Council's reference to saved Policy GBSP2 of the Local Plan which relates mostly to the towns and settlements specified as being excluded from the Green Belt and to where new development should be focussed. Being within one of the specified settlements the proposed development would comply but given the main issue in the determination of this appeal, saved Policies D1 and D2 are more than sufficient and most relevant.

Other Matters

7. I note that the appeal site is in close proximity to a range of services that can be accessed via sustainable means. However, the scheme before me is not for a new dwelling where the principle of the development may be in question. I have also been referred to examples of other extensions but none bear sufficient parallels to the scheme before me to justify granting planning permission. In any event, each development proposal is considered on its own individual merits.

8. The appeal site does not fall within a Conservation Area nor is the bungalow listed. This does not however mean that an assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the building or the area should be conducted any less stringently. In addition, I do not subscribe to the notion that the extension would have a similar appearance to sloping side dormer windows, particularly given how identifiable the extension would be from street level. Furthermore, and whilst I am not unfamiliar with the benefits that an extended home would grant to the existing occupants I have no compelling case of need before me to weigh against the harm I have identified.

9. There has been no clear opposition to the scheme from either local residents or the Parish Council but this does not automatically make the scheme acceptable in light of my findings.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR