
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 June 2017

by J Gilbert MA (Hons) MTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 05 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/17/3169983

11 Grange Park, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 2HX

- 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 K & D Basavaraj against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/16/2265/HH, dated 4 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 29 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is single-storey front and two-storey side extensions to existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for single-storey front and two-storey side extensions to existing dwelling at 11 Grange Park, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 2HX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 3/16/2265/HH, dated 4 October 2016, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: p01 c; p02 c; p03 c; p04 c; p05 e; p06 e; p07 e; p08 a; e01; e02; e03; e04 and unnumbered location plan.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials shown on plans p05 e; p06 e; and p07 e.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. The Council has also amended the description on the decision notice to refer to raising the ridge height of the roof. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a large two-storey detached house set back from the street within front and rear gardens. It is only partially visible in long views along the street. In terms of shorter views, it faces its immediate neighbour, No 10 Grange Park (Orchards), at the end of the residential cul-de-sac. A public right of way, Whitehall Lane, runs along the side of Nos 10 and 11 behind existing high hedging and fencing.
5. Grange Park is typified by two-storey detached houses and detached dormer bungalows of individual design within well-proportioned and well-established gardens. The street rises up a moderate slope from Rye Street to the crest of a hill. As a result of its topography, layout, and its mix of architectural forms, Grange Park has a pleasant, relatively informal character.
6. The Council is concerned about the prominence of the roof from the street and the public right of way to the side of the property, by reason of raising the ridge height of the roof by 0.6 metres and the insertion of 5 rooflights on the front roof slope. The existing ridge height is indicated on the proposed plans, which confirm that there is no increase in the roof's ridge height proposed. With regard to the rooflights, the house has a large roof which would increase in size as a result of the proposed extensions. The evenly spaced and sized rooflights to both roof slopes would not be incongruous with the host dwelling and would not be highly visible from public vantage points given the site's relationship to the street and the public right of way. As such, I do not consider that either the roof height or the rooflights cause harm to the host dwelling and the character and appearance of the area.
7. I note the Council's disquiet regarding the lack of subservience of the two storey side extension to the existing house. While the proposal would increase the bulk of the first floor of the dwelling, the extension and the existing building would be broken up with timber cladding and glazing and would appear no larger within the street scene at the end of the cul-de-sac than the bulk and scale of the adjoining large property at No 10.
8. Policy HOU11 of the pre-submission version of the East Herts District Plan makes reference to extensions being subservient, but the plan has not yet been examined and I consequently give it limited weight. Policy ENV6 of the extant East Herts Local Plan Second Review (2007) does not refer to the need for extensions to be subservient, instead requiring development to complement the building and its setting, and to ensure appropriate space is left between the extension and the boundary with a neighbouring property. I consider that the two-storey side extension complements the host building within its ample gardens and is compliant with the requirements of extant policy ENV6.
9. The Council also asserts that the proposed first-floor façade cuts into the pitched roof and creates a significant area of flat roof, high eaves and an asymmetric roof from the side elevation. While I acknowledge that the

changes proposed to the dwelling are significant, the remodelling of the house is being treated in a holistic manner. While the relationship between the flat roof and pitched roof and the raised eaves would be visible from the street, as is the existing gable currently, this does not in itself make the proposal unacceptable. In my view, it would not be unduly prominent and the contemporary, asymmetric design would be in keeping with the rest of the host building and with the varied architectural nature of the street. As a result, it would not be intrusive or detract from the qualities of the locality.

10. I find that subject to a condition requiring the control of external materials for construction, the proposal would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would, therefore, accord with policies ENV1, ENV5, and ENV6 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review (2007). The former is a general policy which aims to secure a high standard of design in all new development. Policy ENV5 sets out the general principles for extensions to houses, while Policy ENV6 contains criteria which should be met by domestic extensions. The proposal would also be compliant with a core planning principle of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to secure high quality design.

Conclusion

11. In addition to a condition on materials, conditions should be imposed to require the standard time limit for commencement and to set out the approved plans, in the interests of certainty. Subject to these conditions and for the reasons given above, the appeal succeeds.

J Gilbert

INSPECTOR