
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 June 2017

by R Norman BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 12 July 2017

**Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/17/3174747
194, The Ridgeway, St Albans AL4 9XJ**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs H Wazir against the decision of St Albans City & District Council.
 - The application Ref 5/17/0502, dated 7 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 19 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is two storey side/rear/front extension plus single storey front and rear extensions.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on;
 - The character and appearance of the surrounding area;
 - The living conditions of neighbouring residents.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The proposal seeks to introduce a 2-storey extension to the front, rear and side of the existing semi-detached dwelling and single-storey extensions to the front and rear. This part of The Ridgeway is characterised by two-storey dwellings which, although have some variations in design, have been designed in coherent groups. The existing dwelling is a semi-detached property adjoining No 192 which at present have a balanced appearance. The introduction of the 2-storey gable frontage extension would unbalance the pair of dwellings and would result in a dominant forward projecting feature within the street scene. I have considered the siting of the dwelling in relation to the neighbouring property, No 196, which is set forward of No 194. However this would not sufficiently mitigate the harm caused from the introduction of the front gable extension.
4. From my site visit I noted that some of the surrounding properties have front gable features, however these appear to be part of the original design of these dwellings. Furthermore, some of the nearby dwellings have single-storey front extensions, however these were of a more modest scale than the proposal and

therefore have not have the effect of unbalancing the dwellings to the extent that this proposal would.

5. I also viewed the extended properties identified by the Appellant in Sherwood Avenue, Meadow Close, Hazelmere Road and other properties on The Ridgeway. Whilst some of these have been extended to the front the circumstances behind their approval have not been provided and therefore I can give limited weight to these examples. I have therefore determined this appeal on its own merits.
6. Given the above considerations, the presence of the front two-storey extension would cause harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area by introducing a dominant feature within the street scene, thereby unbalancing the appearance of the pair of semi-detached dwellings. The proposal therefore fails to comply with Policies 69 and 72 of the St Albans District Local Plan Review, 1994, which seek to ensure that development takes into account the scale and character of its surroundings and the original building.

Living Conditions

7. The proposal would introduce a rear two storey gable extension with a single storey extension sited adjacent to No 192. I note that a recent planning application for extensions, including a rear projection has been approved for No 192 which would extend to a similar point as the appeal proposal. I have not been given specific details of the design of the approved rear extension however it is likely that, given the adjacent approval, the proposed rear extension would not result in any undue harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 192 due to its single-storey nature and proposed depth.
8. The rear gardens of the appeal site and adjacent dwellings are relatively long and the introduction of the rear elements of the proposal can be accommodated on the site and would not give rise to any undue harm on the living conditions of adjoining occupiers. As such the proposal complies with Policy 72 of the St Albans District Local Plan Review, 1994, which requires that extensions will not harm adjoining properties. However, this is not sufficient to outweigh my findings in relation to the harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Norman

INSPECTOR