

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July 2017

by J A B Gresty MA MRICS

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

Decision date: 18 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P1940/D/17/3174293
12 Capell Avenue, Chorleywood WD3 5HX

- 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 Rawstorne against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/2432/FUL, dated 19 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing loft conversion, front porch and part single storey rear extension, proposed raising of the main roof, three front dormers, one rear dormer to facilitate a loft conversion, single storey rear extension with associated patio and alterations to front elevation windows and doors.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue 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 bungalow with dormer windows built into the front and rear elevations of the roof to provide for first floor accommodation. The surrounding area is predominantly residential and Capell Avenue is characterised by a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced, single-storey and two-storey dwellings set back from the road behind front drives and gardens. There is significant visible space between most of the dwelling buildings which, in combination with the front gardens, contributes to the local area having a generally spacious character and appearance.
 4. The space between the appeal property and its immediate neighbours is more limited than seen on other parts of Capell Avenue. However, the appeal property and the neighbouring dwellings have hipped roofs which provide the impression of space between the properties at first floor level. This impression of space between is enhanced by the slope of the land which results in the dwellings being built on slightly different levels. Overall, the appeal property and its neighbours reflect the spacious character and appearance of the local area.
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5. The appeal proposed includes a new, larger roof which would more or less cover the footprint of the existing building and provide space for increased first floor accommodation. Whilst the eaves height of the new roof would be unchanged, the top of the roof would be about 0.4 metres higher than the existing roof. To provide more space for first floor accommodation, the new roof would have gable ends and a flat middle section. The loss of the hipped roof design would result in a significant reduction in the visual space between the appeal property and its neighbours when viewed from the road.
6. The flat-topped gable ends would be open to view from the road, especially to the north. Flat roofs are not a prominent feature of the local area and, taking into account its depth and height, the new roof and gable ends would appear very prominent and bulky in the local landscape when viewed from the road. The gable end wall would look particularly bulky and incongruous in comparison to 10 Capell Avenue which is on lower ground.
7. The new roof would have a flat-roofed dormer which would span across nearly the whole of the rear elevation of the property. Views of the dormer would be limited from the road but it would be visible from back gardens of nearby properties on this side of Capell Avenue and residential roads to the rear. Because of its size and box-like design, the dormer would add significantly to the visual bulk the new roof and the appeal property as a whole.
8. Policy DM1 of the Three Rivers District Council Development Management Policies Local development Document (DMP) requires residential development to satisfy the criteria set out in Appendix 2 in order to ensure that development does not lead to a gradual deterioration in the quality of the built environment. DMP Appendix 2 indicates that extensions should not be excessively prominent in relation to adjacent properties. The new flat topped roof with the flat-roofed dormer and prominent gable ends would fail to meet this requirement, especially in relation to No 10. Overall the proposed new roof of the main body of the dwelling would be a large, bulky and incongruous feature which would detract significantly from the character and appearance of the host property and local area, contrary to the design requirements of Policies CP1 and CP12 of Three Rivers District Council Core Strategy and DMP Policy DM1.
9. The south side of the proposed rear single-storey extension would project about 3 metres beyond the back wall of the existing house, which would be some 2.2 metres beyond the building line of the rear elevation of No 14. However, this section of the extension beyond No 14's rear elevation would be single-storey and flat-roofed and would not be prominent when viewed from No 14.
10. The north side of the proposed rear single-storey extension would project further from the main body of the appeal dwelling, 5 metres or so beyond the line of No 14's rear elevation. The extension would be single-storey but would have a pitched roof. Because of the distance from No 14 and the slope of the land, this part of the extension would not be prominent when viewed from No 14's back garden. Also, it would stand adjacent to a brick built outbuilding in No 10's garden and, whilst No 10 is situated on lower ground than the appeal property, this pitched-roofed projection would not be unduly prominent when seen from No 10.

11.DMP Appendix 2 indicates that single-storey rear extensions of detached dwellings should not normally have a depth of more than 4 metres. In this case parts of the rear extensions would be more than 4 metres deep. However, the appeal property has a large back garden and the overall footprint of the extended dwelling would remain modest in relation to the size of its plot. Also the rear single-storey projections would not be prominent when seen from the nearby properties. Therefore, I conclude that the size and depth of the proposed single-storey rear extensions would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the appeal property and local area and would not be reason to dismiss the appeal.

Conclusion

12.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 property would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the local area and in this respect it would not represent sustainable development as sought by the Framework. Therefore, on balance and for the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J A B Gresty

INSPECTOR