
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2017

by Rory MacLeod BA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/D/17/3179336

48 Pine Grove, Brookmans Park, Hatfield AL9 7BW

- 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 S. Photiou against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 6/2017/0689/HOUSE, dated 31 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 26 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is two storey rear extension and internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for two storey and single storey rear extensions at 48 Pine Grove, Brookmans Park, Hatfield AL9 7BW, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 6/2017/0689/HOUSE, dated 31 March 2017, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site location plan, 2729/6A, 2729/7A, 2729/9A and 2729/10A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matter

2. The proposal includes a substantial single storey rear extension in addition to the two storey rear extension and so I have adopted the Council's description of the development for the purposes of this decision.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a two storey detached house with room in the roof. There is a two storey rear extension and conservatory beyond this on the southern

side of the house closest to no.46 Pine Grove and a garage to the side adjacent to the boundary with no.50. At the time of my site inspection, work was underway at the site to provide a loft conversion and alterations following previous planning decisions from the Council. Both sides of Pine Grove are characterised by large detached houses set well back from the road frontage. Whilst the plot widths are similar, and the houses follow a front building line, their sizes and design vary greatly.

5. It is proposed to construct a two storey rear extension with a full width single storey rear extension beyond this to the line of the conservatory that would be demolished. The two storey rear extension would have a twin pitched roof with a valley gutter between two rear facing gables. The appearance of the house would be greatly changed from the property's original design with a significant increase in the mass. But the proposal would not be unattractive in my opinion with the twin gables and fenestration presenting a symmetrical appearance. There is great variation in the size, siting and design of the houses in the road and other houses nearby, such as 54 and 56 Pine Grove, have also been enlarged by two storey rear extensions of comparable mass.
6. As the works are to the rear of the house they would not readily be visible in the street scene. The present two storey extension and conservatory beyond can be seen from the road in the gap between nos. 46 and 48 Pine Grove. The massing and appearance of the development would change little from this viewpoint other than in the detail of the new roofs. The flank wall of the two storey extension would be visible through the gap between nos. 48 and 50 Pine Grove but this would not be a conspicuous feature and would be viewed over the garage at the side of no.48 and would be partly obscured by the branches of a large tree at no.50.
7. Having regard to the mixed character of detached houses and substantial extensions in the surrounding area, I consider that the proposal would not be in conflict with policy D1 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 (WHDP) that requires a high quality of design in new development or with policy D2 of the WHDP that requires development to respect and relate to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed. The Supplementary Design Guidance, Statement Council Policy 2005 states that extensions should be designed to complement and reflect the design and character of the dwelling and be subordinate in scale. The proposal would result in a substantial addition but in my opinion its design would nonetheless be compatible with the evolving character of the dwelling having regard to alterations made and underway.

Conclusion

8. The proposal would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area. The appeal is therefore allowed subject to conditions that are necessary to limit the timespan of the permission, to provide certainty in relation to the plan numbers and to ensure a satisfactory appearance through the use of matching external materials.

Rory MacLeod

INSPECTOR