
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 October 2019

by L McKay MA MRTPI

Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th October 2019.

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/19/3230514
21 Woodfield Way, St Albans AL4 9RY

- 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 Hendrik Nel against the decision of St Albans City & District Council.
 - The application Ref 5/19/0586, dated 11 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 30 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is a roof terrace and all associated works.
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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 area.

Reasons

3. Woodfield Way is a residential street of predominantly two storey semi-detached houses, all set back a similar distance from the street. The appeal site shares the simple form of the surrounding properties with a mix of brick and pebble dashed elevations, regularly spaced large windows and a single garage to the side. Many properties in the street have been extended and altered, however their designs are generally sympathetic to the form and detailing of the host properties. Consequently, the street retains a clear rhythm and the front gardens give it a spacious, open character.
4. The proposed screen and fence around the roof terrace would be an incongruous addition to the street scene at first floor level. The design would contrast sharply with the form of the existing dwelling and surrounding properties. Although the proposed screen and fence would be below eaves level and less bulky than other first floor extensions in the area, nevertheless they would be a prominent and dominant feature in the street scene in this elevated position. Consequently, the proposed enclosure would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area.
5. While there are other timber enclosures in the area these are at ground floor level around domestic gardens. Timber doors, windows and shutters are also common in this street scene. All of these are substantially different in appearance to the proposed enclosure however, and their presence does not make the proposed development any less incongruous.

6. The proposed first floor extension would be largely obscured by the proposed enclosure and therefore would not harm the character and appearance of the area. However, because the proposed extension is necessary to facilitate access to the proposed roof terrace it is part and parcel of the whole development and cannot be separated from it.
7. The proposed development would therefore conflict with saved Policies 69 and 72 of the City and District of St Albans District Local Plan Review 1994 (LPR) which, amongst other things, require a high standard of design that takes account of its surroundings, relates to the domestic scale, character and appearance of the street and is compatible with the original building.
8. Furthermore, the proposal would conflict with paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which requires development to add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character. The appeal proposal would be of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area. Paragraph 130 of the Framework directs that such developments should be refused.

Other matters

9. The proposal would not significantly reduce the gap between the host property and No 23 and would not harm the living conditions of neighbours, however these matters are of neutral consequence. The additional outside space created would be a private benefit for the appellant and would not justify the significant harm I have identified.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L McKay

INSPECTOR