



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 October 2020

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) DiP TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date:

Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/D/20/3249885

46 Bluebridge Road, Brookmans Park, Hatfield AL9 7SA

- 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 A Abraham against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 6/2019/3149/HOUSE, dated 11 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 3 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is a detached single garage and retaining wall, with steps to re-form existing driveway.
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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. Amongst other things, the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 ('SDG') requires the layout of development to be informed by its wider context.
4. The dwellings close to the appeal site either side of Bluebridge Road are arranged in rows which are set well back from the highway. The area between the front face of the dwellings and the highway generally comprises gardens, often with parking forecourts or driveways. Those areas are almost all devoid of buildings.
5. Whilst No 24 has a garage between its front elevation and the highway, that property sits somewhat apart from its neighbours, both of which face side roads, and it is on a curved section of Bluebridge Road, some distance to the north of this site.
6. This proposed garage would be set back around 2.9m from the front boundary of the site. In that location it would be well forward of the host dwelling, and its siting would not reflect the prevailing pattern of development nearby.

7. The proposed garage would have a low hipped roof, in keeping with the form of the roof above the host's entry door. This would assist in limiting the structure's scale and bulk. However, notwithstanding proposed additional landscaping along part of the site's frontage, and a proposed reduction in levels, the garage would still be clearly visible from Bluebridge Road, including through the gap formed by the widened access. In those streetscene views its siting would jar markedly with the nearby pattern and layout of development.
8. I have no evidence to indicate that, should this appeal be allowed, other nearby occupiers would follow suit with similar schemes. However, for the above reasons this proposal would conflict with Policies GBSP2, D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005. Amongst other things, they require high quality design, which respects and relates to the character and context of the locality. It would also conflict with the broadly similar stance in the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly at paragraphs 124 and 127; and with the SDG.
9. I note that this is an amended scheme following the refusal of planning permission for a double garage on the site. However, having considered this scheme on its merits, it would significantly harm the character and appearance of the local area, and would thus conflict with the development plan. Consequently, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR