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# Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 8 December 2020

**by Paul Thompson DipTRP MAUD MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/C1570/D/20/3259163**

**1 Stortford Road, Little Canfield, CM6 1SN**

- 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 D Adams against the decision of Uttlesford District Council.
  - The application Ref UTT/20/1197/HHF, dated 20 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 July 2020.
  - The development proposed is described as 'Proposed side extension'.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Procedural Matter

2. The main parties have both referred to the Council's SPD<sup>1</sup> in their evidence, as such I have had regard to it in the determination of the appeal.

## Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the pair of existing dwellings and the surrounding area.

## Reasons

4. The appeal site concerns one half of a pair of two-storey dwellings situated within the open countryside. The dwellings have a narrow span and shallow pitched roof, with a central ridge and gables to either end, but the frontage of No 1 is somewhat longer than that of No 3.
5. The proposed extension would be of considerable size, just short of half the width of the existing dwelling. It would also be flush with the front façade, incorporate identical eaves and ridge heights and a contrasting crown roof with a hipped end. Due to the scale, form and appearance of the proposal, the host property would be unrecognisable and overwhelmed. While there is not currently symmetry between the pair of dwellings, the proposal would add significantly to the imbalance between them and appear as a discordant feature within its surroundings.
6. While the revision of the materials of construction, to utilise black feather boarding, may have similarities with traditional buildings in Essex, I am conscious that the appeal process should not be used to evolve a scheme. Moreover, this would alter the appearance of the extension and it is important

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<sup>1</sup> Uttlesford District Council Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document – Home Extensions (Adopted November 2005).

that I determine this appeal on the basis of what was considered by the Council and on which interested parties' views were sought.

7. I have been referred to a number of extensions to other properties in the district, the majority of which are not situated in rural locations and were granted prior to the adoption of the Council's SPD. While the SPD does not set out mandatory requirements for extensions, this does not mean a carte blanche approach should be taken and good design principles disregarded. Therefore, the existence of similar extensions in the district would not provide justification for a further development that I consider would be harmful to the pair of dwellings and their surroundings.
8. Similarly, the Council's SPD demonstrates how side extensions can be accommodated, including for situations where garaging is required. In that scenario the roofline and front façade are both shown to follow those of the house. The proposal does not include a garage, so I have given limited weight to the appellant's argument that this scenario should apply to the proposed extension, particularly as the SPD is clear how side extensions should be approached.
9. I have also had regard to a large commercial building approved by the Council to the west, opposite a Grade II listed building. Although the Council found no harm in relation to its policies that protect the countryside, it would not be for comparable development, so I have only given limited weight to the decision in my consideration of the appeal.
10. Despite the absence of objections from third parties and the use of a carefully considered palette of materials, the proposed development would have a significantly harmful effect on the character and appearance of the pair of existing dwellings and the surrounding area. Hence, the proposal would conflict with the design aims of Policies ENV1, GEN2, H8 and S7 of the Council's Local Plan, their SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Other Matters**

11. I acknowledge the appellant's concerns with the Council's handling of the planning application and the inconsistencies between the Council's SPD and the policies of a neighbouring district, but in reaching my decision I have been concerned only with the planning merits of the case and the planning policies relevant to the consideration of applications in the district.
12. Compliance with the Building Regulations, which are separate legislative requirements, would not justify the harm that I have identified in the main issue.

### **Conclusion**

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

*Paul Thompson*

INSPECTOR