



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 October 2020

by C Beeby BA (Hons) MIPROW

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/K1935/D/20/3248718

2 Whitney Drive, Stevenage SG1 4BG

- 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 Steve Curtis against the decision of Stevenage Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00529/FPH, dated 1 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is a part first floor and part 2 storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The host dwelling is a detached property with a prominent corner position within an area of similar dwellings. The generally well-spaced dwellings within reasonably sized plots give the surrounding area a spacious appearance. The limited scale of the host dwelling's single storey side hall and garage allows for a characteristic spaciousness.
4. The proposed extension would lie above the hall and garage and would extend the property's footprint to the rear. The finished property would give rise to a significant projection of two-storey built form of a scale which would be uncharacteristic of the prevailing pattern of development. The resulting dominance of the development at this prominent corner location would cause material visual harm to the area's characteristic spaciousness.
5. Furthermore, the proposed substantial areas of white painted render to the property's front elevation would exacerbate the visual effect of excessive scale because the light shade would draw the eye in an area of development which generally has a more muted appearance.
6. The appeal proposal would consequently cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. As a result, it conflicts with Policies SP8 and GD1 of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (2019), which state that development should achieve the highest standards of design, and should make a positive contribution to its location and surrounds. Further conflict

exists with the Stevenage Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2009), which sets out that extension proposals should respect the size and materials of the building concerned, as well as the surrounding buildings.

Other Matters

7. My attention has been drawn to a property in the vicinity which is clad and rendered in modern materials. Whilst I have limited details on the circumstances of this development, the dwelling has a less prominent position than the appeal property and furthermore it is partially screened behind vegetation. Moreover, its scale and proportions differ from those of the appeal property. Thus, it does not have a sufficiently similar appearance for me to be able to draw comparisons. Furthermore, even if the other development and circumstances were similar, they would not inevitably provide an example that should be followed even if harm results. Accordingly, the other development does not alter my conclusions as to the unacceptability of the current scheme.
8. I acknowledge the stated household need for greater space, and I am sympathetic to this. Nevertheless, planning in general is concerned with land use in the public interest. It is probable that the development would remain long after the current personal circumstances cease to be material. For these reasons, this factor is a benefit to which I can attach only minimal weight.
9. I have not identified that the proposal would cause any significant harm to the living conditions of occupiers of the neighbouring dwellings. I acknowledge the lack of objection from interested parties. Nevertheless, these are neutral matters which consequently do not attract weight in my decision.
10. It has been put to me that the imposition of a condition concerning the materials of the proposed development could render its effect on the main issue acceptable. However, I am mindful of advice within the Planning Practice Guidance on the use of conditions, which sets out that it is not appropriate to impose a condition which would modify the development in a way that makes it substantially different from that set out in the application. The suggested condition would result in a development which would be likely to be substantially different in appearance to that which was applied for, and hence it would not be appropriate to impose it. Thus, the suggestion is not capable of rendering the proposal acceptable.

Conclusion

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

C Beeby

INSPECTOR