



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 25 May 2021

by Mr James Blackwell LLB (Hons)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/21/3269923

2 Tower Road, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 7LP

- 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 Mrs Liliya Gizzi against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/20/2409/HH, dated 27 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 26 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing garage, and proposed two storey side extension to family dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. During my site visit it was apparent that the garage had already been demolished, which reflects the position set out in the appellant's application form and the Council's delegated report. This aspect of the development for which planning permission has been sought is therefore retrospective, and will be referred to accordingly in this decision.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached two-storey house, located on a corner plot at the junction of Tower Road and Fanhams Road. The property is set back from the road and benefits from ample space for the parking of vehicles on its frontage with Tower Road. There was previously a garage to the side of the property which has now been demolished, leaving an additional area of open space between the side elevation of the property and Fanhams Road. There is an enclosed garden to the rear of the property.
5. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature and includes a variety of house types. These are mostly modest semi-detached or terraced dwellings which are separated from the road by driveways and/or gardens, many with sizeable gardens to the rear. Pairs or terraces of dwellings are generally separated by modest gaps, which provides a sense of space and openness to the street scene, which in turn contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.

6. The proposed two storey side extension would be located to the south west elevation of the appeal property, on the area previously occupied by the garage. The extension would measure 3.85m in width, which equates to approximately two thirds of the width of the existing dwelling. In terms of depth, the extension would align with both the front and rear elevations of the host dwelling at ground floor level, but would be set back at first floor level by approximately 600mm. The height of the extension would be similar to the current dwelling, albeit the ridge line of the new roof would be set down from the main roof line by 200mm.
7. Whilst I acknowledge the slight reduction in height of the proposed extension when compared to the host property, the difference in height is only marginal. Similarly, whilst the front elevation of the first floor is set back by 600mm from the main dwelling, no attempt has been made to incorporate any degree of subservience to the host property at ground floor level. Due to these factors, the proposed extension would not appear subordinate to the existing dwelling.
8. With such a limited degree of subservience to the host property, the extension would be disproportionate in terms of size and scale to the existing dwelling, which would be harmful to its appearance. Due to the modest size of its attached neighbouring property and the current symmetry they share, the extension would also lead to a significant imbalance between the two properties, which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the wider street scene.
9. The Council has indicated that the extension would not adhere to the existing building line that the appeal property shares with neighbouring properties along Fanhams Road and Homefield Road. Based on my observations during the site visit and the figure included at paragraph 6.24 of the appellant's statement of case, I am satisfied that the proposed extension would not breach these building lines. Nonetheless, due to the open corner location of the appeal property, the extension occupies a prominent position which is seen from numerous aspects along Tower Road, Fanhams Road and Homefield Road. Given the significant scale of the extension and the consequent disparity in size with many of its neighbouring properties, the extension would be visually prominent and obtrusive in places along each of these roads, which would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
10. Whilst I acknowledge there are examples of other residential side extensions near to the appeal property, these extensions have generally incorporated a greater degree of subservience to the host property when compared to the development proposed, and therefore integrate more successfully with both their host dwelling and the wider street scene.
11. Specifically, the side extension at No 3 Tower Road (opposite to the appeal property) appears subordinate to the host property, which has been achieved by incorporating a greater reduction in roof height, and a step back from the front elevation of the main dwelling on both floors. Before being extended, No 1 Tower Road occupied a much larger plot than the appeal property, which enabled a larger extension to come forward without appearing overly dominant or visually obtrusive. Due to the subdivision of the plot, the size of the resultant dwellings is also more commensurate with the size of other properties along the road, which helps retain an appropriate level of balance to the street scene.

12. Due to its bulk and scale, the proposed extension would not be subordinate to the host dwelling, which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the appeal property itself and the wider surrounding area. This is contrary to policies DES4 and HOU11 of the East Herts District Plan (adopted October 2018), which require extensions to be of a size, mass and scale which is appropriate to both the existing dwelling, and the wider surrounding area.

Conclusion

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

James Blackwell

INSPECTOR