



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 November 2021 by Emma Grierson BSc (Hons) MSc MRPTI

Decision by H Nicholls FdA MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/21/3281651

10 Robins Close, London Colney AL2 1QT

- 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 Jason and Mrs Julie Hudson against the decision of St Albans City Council.
 - The application Ref 5/21/0816, dated 18 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 28 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is a garage conversion to form habitable space, erection of single storey front extension to form new garage, single storey side extension and relocation of front door.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is occupied by a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling located in a small cul-de-sac to the rear of High Street. The surrounding properties in Robins Close are similar in appearance to the appeal dwelling, with two garage blocks forward of the main building line serving a row of terrace dwellings further into the cul-de-sac. The proposal would introduce an attached garage to the front of the appeal dwelling along with a side extension and the conversion of the existing integral garage into habitable accommodation.
5. The entrance to Robins Close and the area to the front of the appeal property is open and spacious in nature. Whilst the proposed front extension would be against an existing boundary wall, its substantial depth would still project significantly forward of the current building line, resulting in the partial loss of the openness and an overly large addition to the front of the host dwelling.
6. Although the materials proposed for the front extension would match that of the host dwelling and the height would be relatively modest, the hipped roof would not match the existing dwelling's roof form and, along with its depth,

would appear as an incongruous addition to the appeal property. Whilst its attachment to the host dwelling would be difficult to distinguish from the public realm, the lack of space between the property and garage would contribute to its massing and dominant appearance.

7. It is noted that Robins Close is dominated by two large garage outbuildings, which are forward of the properties they serve, and which form part of the character of the area. The proposed front extension may be in line with these garages and have a smaller profile, however the existing garages are set further into the cul-de-sac than the proposed development and are less prominent in the streetscene. Therefore, the existing garages do not set a precedent for new development forward of the building line.
8. Therefore, for the reasons above I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area and therefore would be contrary to Policies 69 and 72 of the St Albans District Local Plan Review (1994). These policies require new development to have a high standard of design which relate to the domestic scale, character and appearance of the street. It would also be contrary to the general design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

9. A front extension was approved on the appeal site in 2005 but was not implemented. However, this was significantly smaller than the appeal proposal and therefore does not provide a material fall-back position.
10. The appellant has brought several developments to my attention which are similar to the appeal proposal. This includes a linked outbuilding to the front and side of the dwelling at 40 Watford Road and a single storey front extension at Jemarold, North Orbital Road. However, both of these developments are located in a vastly different settings to the appeal before me and therefore are not directly comparable.
11. It is noted that the Council have found no harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers or access to, and parking provision on, the appeal site. However, this would not outweigh the identified harm.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole, and I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Emma Grierson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Hollie Nicholls

INSPECTOR