



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 November 2021

by A.Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/D/21/3280941
41 Selwyn Crescent, Hatfield AL10 9NW

- 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 Barry Allport against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 6/2021/1050/HOUSE, dated 29 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 June 2021.
 - The proposed development is for double storey side extension and loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the impact of the proposals upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is an attractive semi detached property within this suburban crescent street where most properties appear to be of similar ages, materials and design. The majority of the houses are of red/orange brick with double front bay windows serving both the ground floor and first floor and elaborated with either Mock Tudor or tile hung cladding to certain elements.
4. Most properties have front gardens or parking areas bounded by a low brick wall and the highway verge epitomises the Arts and Crafts inspired mid twentieth century suburban design that gives the crescent much of its appeal.
5. The appeal property is synonymous with this character and includes a single storey garage and outbuildings adjoining the main house that then give access to the generous rear garden.
6. The proposal before me seeks permission to extend the property to the side and rear with loft conversion and dormer facing over the back garden. This would remove the existing garage and attempt to straighten the building through aligning it with the side boundary at ground floor level but being set in slightly at the first floor.
7. Due to this set in at first floor the proposed extension would create an awkward junction between first and ground floors. This appears to me to be a relatively

poor response to the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance that strives for a 1m set in from the common boundary in such areas of semi detached housing. In this case however the 1m set in has been achieved through the introduction of this rather awkward roof juncture farther into the plot which would present a partial and foreshortened roof form that would in no way reflect the high quality of architectural details and features that I consider add interest, quality and variety to the streetscene here.

8. Although I have been made aware of several other such instances within the immediate vicinity where such extensions have utilised a similar roof junction and complex roof form, I have no information before me as to the precise reasons why these extensions came about and as such can only give them limited weight.
9. Further to this, however, I also saw on my site visit that there have been other such extensions that have avoided such awkward design details in similar extensions within the street. As such, I consider that the introduction of more such examples of contrived roof forms within such extensions would actually cause more harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene here and would undermine the high quality design that currently predominates.
10. Further to this I consider that the proposed rear dormer would represent an overly large addition to this property that could easily be avoided through more sensitive design. As it stands however, I consider that the proposed rear dormer would somewhat dominate this roof and would clearly fail to meet the Council's guidance on such roof extensions.
11. Therefore, although I consider there are ways to extend this property that could meet the recommendations within the Council's residential design guidance, in this instance, the cumulation of both the contrived roof forms and the overly large rear dormer would constitute a poor design response to this property that would not meet the relatively high quality of design that characterises the streetscene here.
12. In light of this I consider that the proposal before me would fail to meet the high standards of design sought for through both the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework and as such would be contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons above, taking into account all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

A Graham

INSPECTOR