



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 November 2021

by Penelope Metcalfe BA(Hons) MSc DipUP DipDBE MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 December 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/A1910/D/21/3280113

43 Green Lane, Bovingdon, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 0JZ

- 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 Ms Linda Buxton against the decision of Dacorum Borough Council
 - The application Ref 21/01653/FHA, dated 21 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 16 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is single storey link extension, garage conversion and insertion of doors to first floor rear elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of single storey link extension, garage conversion and insertion of doors to first floor rear elevation at 43 Green Lane, Bovingdon, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 0JZ, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 21/01653/FHA, dated 21 April 2021, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 21.061-P1, 21.061-P2[2] dated 1.6.21 site and block plans and 21.061-P2[4] dated 1.6.21 proposed plans and elevations.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.

Main issues

2. I consider that the main issues in this case are its effect on the character and appearance of the area and on the living conditions of residents.

Reasons

3. 43 Green Lane is a detached two storey house with a hipped roof and a slightly projecting hipped front gable element and a canopy feature across the front over the ground floor bay window and forming the porch. It is set well back from the street on the southeast side with a large double garage sited to the front approximately 3.7m from the front boundary. The surroundings are residential in character, with substantial detached houses in a mix of

architectural styles on this side of the street. These follow no formal building line but are generally set well back. Several have large detached front garages set closer to the road.

4. The policies relevant in this case include CS11 and CS12 of the Core Strategy 2006-2031 (2013) (the Core Strategy) and saved Appendices 3 and 7 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 (the local plan). These relate to the quality of design and require, among other things, that development including residential extensions preserve attractive streetscapes, avoid loss of privacy, harmonise with the original house and respect adjoining properties in terms of matters including scale and height.
5. The proposed single storey extension would form a link between the front of the house and the existing garage, incorporating the existing front door. It would be constructed of materials to match the existing with a pitched roof. The garage would be converted to provide two new bedrooms.
6. It would alter the balance of the existing house, but as this is not symmetrical I consider that this would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the house. It would remain subservient to the main mass of the house and would be a relatively small infill element between the house and the garage which is set well forward of the house within the site.
7. Although it would project beyond the front wall of the house it would not dominate the street scene because it would be set well back from the street and largely hidden behind the bulk of the garage. It would not appear obtrusive in views from the street as it would only be partially visible in some oblique glimpses along the street. This is because the properties on either side are both sited forward of No. 43 and therefore would screen the proposal from view and additional screening would be provided by the substantial vegetation marking the side boundaries of the site.
8. I conclude that the proposed single storey link extension would not harm the character and appearance of the existing house or the wider street scene. In this respect it is consistent with policy CS12 and local plan Appendices 3 and 7.
9. The proposed first floor doors would replace an existing rear window. They would give access to a balcony which would be approximately 0.5m deep. Although this would be deep enough to stand on, it would not provide a realistic space for sitting out. I consider that the doors would not result in any greater overlooking and impact on the privacy of the neighbours on either side than the existing large window in the room.
10. The rear building lines of the houses on each side are set well back compared with No.43 such that the most private parts of the gardens closest to each house are not visible from the window. Views further into the gardens from the window, and therefore from the proposed doors, are limited by substantial and high hedges. These hedges appear to be well established and maintained to provide privacy and I see no reason to expect that they would be reduced in either height or width and consequently result in a loss of privacy.
11. I conclude that the proposed doors would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring residents by reason of loss of privacy. In this respect the proposal is consistent with policies CS11 and CS12 and local plan Appendices 3 and 7.

12. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed.

Conditions

13. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council, having regard to the tests set out in the Framework. A condition detailing the plans is necessary to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and for the avoidance of doubt. A condition relating to the materials is necessary in order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development.

PAG Metcalfe

INSPECTOR