

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 February 2022 by Emma Grierson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by Caroline Mulloy BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/D/21/3279219

22 Walter Mead Close, Ongar CM5 0BW

- 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 Robert Enderby against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref PL/EPF/0864/21, dated 26 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is a single storey front extension.
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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 surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is occupied by a two-storey semi-detached dwelling with further habitable accommodation in the roof space. To the front of the dwelling is a detached single garage along with a driveway and a private parking area. The surrounding area is residential in nature and, whilst the properties on the estate vary in size and design, they all follow a similar modern and simple style which has a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area.
5. The proposed single storey front extension would be located between the main dwelling and the detached garage. Therefore, whilst it is somewhat concealed by the existing built form and set back from the roadside, it would still be a visible addition within the streetscene. The proposal is relatively modest in scale with materials matching that of the host dwelling. However, its location on the front of the dwelling and its visibility from the public realm would make it a prominent addition which would appear incompatible with the current minimalistic styling of the immediate area.
6. The pair of semi-detached properties, of which the appeal property is part of, are currently symmetrical in appearance. The proposed extension would unbalance this symmetry and appear as an incongruous and cluttered addition

to the front elevation, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the pair of dwellings and the surrounding area.

7. For the reasons above, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would therefore be contrary to Policies CP2, CP7 and DBE10 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan (2006). These policies collectively seek to safeguard or enhance the setting and character of the urban environment with high quality design that complements the streetscene. It would also be contrary to the general design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.
8. Furthermore, the proposal would be contrary to Policies DM9 and DM10 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan Submission Version (2017) which seek to ensure development proposals relate positively to their context with extensions to residential buildings being required to respect the form and setting of the original buildings.

Other Matters

9. I note the other properties within Walter Mead Close, which have undergone various extensions, that have been highlighted by the appellant, including No.3, 12, 31 and 35. Whilst all these extensions have changed the appearance of the host property in a way which the appellant considers to be prominent, they are all vastly different to the appeal proposal in that they do not include an extension to the front elevation of the dwelling. Therefore, these other developments do not set a precedent for the proposal before me.
10. The Council and the appellant have both concluded that the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and that no objections have been received from third parties, including the Town Council. However, this lack of harm does not amount to a positive benefit, but a neutral factor only in my consideration of this case.
11. The appellant's claims relating to the conduct of the Council, including the re-use of a pre-planning application response in the delegated officer report and the lack of a site visit, are noted. However, this does not alter the planning merits of the case and the conclusions which I have reached.

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.

Caroline Mulloy

INSPECTOR