
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 March 2022

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/A1910/D/22/3290070

4 Parkfield, Markyate AL3 8RD

- 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 Paul Skinner against the decision of Dacorum Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/04397/FHA, dated 18 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 15 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a 2-storey front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a 2-storey semi-detached house with a ground floor projection that wraps around the front and side of the main building. It stands within an estate style residential area within which dwellings are similar in age and general style although several properties vary in scale and appearance partly due to various external alterations and extensions that have taken place. New dwellings have also been introduced close to the site. As a result, there is some variety to the existing built form in the local area to which No 4 belongs, which the appellant's photographs clearly show.
4. The proposal is to enlarge No 4 with a part single storey, part 2-storey extension at the front that would be evident from Parkfield, in both directions. When seen from this highway, the new 2-storey element with a hipped end facing the road would be a significant and prominent feature. It would be a sizeable addition, extending outwards by 3-metres from the main front wall and across much of the building's width. In combination, the design and scale of the new 2-storey extension would cause it to overwhelm the simple form, modest proportions and general style of the existing dwelling notwithstanding the use of matching external materials.
5. From the street, the additional built form would also accentuate the contrast in scale, design and roof form between No 4 and the attached property, which largely retains its 2-storey built form at the front and has a largely flat façade and a simple dual pitched roof. By introducing a large 2-storey front projection

with mono-pitched roofs on either side, the proposal would exacerbate these differences and further unbalance the built form of No 4 and its attached counterpart. This imbalance would be so great as to draw the eye in the local street scene. For all these reasons, the proposal would spoil the intrinsic character of the existing dwelling and be obtrusive even among the varied built form within the local area.

6. From what I saw, there have been changes to several properties in the vicinity of the site that together with examples of new dwellings have introduced some variety to the size and general appearance of existing development. However, I observed that properties with large 2-storey front projections, as proposed, are not a predominant characteristic of existing development in the local area with the example provided of 79 Buckwood Avenue being some distance away from the site. To reiterate, the proposed development would be on a scale where the form of the host building would be unduly compromised and its effect on the surrounding area would be both significant and harmful.
7. Against that background, I conclude that the proposed development would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the local area, in conflict with Policies CS11 and CS12 of the Council's Core Strategy 2006-2031. These policies seek to ensure that development integrates with the streetscape character and respects adjoining properties in terms of scale and bulk. It is also contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that developments should be sympathetic to local character and add to the overall quality of the area.
8. I recognise that there would be sufficient off-road parking to serve the enlarged house and that the existing dwelling would be no wider because of the appeal scheme. Consequently, the gaps between buildings and views of the sky from the public realm would remain unaltered. However, these considerations do not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

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

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR