



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 February 2022

by Rebecca Thomas MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K1935/D/21/3279883

21 Augustus Gate, Stevenage, SG2 7QY

- 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 Shane McGuire against the decision of Stevenage Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00308/FPH, dated 25 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is Part two storey, part single storey side and single storey front extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for is Part two storey, part single storey side and single storey front extensions at 21 Augustus Gate, Stevenage, SG2 7QY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/00308/FPH, dated 25 March 2021, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 3285-20A1-01 – Existing Plans and elevations; 3285-20A4-04 – Site location plan; 3285-20A4-03A – Block Plan; 3285-20A1-02F – Proposed plans and elevations.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural matters

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the Council's decision notice. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed from that stated on the planning form. Notwithstanding this, I have used the description as used on the Council's decision notice as this more accurately describes the proposal as shown on the plans and I have considered the appeal on this basis.
3. The Council has raised concern that the development would require the removal of the existing boundary fence to Fairlands Way and replacement or relocated fence. Nonetheless, the proposal appears to show that all the development is contained within the red line as submitted, notwithstanding the location of the existing fence or its replacement and this is not disputed by

either party. Therefore, I have considered the proposals on the basis of the plans before me.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal site and the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is an end of terrace property located in a residential area, accessed from the cul-de-sac of Augustus Way, which is also accessible by foot from Fairlands Way. The southern boundary of the appeal site is located adjacent to this street. The dwelling is constructed of yellow brick with a tile roof. The boundary with Fairlands Way is a standard close-board fence. There is a detached garage building to the east of the house, which is shared with a neighbouring property.
6. To the west of the appeal site is a community centre and pharmacy building, of modern construction and set back from the road. This building features red brick with clay tiles, dormer windows to the front and a single storey pharmacy building. Fairlands Way is a main arterial route, with residential streets leading off it. The local area is characterised by many dwellings which bound the street and pavement at varying angles and orientations, combined with the community and commercial uses along the street, such as the buildings adjacent to the appeal site and other uses. I was able to see along the road varying types of boundary treatments, some of which are immediately abutting the pavement, others leaving some space before the pavement. This includes blank walls of dwellings (some being two storey), brick walls, close board fences and hedges.
7. The development would introduce a two storey extension to the property, including a single storey element which would wrap around the front and side of the house. The development would include a hipped roof element, set below the ridgeline of the existing dwelling and include a mono-pitched roof to the side and a gabled porch element to the front elevation both at ground floor. The extensions would make use of the existing footprint of the dwelling and would not protrude beyond the existing rear elevation.
8. Much of the dwelling and garage is visible from Fairlands Way given its orientation and location to this main road, combined with the marginally higher ground of the appeal site as compared to the street. In this respect, I agree with the council that the appeal site is prominent as seen from the street. Nonetheless, the site as seen within the overall setting of the local area is not unusual or incompatible. As described above, there are a variety of building types and orientations immediately adjacent to the pavement and visible within the local area.
9. Whilst the proposed extensions would be visible, I am able to see from the plans before me that the extensions would be set down from the main roof of the existing dwelling, with the hipped roof element facing Fairlands Way. I have noted the hipped roofs to the larger commercial and community buildings nearby, as well as blank gable walls which directly abut Fairlands Way and do not consider that the proposed development would be out of place with the character and appearance of the dwelling or the local area. Although the

development would be brought closer to the boundary, this is not unusual as there are a number of dwellings forming the boundary with the road or pavement, or within proximity to it. The widest part of the development is to be set closest to Fairlands Way, however, would remain single storey, whilst the two storey element would be reduced in its impact due to the hipped roof element. These design elements would soften the impact close to Fairlands Way and would not be out of keeping in appearance or character to the local area.

10. I have had regard to the Council's Local Plan¹ which expects at Policy GD1 that development represents good design, and at Policy SP8 that the standards of design also have regard to Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The Council's Design Guide SPD² sets out guidance for residential extensions. This includes a requirement for extensions to appear subservient to the original house. Whilst the development would be a large increase to the dwelling, the lower hipped two storey element and the mono-pitched ground floor element ensures that the extensions remain subservient to the original house. In this regard, the development would not conflict with the provisions of the Local Plan or the SPD. For these reasons I find that the proposed development would also accord with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) regarding good design.

Other Matters

11. I note that the appeal proposal is a resubmission, taking into account issues previously raised by the Council. Whilst I have been provided with the details of that proposal, it is correct that I have assessed the current proposal on the basis of the information before me.
12. There have been comments from both parties with regard to nearby developments and permissions. Although there may be some similarities with the issues raised, there are still specific differences for each site. Given these differences I have given these examples little weight, and in any event have considered this appeal on its own merits in light of the evidence before me.

Conditions

13. In addition to the standard timescale for implementation condition, it is necessary to attach a condition to confirm the approved drawings in the interests of certainty. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, I have also imposed a condition to ensure that the external surfaces materials would match the existing.

Conclusion

14. I have found that there is no harm to the character and appearance of the local area. I therefore conclude that, subject to the above conditions, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal should be allowed.

Rebecca Thomas

INSPECTOR

¹ Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (May 2019)

² Stevenage Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (October 2009)