

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 June 2022

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6TH July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/22/3298531

41 Star Street, Ware, SG12 7AA

- 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 Anthony Woodward against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/22/0130/HH, dated 21 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as '*Construction of two-storey side extension and single-storey rear extension*'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Notwithstanding the description that I have used in the banner heading above, the Council's decision notice also includes reference to a loft conversion and rear dormer window. This is clearly shown on the planning application drawings as part of the proposed works. Furthermore, the appeal form includes reference to a loft conversion with rear dormer window as part of the details for the proposed development. I have therefore considered the appeal on this basis.
3. The application form gives the date of the application as '21/0/22'. This is clearly an error and I note the certificate of ownership which accompanied the application was dated '21/01/22' and that the decision notice states that the application was received on 21 January. I am satisfied that the application was made on that date and have recorded it as so.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and the wider street scene.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a modest sized, two-storey semi-detached dwelling located within a predominantly residential area on the fringes of Ware town

centre. Although there are mixed residences in the area, including contemporary flatted developments and terraced houses both opposite and adjacent at Star Holme Court, the appeal property and its attached neighbour at No 39 is one of three similar, adjoining semi-detached pairs that occupy an arced arrangement which turns around the corner where Clements Street joins Star Street. Nos 39 and 41 squarely face Star Street. No 43 and No 1 Clements Street are orientated obliquely facing the road junction, and Nos 2 and 3 squarely face Clements Street. Therefore, whilst Nos 39 and 41 appear to be an isolated example of a unique house style when approaching along Star Street from the west, they are clearly seen to be associated with the others when seen from other viewpoints and part of a reasonably harmonious group, despite some notable changes over time to some of these properties.

6. As a pair, in common with the other similar properties, Nos 39 and 41 share a two-storey forward facing gable with the boundary between both at the apex, and with narrow recessed wings to each side under a hipped roof. To the rear, the original form of the building had a shared and centrally positioned shallow, two-storey projection under a flat roof. No 39 has been extended to the front side and rear, such that there is an imbalance between the pair at ground floor level. Nevertheless, there remains a symmetry to the building at first floor and roof levels that ensures it maintains its proportions and harmony in its setting, and its associations with its contemporaries.
7. The proposal would include extending No 41 sideways with a two-storey extension that would follow the front and rear building lines of the existing side wing. The roof form would be changed from a hip end to a gable, and a 'box-like' dormer would be added to the rear roof slope and spanning almost its entire width. I do not share the appellant's view that the recessed position of the existing side wing would enable the new side extension to appear subservient. The balanced proportions, appearance, and simple form of the existing building would be lost, with the modest size of the side wing engulfed as part of a much wider side element and with an entirely different roof profile. The failure of the two-storey side extension to appear as a subservient addition and of a size, form and design that would be appropriate to the character, appearance and setting of the existing dwelling would directly conflict with part (a) of Policy HOU11 *Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings, Residential Outbuildings and Works Within Residential Curtilages* of the East Herts District Plan 2018.
8. The dormer extension would dominate the existing rear roof slope. Not only would it significantly alter the roof profile of the building when seen from the rear and in open views from Clements Street, but it would be heavily dependent upon the new side extension to accommodate a large part of its size. By failing to be of just modest proportions and respectful of the design and character of the original dwelling and its surroundings, this part of the proposal would also conflict with part (d) of Policy HOU11.
9. Overall, I find that the proposed side extension, loft conversion and rear dormer window would fail to display the standard of design necessary to respect the character of the existing dwelling and the wider street scene. As such there would be conflict with the overall requirements of Policy HOU11 and with EHDP Policy DES4 *Design of Development* which requires all development to be of a high standard of design and layout to reflect and promote local

distinctiveness. I have noted the need to make provision for a larger family living space but this need does not outweigh the harm that I have identified. Accordingly, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR