



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 November 2022

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/22/3306659

11 Thorley Hill, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 3ND

- 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 Bill Rice against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/22/1060/HH, dated 12 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 22 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two-storey rear extension, existing dormers to be extended, front facade to be insulated and clad with flint, roof lights and windows added to the side elevations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a two-storey rear extension, existing dormers to be extended, front facade to be insulated and clad with flint, roof lights and windows added to the side elevations at 11 Thorley Hill, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 3ND in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 3/22/1060/HH, dated 12 May 2022, 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: Drg Nos 1049-22.PL.001 Rev A, 1049-22.PL.002, 1049-22.PL.003 Rev B, 1049-22.PL.004 Rev B, 1049-22.PL.005 Rev B and 1049-22.PL.006.
 - 3) The roofing materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and wider street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a detached, gable fronted bungalow located on a wedge-shaped plot with a narrow frontage and appearing fairly tightly squeezed between a much more imposing and contemporary looking two-storey gabled dwelling at No 9, set lower down the slope of Thorley Hill, and a more

traditional looking two-storey semi-detached house on higher ground at No 13. The appeal property has accommodation at first floor level within the roof void that is facilitated by dormer windows to each side. These are slightly recessed behind the front elevation and set up from the eaves, and project with a shallow, catslide type roof from the ridgeline of the much steeper side slopes of the main roof. The dormer to the west elevation is shorter in length than the dormer to the opposing side but despite this they appear from Thorley Hill as a pair of symmetrical wings which create a balanced appearance to the building within the street scene.

4. The property has a single-storey, flat roof extension across the majority part of the rear elevation. The proposal would effectively square this off at ground floor level and project the existing form of the building over at first floor. Both dormers to each side would be extended rearwards to span almost the full length of the enlarged dwelling.
5. Policies DES4 and HOU11 of the East Herts District Plan October 2018 (EHDP) require extensions to dwellings to be of a size, scale, mass, form, siting, design and materials of construction that are appropriate to the character, appearance and setting of the existing dwelling and/or the surrounding area, and extensions to generally appear as a subservient addition. Part (d) of Policy HOU11 further advises that roof dormers may be acceptable if appropriate to the design and character of the dwelling and its surroundings and that they should generally be of limited extent and modest proportions, so as not to dominate the existing roof form.
6. The rearward projection of the main part of the dwelling would follow a logical extension in a manner that would appropriately respect the building's original form.
7. The enlargement of the side dormers would alter little, if anything, of the dwelling's appearance. The front elevation would not change, other than through a proposed alternative use of flint cladding at ground floor level, which would be acceptable within the mixed palette of materials in the wider area.
8. The dormers would be undeniably large and dominant within their respective roof slopes. However, they would merely reflect the established design and character of the dwelling and its existing roof form. Whilst I agree with the Council that each enlarged dormer would be glimpsed from Thorley Hill, my own observations confirmed that, due to the tight relationship between No 11 and both neighbouring properties, the ability to have full sight of each dormer would be severely limited and restricted for each to be seen from just a very short stretch either side of the property, beyond which the extended parts of the dormers to the rear would be screened by the neighbouring buildings and undetectable from the public domain.
9. My overall view is that the proposed extension and dormer enlargements would simply mimic the appearance of the existing building without having any significant impact upon the character or appearance of the street scene. There would therefore be no conflict with EHDP Policies DES4 or HOU11. For the same reasons there would be no conflict with Policy HDP2 of the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for All Saints, Central, South and Part of Thorley 2016-2032 which relates to the setting and character of buildings, streets and spaces.

Conditions

10. A condition specifying the relevant plans is necessary as this provides certainty.
11. The Council has suggested a condition that would require the exterior of the development to be constructed in the materials specified on the submitted application form and plans, or else in materials that would need to be approved in writing. However, the application drawing 1049-22.PL.003 Rev B explicitly details the proposed use of mixed materials for the external walls of the building, which would alter the existing. These are deemed to be acceptable by the Council and I concur. Therefore, a condition along the lines proposed is unnecessary. However, as the existing roof would be extended, I have imposed an alternatively worded condition requiring the roofing materials to match the existing, which is necessary in the interests of maintaining the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given, I find that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of the host property, or to the wider street scene. Accordingly, in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR