

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 December 2022

by J Bell-Williamson MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/F3545/D/22/3304912

28 Helions Park Avenue, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 8BN

- 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 Victor Law against the decision of West Suffolk Council.
 - The application Ref DC/22/0851/HH, dated 11 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is 'householder planning application – first floor side extension'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant indicates that the original description of development has changed. Therefore, the above description reflects the amended description shown on the appeal form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons

4. No 28 Helions Park Avenue is a two storey semi-detached dwelling in a residential road of similar property types.
 5. Policy DM2 of the Council's Joint Development Management Policies Document (2015) concerns development principles and local distinctiveness, and includes the requirement that development should maintain or create a sense of place and/or local character. Policy DM24 of the same document, concerning alterations or extensions to dwellings, requires such proposals to respect the character, scale and design of existing dwellings, and the character and appearance of the immediate and surrounding area. Policy CS3 of the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy (2010), concerning design and local distinctiveness, requires that development proposals must create and contribute to a high quality environment.
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6. Nos 28 and 30 are paired dwellings set at an angle to the main building line of properties with frontages on Helions Park Avenue. Nos 24 and 26 reflect the same angled layout. The two pairs of dwellings are positioned either side of Helions Park Gardens, a short spur road off the avenue, with the original built form of the dwellings set away from the side boundary. As such, this planned layout provides a spacious, open aspect at the entrance to Helions Park Gardens, enabling views of the properties behind the main road frontage.
7. The four dwellings retain a good degree of uniformity in terms of their original form and appearance. The main change in this regard is to the appeal property, which has a relatively wide single storey addition extending towards Helions Park Gardens. Due to the limited height of this existing extension the open aspect to the side of the dwelling is largely retained.
8. In contrast, the extent of the proposed sideways projection to the upper storey would materially reduce the openness next to the junction of the two roads. It would add substantive bulk and mass across the dwelling's frontage, appearing as a dominant feature within the street scene. This would be particularly apparent due to the contrast with the original built form of the other three dwellings and the unbalancing effect between the pair of dwellings, Nos 28 and 30.
9. I note that the original proposal was revised following initial concerns expressed by the Council. However, I have considered the current proposal on its merits based on all the appeal submissions and site inspection. As such, the fact that the original proposal was changed does not have a direct bearing on the outcome of this appeal.
10. The only comparable layout of dwellings within the street scene is the four properties either side of the entrance to Helions Park Grove. There is an example of a single storey extension at No 14 next to the road junction, which is not dissimilar to the existing extension to the appeal property. The two storey extension referred to by the appellant is to the adjoining house, which is not in the same position as No 28. This existing extension does not, therefore, have the same harmful effects with regard to reducing the openness directly next to the road junction and obscuring views of the properties to the rear. Moreover, it is not clear that current local and national policies which require high design standards were in place at the time this extension was approved. The other examples referred to do not reflect the same layout as the appeal property and are not part of the same street scene.
11. Accordingly, for the reasons given, I conclude that the proposed extension would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. As such, it is contrary to Policies DM2 and DM24 of the Joint Development Management Policies Document and to Policy CS3 of the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy, as described above. It is also contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, which promotes good design.

Other Matters

12. I have had regard to the matters raised by interested parties. There is no basis to conclude that the proposal would change the parking arrangements at the appeal property; or that the extension would materially add to or alter

views of neighbouring dwellings that are already available from the appeal property. I have no substantive evidence that this domestic extension would result in harm with regard to local drainage.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given it is concluded that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Bell-Williamson
INSPECTOR