



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 January 2023

by Mrs Chris Pipe BA(Hons), DipTP, MTP, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 February 2023.

Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/D/22/3310686

2 The Driveway, Cuffley, Potters Bar EN6 4EB

- 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 Mrs Laura Jevons against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 6/2022/1633/HOUSE dated 11 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is erection of first floor extension with increase in roof height.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Council changed the description of development from that stated on the application form in the interests of clarity. I consider that the amended description accurately describes the appeal scheme and accordingly I have adopted the amended description in the heading above.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposed development on (i) the character of the area; and (ii) the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The site is within a predominantly residential area with properties of varying form and design. The appeal site is a detached chalet bungalow of modest scale with hipped roof accessed via a private drive which also serves No. 1 The Driveway.
5. The proposed development would increase the height of the property, altering the chalet bungalow into a two storey house. No. 1 The Driveway is slightly elevated above the appeal site and during my site visit alterations were being carried out to the property, which I understand includes changing the roof from hipped to gable and includes dormer windows.
6. The appeal site is set at a significantly elevated position in comparison to the properties on Hill Rise. Whilst at a higher level the appeal site is not obvious in

the streetscene due to its scale, set back from the highway and landscaping around the site. Nevertheless, the proposed development due to its increase in height would be visible from public vantage points and to the surrounding properties.

7. The Appellant has drawn my attention to forms of residential development in the area which have varying roof heights, for instance bungalows adjacent houses. In terms of the effect of the development on No. 1 The Driveway, I do not disagree that the proposed development could be sited adjacent to a No. 1 without harm. Notwithstanding this the appeal site is at an elevated position in comparison to neighbouring properties on Hill Rise and as such the bulk and mass of the proposed development would be dominant to the area.
8. The proposed development would be a prominent addition to the area and would appear incongruous and stark in the streetscene. I conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area.
9. There is conflict with Policies D1, D2 and GBSP2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005) (the District Plan) and Policy SP9 of the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council - Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission August 2016 (the Emerging Plan) which seek amongst other things to ensure development is of high standard of design responding positively to the character and context of an area.
10. There is conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (the Framework) which seeks amongst other things to ensure developments are of good design appropriate and sympathetic to their surroundings. There is also conflict with the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance (the SDG) which seeks to ensure developments harmonise with the existing building and area.

Living Conditions

11. I observed during my site visit that the rear gardens of properties on Hill Rise sloped down from the rear boundary to the properties themselves. Due to the difference in levels the proposed development would be visually dominant and overbearing to the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
12. I conclude that the proposed development would harm the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties.
13. There is conflict with Policy D1 of the District Plan and Policies SP9 and SADM11 of the Emerging Plan which seek amongst other things to ensure development is of high quality, respects neighbouring buildings and the surrounding context in terms of height, mass and scale. There is also conflict with the SDG which seeks to ensure developments harmonise with the existing building and area.
14. There is also conflict with the Framework which seeks to ensure developments have high standards of amenity for existing and future users.

Conclusion

15. For the above reasons I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

C Pipe

INSPECTOR