



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 June 2023

by A.Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4th July 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/W/22/3310164

11 The Rise, Chiswell Green, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL2 2NT

- 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 Gary Barlow against the decision of St Albans City Council.
 - The application Ref: 5/2022/1554 dated 17 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 8 September 2022.
 - The application is for demolition of existing detached bungalow, provision of replacement chalet bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description above has been taken from the Appellant's original planning application form and differs somewhat from both that used on the Council's decision notice and on the Appeal form. Accordingly, I have used the description on the original application form as this more accurately describes the development proposed.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the impact of the proposal upon the living conditions of neighbours and the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a chalet type bungalow likely of the early/mid 20th century that exhibits many of the architectural attributes common in such early suburban dwellings such as Mock Tudor gabled details and a double bay symmetrical frontage. The roof too is hipped in such a way as to retain an element of modesty and proportion about the bungalow and in this respect it is similar, but not identical to several other such bungalows within the streetscene here. In summary, I consider that the existing property is a good example of a chalet type bungalow of its time and generally contributes in a positive manner to the character and appearance of the area.
5. To the front, the property currently maintains a planted garden with small lawn and curving path that leads to the original front door. Access is now gained from a side door that leads into the kitchen from where a modest timber

- conservatory type structure, that is in poor condition, extends into a long, sloping rear garden that leads to a detached garage at the far end of the plot.
6. I saw on my site visit that several properties have previously been modified or extended with both roof modifications or rear extensions. As such the principle of such extensions would appear to be well established. Many of these properties however appear to have retained the existing building and modified accordingly, which has avoided, for the most part, any noticeable changes to the conical, hipped, roof forms that appear common.
 7. Both neighbours to the appeal property have undertaken such changes with rear extensions of a single storey nature. Both neighbours also have windows in their side elevation of around three bays that give light into habitable rooms. Due to the location of these windows, they often face either upon the adjoining driveways or to the side elevations of their neighbours. In this particular case, there is such a window to the neighbour at number 10 The Rise that faces directly into the gap between the two houses and there are other windows to the opposite neighbour that faces onto the driveway of the appeal site.
 8. The proposal before me seeks to demolish the existing building apparently due to it being in poor repair and difficult to heat or insulate. The Appellant also feels that the existing bungalow is of an unattractive appearance and as such has proposed a replacement dwelling, upon a similar footprint, but one that continues to take architectural cues from the original design. Added to this the proposal would extend to the rear with a partial flat roofed projection. The overall proposal would create a new four bedroom dormer bungalow with Juliet type balcony to the rear gable and a slight half hipped roof form allowing much greater headroom to two bedrooms at first floor in the frontage range.
 9. I saw on my site visit that the appeal property is positioned slightly higher than that of its neighbour at number 10 as it follows the lay of the land here. Currently the hipped sloping roof and low eaves allow the relationship between the two properties to not be so over dominant as to enclose the side window to number 10 to an extreme amount. Despite this, the outlook from this window is already very much enclosed.
 10. The proposed development, although extending to the rear, would also fundamentally affect this relationship through its alteration of the roof form here. Whereby currently there is a hip that extends away from this side elevation, the proposed scheme would see a much more dominant gable to this position that would only be relieved by a small half hip to the highest extremity of the roof. As a result, I consider that the outlook from, and impact upon, this window would be significantly worsened despite the BRE guidance referred to by the parties needing to be abided by.
 11. This change in roof design would also lose the attractive conical roof form that currently exists and as such would alter the character of the streetscene here from one of attractive, simple, mid century bungalow, to one of half hipped house who's proportions would appear at odds with the other examples nearby. As a result, the proposed changes would not only see the removal of a fairly positive building that is of its time, but would also result in a replacement building who's roof would appear somewhat 'top heavy' in relationship to the streetscene.

12. When assessed together, the added impact upon the living conditions of residents at number 10 using the side room and the worsening of the character and appearance of the streetscene here through the building of a more dominant building that lacks the subtlety and proportion of the original, would lead me to the conclusion that there would be sufficient harm to dismiss this appeal.
13. In light of this I consider that the scheme would represent an overly bulky response to this site that would compound the existing situation and cause further harm to the living conditions of neighbours at number 10 The Rise. As such I consider that the proposal before me would be in conflict with Policies 69 and 70 of the St Albans District Local Plan Review 1994 and the presumption in favour of sustainable development as contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, and taking into account of all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

A Graham

INSPECTOR