



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 August 2023

by P B Jarvis BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/23/3320276

5 North Road Gardens, Hertford SG14 1NH

- 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 & Mrs Barnes against the decision of East Herts District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/23/0079/HH, dated 18 January 2023, was refused by notice dated 16 March 2023.
 - The proposed development is single storey rear extension, part single storey part two storey front extension, existing roof removed and re-pitched with proposed office/study in roof spaces; roof lights to rear.
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Procedural Matter

1. The Council has described the development as "Single storey rear extension and first floor rear extension incorporating a rear facing Juliet balcony, part single storey part two storey front extension, existing roof removed and re-pitched with proposed office/study in roof space and 3 roof light windows to rear; new first floor side window, alterations to fenestration, replace all windows with powder coated aluminium framed windows, alterations to external materials to include vertical cedar cladding". This more accurately describes the whole development.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for single storey rear extension and first floor rear extension incorporating a rear facing Juliet balcony, part single storey part two storey front extension, existing roof removed and re-pitched with proposed office/study in roof space and 3 roof light windows to rear; new first floor side window, alterations to fenestration, replace all windows with powder coated aluminium framed windows, alterations to external materials to include vertical cedar cladding, at 5 North Road Gardens, Hertford, SG14 1NH in accordance with the terms of application ref: 3/23/0079/HH dated 18 January 2023 and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 20454-S001-1st (existing – plans and elevations) and 20454-P002-A (option 2: proposed plans and elevations).
 - 3) No development shall take place until samples / details of the materials to be used in the external surfaces of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved

details shall be used in the implementation of the development hereby approved.

- 4) No development shall take place until full details of the front parking / garden area have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include the extent and details of surfacing to be installed and planting to be retained and/or provided. The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, street scene and wider area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a detached modern dwelling of brick elevations and tiled roof located on the northern side of a small cul-de-sac which slopes up from the main North Road from which it is accessed. It has a single storey addition to the rear. A second dwelling of similar age and appearance is located at the end of the road, to the south of the appeal site, occupying higher land. The remaining properties to the south and south-east side of the road comprise two pairs of older more traditional style dwellings which have projecting gable fronts with roughcast render elevations and mature hedges to the front boundaries.
5. The surrounding area including nearby North Road, is of more varied character with a mixture of modern and traditional dwellings. These include two new contemporary dwellings of white render and grey brick elevations as well as a small estate of modern dwellings which whilst of more 'traditional' design, incorporate white render and brick elevations with grey tiled pitched roofs.
6. Policy HOU11 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) (EHDP) states that in addition to being of a size, scale, mass, form, siting, design and materials appropriate to the character, appearance and setting of the existing dwelling and surrounding area, extensions and alterations to dwellings should also generally appear as a subservient addition to the dwelling.
7. The overall size of the extensions would not be significantly greater in floorspace terms, the main additional areas being the first floor rear extension and the office/study created in the enlarged roofspace and in that respect the proposal would be subservient. However, the increased roof height and resultant additional roof bulk could not be considered subservient; but the proposed extensions effectively result in a redesign of the existing dwelling and, in my opinion, the issue is whether the enlarged dwelling would be appropriate to the character and appearance of its setting and the surrounding area having regard to the factors set out in the relevant policy.
8. The proposed extensions and alterations would result in a dwelling of greater scale and bulk than existing and the increased roof height together with the side and rear first floor additions would be clearly visible in the street scene in approaches from the entrance to the cul-de-sac from where its elevated position is most noticeable.

9. Notwithstanding these visual impacts, I do not consider that the extended dwelling would appear unduly prominent; it would maintain the same setback from the road frontage and the increased ridge height would not be significantly higher and would be seen against the dwelling at the top of the cul-de-sac in respect of which it occupies a lower position.
10. The proposed external materials would be quite different from the existing brick elevations with a dark grey rendered finish to the ground floor elevations, vertical cedar cladding to first floor and a natural slate roof. Whilst these external materials would contrast with the external appearance of the other dwellings in the cul-de-sac, they would complement the proposed design of the extended dwelling. Furthermore, as noted above, there is a much greater variation to the street scene in the wider area encompassing North Road and the proposal would not appear incongruous in this context.
11. Overall, I find that the proposal would be well designed, and whilst resulting in a larger dwelling of different external appearance to those within the immediate street scene, would nevertheless be appropriate in the wider, more varied setting. Indeed, I consider that it would add interest to the street scene.
12. I therefore find that the proposal would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling, street scene or wider area and it would accord with EHDP Policies HOU11 and DES4 which in addition to the above seek a high standard of design to reflect and promote local distinctiveness that respects or improves upon the character of a site.
13. With regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I consider that the proposal would comply with relevant policies that seek to achieve good design, by adding to the overall quality of the area and being sympathetic to the surrounding built environment.

Conditions

14. A condition to ensure that the proposal complies with the approved plans is necessary in the interests of clarify and proper planning. Whilst the plans indicate the materials to be used, given that these will be new, a condition to require samples/details of the materials to be used in the external surfaces is necessary in the interests of visual amenity. Given the comments of the Council's highway officer and others and lack of detail shown on the plans, a condition is also necessary to require details of how the front parking and garden area is to be treated in the interests of highway safety and visual amenity.

Conclusions

15. I therefore conclude that this appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted.

P B Jarvis

INSPECTOR