



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 July 2023

by S Rawle BA (Hons) Dip TP Solicitor

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/A1910/W/23/3315012

2 Lower Yott, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP2 4LB

- 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 M Leach against the decision of Dacorum Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/02740/FUL, dated 2 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is an extension to building to create a dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant submitted amended plans to the Council. However, these were not taken into account during the application process and as they would result in a material amendment of the proposal and do not appear to have been subject to any further consultation, I have not taken them into account in the determination of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is an end terraced house located in a residential area where properties are generally of a similar style and period. Although the front elevation of the terrace is staggered with the end properties at either end being set back by a small distance from the front elevations of the middle properties, the row of houses are all set back on their plots with parking areas to the front. Some of the properties have been extended to the front at ground floor level, but at first floor dwellings have a largely uniform appearance which provides a simple, uncluttered appearance to the streetscene that contributes positively to local character.
5. The proposed extension to the front, side and rear would replace an existing single storey side and rear extension. Because of the hipped roof design of the roof, the extent of the forward projection and its width, the front extension would appear as a prominent and incongruous feature against the simple form of the existing buildings.
6. Further, the impact of the incongruous design of the front extension would be exacerbated by the overall significant bulk of the roofscape and the equally

incongruous hipped roof design of the extension that projects out to the side which would appear as a discordant feature in the streetscene.

7. The proposal would be highly prominent being set forward and seen against the modest porch of the host property and located on a corner plot. The proposed development would appear disproportionate when viewed from the street. It would neither complement the appeal property, nor would it integrate into the streetscene. Consequently, the proposed development would look harmfully out of place.
8. I have taken account of the fact that planning permission has now been granted for an extension to the existing dwelling to create a new dwelling. However, the approved scheme is materially different from the appeal proposal as it does not include the first floor side and first floor forward projections which would appear incongruous for the reasons set out above. As a result, although I accept that there is a greater than theoretical possibility that the approved scheme might take place and I attach significant weight to the existence of this extant planning permission, it does not alter my view that the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area.
9. I have also taken account of a similar extension added to an existing property on a neighbouring road. Whilst I accept that there are similarities between the appeal proposal and this other example, there is also a significant and material difference as the appeal proposal includes a hipped roof side extension and therefore the impact on the character and appearance of the area is materially different and in any event the existence of this other example does not justify harmful development at the appeal site.
10. Similarly, I have taken account of the fact that other extensions have been added to other properties within the area. However, these other properties do not have the same relationship with their surroundings and so the impact of these other extensions is materially different and again in any event the existence of these other examples does not justify harmful development at the appeal site.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the host property and the area in conflict with Policies CS11 and CS12 of the Core Strategy 2006-2031 adopted 25 September 2013 and saved Appendix 3 and 7 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 adopted in April 2004. Among other things these policies and appendices seek to ensure that development enhances general character, respects the character of the surrounding area, preserves attractive streetscapes, integrates with the streetscape character and that extensions harmonise with the existing house and the surrounding area. Further, the proposal would be at odds with Area Policy HCA22 of the Area Based Policies Supplementary Planning Guidance, May 2004 which among other things seeks to ensure that development maintains and improves defined character. The proposal would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) which seeks to ensure development is sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

12. I have taken account of the fact that the principle of a new dwelling in this location is acceptable, the proposal would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring residents, there would be no harm to highway safety, there would

be no significant impact on trees or other landscape features, no objections have been received and the appellant has entered into a unilateral undertaking to secure the necessary financial contribution to secure appropriate mitigation to avoid further significant effects on the Chilterns Beechwood Special Area of Conservation. However, these matters do not carry positive weight in favour of the proposed development.

Planning Balance

13. The Council confirm that they are unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites and the agreed existence of an undersupply triggers paragraph 11d) of the Framework.
14. The provision of an additional dwelling would have social and economic benefits stimulating work and trade during construction and future occupants would moderately support local services and the vitality of the community. However, the contribution from one extra household would be very modest. As a result, the unacceptable harm the development would have on the character and appearance of the area would significantly and demonstrably outweigh these associated benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, particularly bearing in mind that planning permission has been granted for an alternative scheme which would also result in an additional dwelling.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons I have set out, the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan and the Framework taken as a whole and there are no material considerations which indicate that the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

S Rawle

INSPECTOR