

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 January 2024

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29.01.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P1940/D/23/3331449

Bracken Hall, Bracken Hill Close, Northwood, Hertfordshire, HA6 3EW

- 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 Kamal Pankhania against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref 23/1267/FUL, dated 26 July 2023, was refused by notice dated 8 August 2023.
 - The development proposed is an extension to existing double garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the dwelling, a non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

3. The appeal property, Bracken Hall, is a largely two storey dwelling located in a residential area characterised by the presence of a number of relatively large dwellings surrounded by woodland.
 4. The appeal property is designated as a locally important building dating from the inter-war period and comprises a non-designated heritage asset. Whilst altered over the years, it has a striking and attractive architectural appearance. Of broadly symmetrical plan form, with a recessed central element to the front and rear elevations and with two prominent projecting hipped roof elements to either side of the front and rear elevations, I observed during my site visit that the front elevation has an Arts and Crafts character.
 5. To the rear of the appeal property are large gardens and to the front there is a parking area and a large, modern brick-built double garage with a pyramid hip roof. During my site visit, I observed the presence of double garages of very similar appearance in the grounds of neighbouring dwellings.
 6. It is proposed to extend the garage to the front of the dwelling. During my site visit I observed that, whilst large, the existing garage appears subservient in scale and form to the host dwelling. This is in part due to the comfortable gap between the host dwelling and the garage and in part due to the almost square
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form of the garage, which together with its simple pyramid hip roof, leads it to appear modest and functional against the considerably larger and more ornate house.

7. By way of contrast, the proposal would result in the significant extension of the garage, resulting in the creation of an extremely large garage building of immodest scale. I find that the resultant extended building would, due to a combination of its width, length, height and imposing crown roof, draw the eye as an unduly dominant feature.
8. The overall scale of the proposal would result in it drawing attention to itself as an intrusive and prominent feature rather than as a subordinate ancillary building.
9. Further, the harm arising from the above would be exacerbated as a result of the proposal extending the garage towards the host dwelling, leading to the significant erosion of the currently comfortable gap between the existing garage and the dwelling. As such, I find that the proposed development would result in the garage "crowding" the appearance of the dwelling. This would be to the detriment of the host dwelling's visual attributes.
10. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the dwelling, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework; to the Council's Core Strategy (2011) Policies CP1 and CP12; and to the Council's Development Management Plan (2013) Policies DM1 and DM3, which together amongst other things, seek to protect residential amenity.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR