



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 November 2023 by Max Webb BA(Hons) MSc

Decision by L McKay MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P1750/D/23/3322182

94 Field Way, Aldershot, Hampshire GU12 4UL

- 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 Olga Stephenson against the decision of Rushmoor Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 23/00047/FULPP, dated 16 January 2023, was refused by notice dated 8 March 2023.
 - The development proposed is a second storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. The Government published on 19 December 2023 a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework). Whilst I have had regard to the revised national policy as a material consideration, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the issues most relevant to the appeal remain unaffected by the revisions to the Framework. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling on a street made up of predominantly semi-detached properties. Between pairs, there is typically a reasonable visual gap at first floor level which contributes positively to the character of the street. These gaps, together with the set back of dwellings from the road, give the street a spacious character.
6. There are various examples of two-storey side extensions in the area, however in each case there remains a visual gap to the next semi-detached pair at first

floor level. Some pairs are set further back from the road than their neighbour, creating a staggered layout. The appeal site and its attached pair have both already been extended and are set further back from the road than No 96.

7. The proposed extension would have a hipped roof that would meet the existing gable end below the ridge, creating a small residual gable. While this would allow it to appear subservient to the main dwelling, it would result in an awkward interaction between the roof of the proposal and existing dwelling. Consequently, it would relate poorly to the existing dwelling, and fail to respect its appearance.
8. Other hipped roofs on properties in the area are generally seen on ground floor extensions, so the extension roof is seen separately to the main roof. 118 Field Way features a two-storey side extension with hipped roof, however the ridge of the extension is in line with that of the host property. Consequently, these other examples do not result in the contrived roof form proposed in this appeal.
9. The proposed side extension would project to the boundary with No 96, significantly reducing the existing gap between these two pairs at first floor level. In itself, this would not be out of character with the area, where other extensions have narrowed the gap to the same extent.
10. It is however relevant that No 96 has been granted permission for a two-storey side extension extending up to the boundary with the appeal site. Although this was not in place at the time of my site visit, the time period for implementation has not expired. In the absence of any substantive evidence to the contrary, there is the potential that this development would go ahead, and the appellant has not put forward any mechanism by which this could be prevented. While both schemes individually would not result in a harmful reduction in the gap between properties, if both were implemented, this would leave little or no gap between the pairs, resulting in a clear terracing effect that would be harmful to the character of the street scene.
11. The extensions would be slightly staggered at first floor, but project forward a similar depth at ground floor level. This would leave little articulation between the two pairs, such that the staggered layout would not significantly reduce the terracing effect.
12. Overall, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with Policy DE1 of the Rushmoor Local Plan 2014-2032 (adopted February 2019), which requires development to respect the character and appearance of the local area. It would likewise go against the aims of the Rushmoor Local Plan Home Improvements and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (adopted February 2020), which outlines how extensions should relate well to the original building and not harm the character of the street scene, by not resulting in a terracing effect where visual gaps contribute to the character of the area.
13. The appellant suggests the proposed hipped roof could be changed to a gable roof by planning condition, if that were to be found acceptable. There is no such plan before me however, therefore I cannot be certain that such a change would be less harmful than this proposal in terms of the roof form or the harmful terracing effect that I have identified. Furthermore, in the interests of fairness I must consider the appeal on the basis of what has been submitted, which was subject to public consultation and which the Council made its

decision on. Therefore, I recommend that the suggested condition should not be imposed.

Other Matters

14. The appellant has already modified the appeal property for medical reasons, which involved removing a bedroom, and that they wish to replace this bedroom through the appeal proposal. The appellant has an ongoing health condition, but there is no substantive evidence before me to explain the need for an additional bedroom, or to show that the condition is likely to worsen over time such that more accommodation would be needed. Furthermore, it has not been demonstrated that the desired accommodation could not be achieved through a more appropriate proposal.
15. Therefore, it has not been demonstrated that dismissing this appeal would result in harm to the appellant's health, or that the additional accommodation would result in material benefits to their health. I therefore give this matter limited weight, and it does not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area and the resulting conflict with local policy.

Conclusion and Recommendation

16. The proposal would conflict with the Local Plan and national policy, and there are no material considerations that justify granting planning permission in conflict with the development plan. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Max Webb

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

17. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and I agree with the reasoning and recommendation set out above. On that basis the appeal is dismissed.

L McKay

INSPECTOR