



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 April 2024

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26.04.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/24/3339374

200 Sandridge Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 4AL

- 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 J Ibbotson against the decision of St Albans City & District Council.
 - The application Ref 5/23/2535, dated 12 December 2023, was refused by notice dated 13 February 2024.
 - The development proposed is first floor front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey, detached dwelling with a flat roof garage projecting to the front. It is located in a road comprising mainly of two-storey detached and semi-detached dwellings which are mixed in character and appearance.
4. The appeal proposal is for a first floor front extension above the existing double garage and there would, therefore, be no increase in the footprint of the dwelling. As with the existing garage, the proposed first floor extension would project significantly forward of the main front wall of the host dwelling. It would be of considerable width and would also be offset closer to the side boundary of the site than the existing two storey flank wall of the dwelling. The extension would have a hipped roof form, which due to its design and position in relation to the main dwelling, would not be well integrated with the existing roof form.
5. Due to the extent of the projection of the first floor extension to the front of the property, together with its width and overall height, the extension would not appear as a sympathetic or subordinate addition to the dwelling. Instead, it would be of a size, scale and bulk such that it would be highly dominant and would compete visually with the existing projecting two storey bay which is the main feature on the front elevation of the host dwelling, resulting in a cluttered appearance.

6. Whilst the extension would not extend forward of the neighbouring dwelling, 198 Sandridge Road, it would nonetheless be poorly related to the host dwelling in terms of its width, poorly integrated roof design and height and would appear as a highly prominent and incongruous feature of both the dwelling and the street scene, particularly when approaching from the north-east or when level with the dwelling. I acknowledge that the host dwelling is of an individual design however, this does not alter my findings regarding the design and prominence of the proposed extension. I also note that the existing flat roof garage is not typical of the street scene, however, it does not stand out as a particularly incongruous feature due to its low height and subservience to the host dwelling.
7. I acknowledge that a previous application (LPA ref. 5/23/1246) for a similar extension with a crown roof design was also refused by the Council and the current design was an attempt to overcome the previous refusal reason. However, I concur with the Council that the current proposal would also be poorly integrated with the main dwelling and would be harmful to its character and appearance and that of the surrounding area for the reasons set out above.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to saved policies 69 and 72 of the St Albans District Plan Review 1994 which require that all development shall have an adequacy high standard of design and that extensions shall be compatible with the existing building and relate to the domestic scale, character and appearance of the street. It would also conflict with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

9. The appellant has referred to an application for a replacement dwelling at 232 Sandridge Road which was approved by the Council. However, the replacement dwelling, now constructed, appears to be of a different design to that of the appeal proposal and is of little relevance to the appeal proposal which I have determined on its own merits.

Conclusion

10. I have found that the proposal conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole, and the National Planning Policy Framework, and there are no other material considerations advanced to outweigh that finding. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR