



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 June 2024

by D J Barnes MBA BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 28th June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/24/3340914

67 Charmouth Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 4SF

- 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 Mrs Eleanor Mack against the decision of St Albans City and District Council.
 - The application Ref 5/23/1952, dated 20 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 21 February 2024.
 - The development proposed is the partial demolition and reconfiguration of existing ground floor extensions, replacement of existing roof to create crown roof with hipped sides and gable to rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. It is considered that the main issues are the effects of the proposed development on (a) the character and appearance of the host property and the streetscene and (b) the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property is a 2-storey detached dwelling located within a primarily residential area of similar types of property. The roofscape of the streetscene is characterised by primarily hipped tiled roofs. However, as the appellant has identified, there are some variations in the roofscape, including crown roofs which were observed during the site visit. However, the design, form and scale of some of these roofs do not make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the roofscape along the streetscene.
4. The proposed development includes an increase in the height and bulk of the property's roof to create additional living accommodation within the roofspace. These alterations would result in the property possessing a crown roof with smaller hipped roof elements (referred to as half hips by the appellant) when viewed from Charmouth Road.
5. Within the context of the neighbouring properties along the west side of Charmouth Road, the form, bulk and ridge height of the resulting roof would be a conspicuous and incongruous addition to the streetscene. Although the half

hip elements proposed would result in the roof having a symmetrical appearance, they would not reflect the context of the neighbouring properties which primarily have hipped roof forms. The bulk of the proposed roof would be accentuated by its ridge height which would result in a taller dwelling when compared to the adjacent properties. By reason of the proposed roof not respecting its context, the scale, height and character of the resulting property would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene.

6. At the rear, a dormer would be erected within the roofslope above an existing gable projection. This dormer would be visible from neighbouring gardens and across some of these gardens from Harptree Way. There would be an awkward juxtaposition between the proposed dormer and the roof of the rear gable. This juxtaposition would accentuate the bulk and massing of the overall alterations to the roof of the property thereby causing unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host property.
7. For the reasons given, it is concluded that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the streetscene, and, as such, it would conflict with Policies 69 and 72 of the St Albans District Local Plan Review (LP). Amongst other matters, these policies require development and extensions to buildings to be of an adequately high standard of design and relate to the domestic scale, character and appearance of the street. Further, extensions should be compatible with the original property, including roof form.

Living Conditions

8. The Council's objections in terms of harm being caused to the living conditions of the occupiers of 65 and 69 Charmouth Road are specifically related to outlook and the appeal scheme, or specific elements thereof, being an overbearing form of development. No issues are raised concerning loss of sun light, day light or privacy.
9. By reason of the siting of the appeal property, the proposed increase in roof height would only be particularly noticeable from the gardens of Nos. 65 and 69 rather than the habitable room windows of these properties. Although the height and bulk of the roof would be increased, including because of the proposed rear dormer, there would be sufficient separation distance from the gardens of these neighbouring properties to prevent both a material loss of outlook and any sense of the resulting property being overbearing.
10. In addition to alterations to the roof, the appeal scheme includes changes to the design and form of the existing single storey side and rear additions. The change in the form of the rear addition would involve the loss of the chamfered walls and the erection of new side elevations. Although sited no closer to the shared boundaries, these side elevations would be longer. However, although the eaves would be higher than what currently exists, the change of the length of the flank walls and roof form of the proposed rear extension would not materially alter the outlook of the occupiers of Nos. 65 and 69. This element of the appeal scheme would not result in an overbearing form of development.
11. Adjacent to the shared boundary with No. 69 an existing single storey side addition with a pitched roof would be replaced by a flat roof extension albeit with a higher eaves' height. In addition, the existing pitched roof canopy would

be replaced by a flat roof canopy with a higher eaves level. The alterations to the height of the flank wall adjacent to this shared boundary would be noticeable for the occupiers of No. 69. However, the degree of change to the outlook of these occupiers would not be such that it would be a reason for this appeal to fail because the proposed side extension would not result in an overbearing form of development.

12. Even when the proposed alterations to the roof and the existing rear and side extensions are considered cumulatively, it is concluded that the proposed development would not cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and, as such, it would not conflict with LP Policy 72 which refers to the amenity of adjoining property not being unacceptably harmed.

Conclusion

13. Although the proposed development would not cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties, this matter is demonstrably outweighed by the unacceptable harm which would be caused to the character and appearance of the host property and the streetscene. Accordingly, it is concluded that this appeal should be dismissed.

D J Barnes

INSPECTOR