



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 July 2024

by Ian McHugh DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/D/24/3340575

5 Kendal Avenue, Epping, CM16 4PN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Gareth Knight against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref is EPF/2747/23.
 - The development proposed is a loft addition and alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. My visit to the site on 3 July was scheduled as an 'access required site visit'. However, I was unable to gain access to the site at the scheduled time. Given the main issue, I was able to understand the proposal and its impact when viewed from various angles along Kendal Avenue and I am satisfied that I can determine the appeal without gaining access into the site. This was communicated to the appellant, who has agreed to proceed on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a large detached dwelling, which is set-back from Kendal Avenue and is partially screened by trees and other vegetation. The property is distinctive having a Dutch/Flemish appearance with numerous decorative features and detailing. The dwelling has previously been altered and extended, including a two-storey side extension on its north-western side. The Council considers the building to be locally listed and it is a non-designated heritage asset.
5. The streetscene and building styles along Kendal Avenue vary, but the appeal property stands out, because of its architectural style and features.
6. The proposal is to construct a loft extension, with other associated alterations on the north-west side of the dwelling. The extension would provide additional storage space within the property. The Council Officer reports that the roof would be raised by some 2m.

7. The Council's decision notice refers to Policies DM7, DM9 and DM10 of the adopted Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033 (LP). Policy DM10 appears to relate to new housing development and, therefore, I consider Policies DM7 and DM9 to be of more relevance to this appeal. These policies seek (amongst other things) to preserve or enhance heritage assets (including non-designated assets); and for the design of new development to be of high quality.
8. In addition to the above, paragraph 209 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that the effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account and that a balanced judgement will be required.
9. The appellant makes detailed reference to the comments of the Council's Conservation Officer and he refute the criticisms of the design, including its crown roof and the effect on the symmetrical appearance of the dwelling. I agree in part, insofar that the crown roof is already a feature of the building and, therefore I do not consider that, in itself, to be unacceptable. I have also noted that crown roofs have been approved by the Council on other properties in the area, including the extension at number 48 Hemnall Street, which is located in a conservation area.
10. Regarding the symmetrical appearance of the dwelling, I accept that the two side wings of the property have a different appearance, including different roof designs. However, notwithstanding the difference in the external appearance between the two, there is a strong balance in terms of their roof heights, which does provide some symmetry and balance to the dwelling. I consider this to be a significant and distinctive characteristic of the property.
11. The proposed increase in the roof height would disrupt this balanced appearance and, consequently, it would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the dwelling. It would, therefore conflict with the relevant policies of the LP, as referred to above.
12. In reaching my decision, I have given weight to the fact that the extension would be constructed of matching external materials and that would be well set-back from the road frontage. It would also be partially obscured from view by trees and other vegetation. I also note the appellant's need for additional storage space within the dwelling and that the roof of the neighbouring dwelling at number 3 Kendal Avenue is higher. However, my concern relates to the effect of the extension on the host dwelling rather than the streetscene.
13. I have balanced the above factors and other arguments put before me by the appellant but, in my opinion, these are outweighed by the harm that I have identified. Consequently, the proposal would conflict with the relevant policies of the LP, as referred to above.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

Ian McHugh

INSPECTOR