



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 August 2024

by K E Down MA(Oxon) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P1940/D/24/3344881

44 Carpenters Wood Drive, Chorleywood, Hertfordshire, WD3 5RJ

- 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 Curtis against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/0001/FUL.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and construction of two storey side extension, single storey side porch and loft level accommodation incorporating changes to roof form including increase in ridge height, chimneys, hip to gable conversion and dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. There is one main issue which is the effect of the proposed extensions and alterations on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the street scene of Carpenters Wood Drive and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Carpenters Wood Drive is a street of detached dwellings. According to the submitted evidence, the north side of the street was built during the late 1930s with a variety of dwelling designs following the Arts and Crafts style. The southern side of the street was built during the 1950s and the architectural style reflects this later date, giving it a noticeably different appearance. The appeal dwelling is a detached two storey dwelling built in the late 1930s in the Arts and Crafts style. It has a traditional hipped roof and an asymmetric design, typical of the period.
4. The Council has no objection to the proposed extensions and alterations at ground and first floor or to the proposed alterations to the chimneys and I agree that these would, in principle, be acceptable. However, significant alterations and extensions to the roof, including an increase in the ridge height, hip to gable alteration and front and rear dormers are also proposed. These are the issues of contention between the parties and I shall therefore restrict my further consideration to these aspects of the proposed development.
5. The increase in ridge height would be by some 0.85m to enable accommodation in the loft. Whilst this would be a noticeable increase, I note that other dwellings in the street, including some nearby, have had roof

extensions that have included significant increases in height. This type of alteration would not, therefore, be alien in the street scene. Moreover, the roof of No 42 appears from the evidence to have been increased in height by a noticeable margin and currently appears higher than that at the appeal dwelling, despite being on slightly lower ground. I therefore consider that the increase in height, in itself, would not be disproportionate to the dwelling or incongruous in the street scene.

6. Nevertheless, the proposal includes a hip to gable alteration. This would fundamentally change the shape of the roof, adding significant bulk. The existing prominent front hipped projection would be dwarfed by the new roof form. As such the existing hipped form would be almost entirely undermined. Moreover, two symmetrical roof dormers would be set into the front roof slope. Although these would be modest in scale, they would draw the eye upwards, emphasising the bulk and shape of the roof, and their arrangement would detract from the characteristic asymmetric arrangement of the dwelling.
7. The appellant provides evidence, demonstrating that gabled roof forms and front dormers are common on Arts and Crafts buildings in the wider area and in Carpenters Wood Drive. However, whilst this may be the case, the dwellings on the northern side of the street mostly retain some prominent hipped or semi-hipped form to at least one side elevation. I therefore find that the proposed full hip to gable alteration would be a disproportionate and unsympathetic addition, detracting from the original architectural style of the dwelling and appearing discordant in the street scene.
8. In terms of front dormers, whilst there are a number on nearby dwellings, those I saw were either on the southern side of the street or set at first floor level, either on catslide roofs or on chalet bungalows. They therefore had a different, better integrated and less strident effect on their host dwellings.
9. The proposed side roof elevations would incorporate a double gable with crown roof between. The arrangement would be unduly complex and out of keeping with dwellings nearby. Moreover, it would be conspicuous in the street scene, particularly from the west, due to the staggered building line and gaps between dwellings. This would emphasise its unsympathetic character and appearance and further detract from the pleasing Arts and Crafts design of the original dwelling.
10. Overall, I find that the proposed hip to gable roof alteration, including the double gabled side elevations and front dormers would be materially harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and incongruous in the street scene.
11. The proposed roof alterations include a rear dormer. This would be modest in scale, set in from the side eaves, up from the rear eave and down from the ridge. Its bulk would be reduced by its "Nantucket" arrangement with two small projecting hip roofed elements, one at either end, and a set-back mid-section. In itself, I find it an acceptable form of development on the rear elevation. Furthermore, I note that a number of dwellings nearby have large rear dormers and as such it would not be out of place in the surrounding area.
12. The appellant has submitted evidence which he suggests indicates that the Council has been inconsistent in its decision making and has allowed similar alterations and extensions elsewhere in the street and the surrounding area.

However, in the case of the appeal proposals the identified elements of the proposed alterations, and in particular the incongruous hip to gable alteration, significant increase in the bulk of the roof, and unsympathetic design, including the front dormers and twin gables to the side elevations, when taken together mean that the overall design would be unacceptable in the context of the appeal dwelling.

13. It is concluded on the main issue that the proposed changes to the roof form would have a materially detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the street scene of Carpenters Wood Drive and the surrounding area. In consequence, they would conflict with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Council's Core Strategy, 2011, Policies DM1 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies Local Development Document, 2013, and Policy 2 of the Chorleywood Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020-2035, Referendum Version, 2020.
14. Taken together and amongst other things these expect all new development to be of a high standard of design, such that it is in keeping with the special characteristics of Chorleywood, maintains local distinctiveness and makes a positive contribution to the street scene. In particular, development should have regard to the local context and respect the character of the street scene with regard to matters including roof form.
15. The appellant draws my attention to other specific examples of development in the street and the local area that have been permitted by the Council or allowed on appeal. However, whilst these may exhibit some similarities with the appeal proposals there are also notable differences, including that they appear on dwellings of different design to the appeal dwelling. In any case, each development must be judged on its own merits which is what I have done.
16. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, including the support of a neighbouring occupier, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

KE Down
INSPECTOR