

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 October 2022

by P Eggleton BSc(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31st October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/D/22/3301686

1 Stonecross Road, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 0HR

- 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 Bollampally against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 6/2022/0893/HOUSE, dated 13 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 30 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is a full width ground floor rear extension and part first floor rear extension with internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The existing dwelling has a large and distinctive corbel feature associated with a gable parapet to the side facing elevation. These corbels are to the front and rear of the property and this design feature is common to both ends of this terrace. It is also present on a number of other terraces along this road. These distinctive gable features are important to the character of these otherwise simply designed houses and add significantly to the wider character and appearance of the area.
 4. This proposal would result in a part single and part two storey rear extension. The property is situated on a corner plot and its side gable is prominent in views from the road. The two storey addition would extend the side gable wall further to the rear and would include a roof that would hip into the main rear facing roof slope.
 5. The elevation plans suggest that the distinctive corbel would be retained; and that the eaves of the new rear extension would extend beyond the alignment of the gable and parapet. The roof plan shows the new roof cutting across the parapet and corbel and does not show the roof extending beyond the side gable. The conflict between the plans results in uncertainty as to how the relationship of the existing gable and corbel would work with regard to the new roof structure. However, in other respects, the elevations appear to reflect the
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details of the floor plans so I have assumed them to be correct, rather than the roof plan.

6. The eaves overhand and the rainwater goods, which are shown beyond the alignment of the side elevation at first floor level, would detract from the distinctive parapet and corbel feature. Although the plans show a line where the gable and the proposed side of the extension wall would begin, this in reality would not exist if built as shown. It would be necessary to step the side of the rear extension back, making it narrower, in order for the eaves of the new roof and its rainwater goods, to be viewed beyond the corbel, in order to make a meaningful distinction and to avoid conflict with this important feature.
7. On the basis of the current elevation plans, the proposed side facing eaves, along with the prominence of the rainwater goods, would compete with and detract from the distinctive appearance of the gable parapet and corbel. I agree with the council that this would represent poor design and it would detract from the appearance of these properties and the character of the wider area. It would therefore be contrary to Policy D1 and Policy D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 as these seek high quality design; and require respect for the character of the area. As these policies generally accord with the design aspirations of the *National Planning Policy Framework*, I afford them full weight.
8. I have had regard to the examples provided of other properties in the area but have not found them to be directly comparable. Drawings of the same extension with a flat roof and a steeper pitched roof have been provided but as both retain the matching alignment with the gable wall, they result in similar conflict with the corbel. Reference is made to plans that set the north-east wall of the proposed extension back by 20cm to the right. I have not been provided with these plans. In any event, I must consider the proposal before me. I note the previous permissions for side extensions, but these do not suggest that the currently proposed design would be acceptable.
9. In conclusion, the plans submitted have discrepancies but based on the elevation plans, the upper section of the first floor extension would conflict with the important detailing of the corbel and would result in a compromised design. Whilst I have had regard to the family circumstances of the appellant and the benefits this proposal would bring, I am not satisfied that there are any matters that are sufficient to outweigh my concerns. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

Peter Eggleton

INSPECTOR