

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 June 2014

by J J Evans BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16 June 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/X1735/D/14/2217141

12 Manor Close, Havant, Hampshire PO9 1BD

- 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 A Southwell against the decision of Havant Borough Council.
 - The application Ref APP/13/01275, dated 18 December 2013, was refused by notice dated 4 March 2014.
 - The development proposed is a first floor rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (the Guidance) was published on the 6 March 2014. I have taken into account the Guidance in reaching my decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed extension would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the St Faiths Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site lies within the St Faiths Conservation Area, and is surrounded by residential properties. 12 Manor Close is one of a number of similarly styled semi-detached houses that fronts a pedestrian footpath. The houses along the Close have regular sized front gardens, and are separated by pedestrian access ways to their rear gardens. In the case of those houses to the east of Manor Close, their deep rear gardens back onto Fairfield Road, with several having garages and parking within them.
5. The properties along the eastern side of the Close form a row of distinctively designed semi-detached two storey houses. Like many of the other properties in the Close, No 12 has two side dormer windows. In most cases these dormers are of a similar size and positioning on the sloping side roofs of the houses. Although several of the houses have single storey rear extensions, these and the dormers are subservient to the host buildings in terms of size and positioning. The provision of similar sized gaps between the houses, and the consistency of the form of the properties, creates a rhythmical character and appearance to the area.

6. No 12 benefits from an extant planning permission for a pitched roof single storey rear extension that would replace the existing conservatory. In addition to this, the appeal proposal seeks a first floor extension that would project along the ridge of the permitted rear one, and the extension of one of the existing dormers.
7. The proposed extension would form an overly complex and prominent addition to the host building. The provision of a narrow first floor gabled projection to the rear would harmfully compete with the design of the existing roof, adding a conspicuous element that would make little reference to the form of its host.
8. Although the extension to the existing dormer would match it in terms of materials, its substantial width would be harmfully exaggerated by the awkward and unbalanced relationship of window to void, and it would form a disproportionally large addition to the property. Taken together, the proposed first floor extensions would form an incongruous juxtaposition of discordant elements that would have little reference to the host dwelling or the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
9. The extant permission for the single storey extension to No 12 included the provision of a wider and taller garage. I note the contention of the appellant that this and the existing landscaping in the area would do much to screen the proposed first floor extension from views, whilst those that do exist would be limited to glimpses of the site.
10. However, the spacing between the buildings would allow the extended dormer to be seen within the surrounding area, including from Manor Close. Notwithstanding the existing landscaping and outbuildings within the rear gardens of the houses, the height and projection of the proposed first floor rear extension would form an intrusive addition that would be clearly seen from Fairfield Road. This effect would be harmfully exaggerated by the absence of any other first floor rear extensions to the nearby houses, with the proposal forming a prominent and discordant addition to the rhythmical character and appearance of the area.
11. The appellant has referred to other properties within the Close with two storey extensions. However, I note that the example provided is on a differently styled house, albeit semi-detached. Furthermore, I do not have the planning history of this property before me, and in any case each scheme has to be treated on its own individual merits in accordance with the requirements of the development plan and all other material considerations.
12. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the Guidance, requires that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, such as a Conservation Area, that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The extension would result in less than substantial harm due to the comparative size of it relative to that of the Conservation Area. The appellant considers the proposal would harmonise with the host building and would have a neutral impact, whilst minimising its impact on the neighbouring property. Nevertheless, for the reasons given above, it would harmfully affect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
13. I therefore find the proposed extension would harm the host building and would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the

St Faiths Conservation Area. It would conflict with Policies CS11 and CS16 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy (2011), that seek, amongst other things, and like objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and Guidance, development that respects the local character and distinctiveness of an area and protects and enhances heritage assets.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

J J Evans

INSPECTOR