



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 October 2024

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 19 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/X1925/W/24/3344662

59 Kings Hedges, Hitchin, Herts SG5 2QH

- 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 Mei Ling against the decision of North Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 24/00472/FP, dated 6 March 2024, was refused by notice dated 22 April 2024.
 - The development proposed is a one bedroom house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed new dwelling on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. No 59 Kings Hedges is a detached, 2 storey house located adjacent to the junction of Kings Hedges and Moss Way. The house faces onto Kings Hedges but the plot has a frontage onto Moss Way and a garage with access to it. The proposal is to demolish the existing garage and to construct a 2 storey dwelling.
4. The junction of Kings Hedges with Moss Way has a spacious feeling which derives from the wide verges and the setting back of the domestic fences and buildings. This complements the significant area of open land on the opposite side of Moss Way. The existing low, single storey garages of the appeal property and the neighbouring dwelling do not impinge on the sense of openness here.
5. The proposed 2 storey house would be sited close to the boundary of the site, close to where the angled pavement passes in front of the site. I consider that the proposal would create a cramped appearance where the new 2 storey building would significantly erode the sense of spaciousness that currently exists here. In this way I consider that the proposal would have an unacceptable negative effect on the character and appearance of the area.

6. The unacceptable visual effects would be heightened by the rather awkward siting at an angle to the other house as well as the stark south elevation which would be devoid of any openings.
7. The appellant indicates that the proposal would be provided with sufficient space to meet minimum space standards, although it is not clear what standards are being referred to. In my determination, I consider that insufficient space would be provided around the building to prevent it having an unacceptable effect on the locality. Additionally, the appellant indicates that the area contains a variety of house styles, including detached, semi-detached and terraced houses, some being converted to flats. In my view the presence of these does not make the proposal acceptable.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. This is contrary to the provisions of Policies SP9 and D1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031. I find that there are no matters which are sufficient to outweigh that conflict. As a result, the appeal is dismissed.

T Wood

INSPECTOR