

Planning officer to architect

I am writing in regards to planning application 18/****/FUL for the erection of a single-storey extension.

The Local Plan (Part One), policy ENV6 states that "*Development should, where appropriate... respect local character and achieve a sense of place through appropriate layout and design*". This is reiterated in policy HO8, "*Extensions to existing dwellings will be permitted provided all of the following criteria are met... the proposal is in keeping with the scale and character of the existing dwelling... the visual appearance of the extension is acceptable in relation to the existing dwelling and its wider setting*".

The proposed single-storey extension would feature a flat-roof. Whilst a flat-roof extension may be acceptable at single-storey level, by reason of its height and the use of different materials and fenestration to the existing dwellinghouse, the extension would look out of keeping at this corner site. The proposal would sit awkwardly against the building and whilst the height of the extension is only approx. 3.1m, it would appear to meet the dwellinghouse at an unusually high height for a flat-roofed extension between the first-floor windows. This results in an extension that does not appear as subordinate and, given the proposal materials and box-design, it would look bulky against the dwellinghouse. Given there are no shared features between the proposed extension and the dwellinghouse, the two do not merge sympathetically. Its height and bulk would also appear cramped in relation to the garage building. Further, whilst the proposal is for a rear extension, the application site sits on a corner plot and the extension would be visible from public vantage points and could be viewed within the street scene. Given this, it is important to note that there are no extensions or modern designs/materials used in the vicinity of the site.

It is therefore considered that the proposal, as it stands, could not be supported. This is because it would be out of keeping with the existing dwellinghouse and the surrounding built environment. For something to be acceptable, it would need to provide a better relationship with the existing dwellinghouse and surrounding neighbouring properties, in terms of its size, design and material finishes.

Kind Regards

Architect to Planner

Thanks for your email of yesterday.

With only a week to go before the determination date and the clients away, I still want to see if we can get to a satisfactory solution.

However, its only a small domestic extension and I don't want to take too much of your or my time.

In response, I would argue the following:

The footprint is exactly the same as existing lawful development – no new footprint.

There are examples of other flat roof/contemporary structures in the vicinity – see images attached.

The maximum height is lower than the existing max height.

The proposal replaces existing structures of no design merit.

We're not in a Conservation Area or any other sensitive designation.

Adopting a design which is in contrast to the existing is a legitimate design strategy for which there is endless precedent.

The dwelling (and extension) is set well back from the road (see attached image).

The dwelling (and extension) is screened by hedging (see attached image).

There have been no objections.

Notwithstanding all of that, the moves that could be made (and I'm saying this without client input) are:

Choice of facing material: We've avoided brick because of the difficulty of matching new with older brickwork. The alternatives are tile-hanging (as per the front elevation of the property) or render (as per many other dwellings in the vicinity). I would suggest render.

Height of extension nearest the road: Theoretically we could reduce the height of the leg of the L-shaped block which is to the rear of the kitchen (to circa 2.6m). Leaving the height of the main portion as existing, but obviously this height then occurring much further from the road than currently proposed.

I would be interested to know whether these moves would be sufficient to tip the balance?

Perhaps we could discuss it?

Best regards

There were then two telephone calls:

1. *Architect and planner discussed the issues and planner conceded that the proposed change to render would 'probably' be sufficient.*
2. *Architect and client discussed the issues and client agreed to look at amended drawings showing the render alternative.*

Client to Architect

Thanks for the amended drawing with the proposed render shown.

We have discussed the change required by the planner; whilst we have no real choice, we are actually quite happy with this alteration and look forward to selecting an appropriate tone/colour.

We look forward therefore, to planning being approved and meeting with you soon to discuss your ideas on our requested changes in glazing.

Kind regards

Architect to Planner

Further to our conversation of yesterday, I have now spoken to the applicants, who have agreed to change the facing material of the extension to coloured render. They agree that this will be more in-keeping with the local context.

Please find attached the revised drawing now showing coloured render.

I trust that the application can now be determined but if there are any other queries, please let me know.

Best Regards

Planner to Architect

Thank you for sending through the amendments. Please find attached the decision notice for the application.

Kind Regards