



PLANNING

Civic Centre Marlowes
Hemel Hempstead
Herts HP1 1HH

MR F PIKE
7 WRENSFIELD
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
HERTS

Applicant:
MR & MRS R H H KERN
72 GRAVEL LANE
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
HERTS
HP1 1SA

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

APPLICATION - 4/00908/98/FHA

72 GRAVEL LANE, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, HERTS, HP1 1SA
FIRST FLOOR EXTENSION

Your application for full planning permission (householder) dated 27 May 1998 and received on 03 June 1998 has been **REFUSED**, for the reasons set out overleaf.

Director of Planning

Date of Decision: 20 July 1998

REASONS FOR REFUSAL APPLICABLE TO APPLICATION: 4/00908/98/FHA

Date of Decision: 20 July 1998

. Policies of the development plan aim to safeguard the local environment. Policy 8 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan, which is supported by the associated Environmental Guidelines for Small Extensions, specifies that development will not be permitted unless it satisfies a range of criteria. The northern elevation of the proposal, by reason of its size and prominent position, will be visually intrusive within the street scene. It will also have a dominating effect, and will fail to harmonise with the surrounding area and the existing building.



The Planning Inspectorate

JG

Room 1404
Tollgate House
Houlton Street
Bristol BS2 9DQ

Direct Line
Switchboard
Fax-No

0117-9878927
0117-987 8000
0117-9878769
1374 8927

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

GTN
E-Mail: ENQUIRIES.PINS@GTNET.GOV.UK

DO	ED	DF	DC	EC	ES	CH

Robin Bretherick Associates
Woodbank
The Ridgeway
Gerrards Cross
Buckinghamshire SL9 8NP

Received

11 DEC 1998

Comments

Your Ref:

RAB/TL/WP6/GRAVEL

Our Ref:

T/APP/A1910/A/98/300273/P8

Date:

10 DEC 1998

Dear Sirs

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990, SECTION 78 AND SCHEDULE 6 APPEAL BY MR AND MRS R H H KERN APPLICATION NO: 4/0908/98

1. The Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions has appointed me to determine your clients' appeal against the decision of Dacorum Borough Council to refuse planning permission for a first floor bedroom extension at 72 Gravel Lane, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead. I have considered all the written representations together with all other material submitted to me. I inspected the site on 24 November 1998.

2. From the representations made and from my inspection of the site and its surroundings I consider that the main issue is the effect which the proposed development would have on the appearance of the area in which the site is situated.

3. With regard to relevant policies of the development plan, policy 8 of the adopted Dacorum Borough Local Plan seeks a high standard for new development. Among other things, the policy requires that development should be appropriate in terms of layout, site coverage, design, scale, bulk, height, materials and landscaping, that it should respect the townscape, density and general character of the area; and that it should avoid harming the surrounding neighbourhood by reason of visual intrusion or loss of privacy. Policy 8 is complemented by environmental guidelines; with respect to house extensions the guidelines require that these should harmonize with the existing house and the surrounding area, and not dominate the existing dwelling. With regard to the surrounding area, the guidelines stipulate that front extensions should be fairly small and should not dominate the street scene, and should maintain the common design characteristics of the row or street within which the house is located.

4. You have referred to national policy on design and the appearance of proposed development, as set out in Planning Policy Guidance 1. You emphasize that the document advises local planning authorities not to concern themselves with matters of detailed design except where these would have a significant effect on the character of an area, and also advises that only in exceptional circumstances should designs which are consistent with relevant design policies be refused planning permission. You have in addition drawn attention to Annex A of the policy advice, which states that plan policies should avoid

unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.

5. I have given appropriate weight to these various policies in accordance with the advice contained in Planning Policy Guidance 1. I have also noted that Planning Policy Guidance 1 advises local planning authorities to reject poor designs, particularly when their decisions are supported by clear plan policies, and in this respect states that poor designs may include those inappropriate to their context, for example those clearly out of scale or incompatible with their surroundings.

6. No.72 Gravel Lane forms part of a group of five similar dwellings, built in the form of one and a half storey houses. Most of these houses have been added to and altered. The additions include reasonably substantial single storey front extensions, as in the case of No.72 and its neighbour No.70. On the opposite side of Gravel Lane are dwellings of similar size and scale, although having their gable ends facing the road. To the north of the appeal site is a small green, flanked to the north and west by short terraces of bungalows. I have concluded that the locality has a very pleasing character and appearance, and that the green is a particularly attractive space, enhanced by mature trees, which forms a distinctive feature of the neighbourhood.

7. The proposed extension would for the most part comprise new first floor accommodation over existing single storey buildings. You have contended that these buildings exhibit a variety of discordant roof types, but in my view these do not significantly detract from the appearance of the area because they are low in height, small in scale and set back from the highway among trees and shrubs. Although the proposed bedroom extension would be set back from the road in the same manner, there is no doubt in my mind that it would have a very much greater scale and bulk, being only a little lower than the top of the existing house roof and extending forwards from the roof about 13 metres, with a width at eaves level of about 8 metres.

8. Because of its substantial size and bulk I consider that the extension would appear both obtrusive and out of scale when seen within the context of the small scale residential development around it, and to my mind it would appear particularly prominent and obtrusive in terms of views of the site from the north, looking across the pleasant green. In addition, I am concerned that the inappropriate nature of the extension's design is also manifested in the location of a first floor bedroom window only 10 metres or so from a window of the bungalow to the north. This would create the possibility of overlooking and loss of privacy being suffered by occupiers of the bungalow, although I do not consider that this shortcoming in itself is so serious as to justify dismissing this appeal.

9. These considerations lead me to conclude that the proposal would result in an extension which would be out of scale and incompatible with its surroundings, and which would harm the attractive appearance of the locality. I therefore find that the proposal conflicts with the aims of relevant development plan policies and national planning policies. I have taken into account the other extensions of a similar nature which have been constructed in the surrounding residential area, and which I saw on my site visit, but I do not consider that these are situated in such a sensitive location as the appeal site.

Consequently I do not find that these other extensions serve to justify allowing your clients' proposal.

10. I have taken account of all other matters raised, including the absence of any objections from local people, but I do not find these to be of such weight as to override the considerations which have led to my conclusions.

11. For the above reasons, and in exercise of the powers transferred to me, I hereby dismiss this appeal.

Yours faithfully

Terence N Povey

TERENCE N POVEY BA BArch MA FRTPI RIBA MIMgt
Inspector