

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made 15 October 2020

**By Ruth Reed BA DipArch MA PGCertEd PPRIBA HonAIA FRIAS**

An Independent Scheme of Management Inspector  
Appointed by the Heritage Foundation Letchworth Garden City

Decision date 26 October 2020

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## Appeal Reference RR/2020/009

**29 Howard Drive, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire, SG6 2BT**

- The appeal is made by [REDACTED] against refusal of consent under the Scheme of Management of Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation for the application submitted on 25 October 2019.
  - Consent was refused by the Heritage Advisory Team on 14 November 2019. It was reviewed by the Advisory Management Committee on 12 March 2020 and the decision to refuse was upheld by the Housing Applications Committee Chair under delegated powers on 24 April 2020.
  - The development is ground floor front extension, following demolition of original porch.
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## Decision

1. The appeal against the proposed ground floor front extension, following demolition of original porch is dismissed.

## Preliminary Matters

2. At the site visit [REDACTED] gave additional details of her [REDACTED] that reduce [REDACTED]. She subsequently forwarded a letter from her [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with further details. [REDACTED] confirmed that she requires [REDACTED]
3. These details were not previously known to the Heritage Foundation and this has been taken into consideration in reaching my decision.
4. The property has been the subject of a number of applications, application reference 35424 for a part single storey and part two storey rear extension has

been approved. I have been provided with drawings showing this scheme which would create a kitchen dining room on the ground floor and an additional bedroom on the first floor. I have taken into consideration the possibility that this extension will be constructed.

5. I have also been given copies of application reference 36045 for a single storey front extension extending 1.68m from the front wall of the house with bay windows, which was withdrawn. I note that alternative, smaller proposals are possible.

### **Main Issue**

6. The main issue in this case is the impact of the front extension on the character and appearance of the house and the street scene.

### **Reasons**

7. Number 29 lies on the east side of Howard Drive in a Modern Character Area. It is one in a frontage of semi-detached houses by the architect CM Crickmer that are grouped along the road with gable fronted properties forming 'bookends' at intervals and wide-frontage semi-detached houses set back between them. Number 29 has a wide frontage and is attached to one of the gable fronted houses, number 31.
8. Number 31 has a large single-storey front extension with a flat roof adjacent to the house and a pitched roof beyond. The appeal scheme proposes extending the front of number 29 in a similar manner to the same building line. Because of the off-set between the original houses this would result in a 3.55m deep extension with a considerable amount of flat roof.
9. The appellant's architect has cited a number of examples of front extensions on Howard Drive, Waysbrook Way, Whitethorn and Lordship Lane. At the time of my visit the weather was exceptionally inclement so I drove around the area to see each of the examples unaccompanied. I did not see an example of a flat roof on a front extension other than on number 31 Howard Drive. Those extensions that were adjacent to gable-fronted properties had kept to the building line of the original gable. This is the case for the front extensions to numbers 47 and 53 Howard Drive that are in the same group of buildings by C M Crickmer.
10. The extension to number 31 is exceptional and stands out in the street scene. To extrapolate it across the front of number 29 would only accentuate the difference in character and appearance to the other houses that make up this group.

11. The proposed extension would not conform to the Design Principles for Modern Character Areas which clearly set out that front extensions should not detract from the architectural value of a group of houses. To extend number 29 to the line of number 31 would create an unduly prominent form of development, contrary to the Design Principles.
12. [REDACTED] has provided details of [REDACTED] that require [REDACTED] [REDACTED] on the ground floor of her home. Approval has already been granted for a rear extension but the combined proposal is not shown on the plans before me. If the front extension that is the subject of this appeal was approved there would be considerable over-development of the property. I have not seen evidence that this is necessary to meet [REDACTED]
13. I accept that there are [REDACTED] that require extended ground floor space for [REDACTED] however the requirement for the large front extension has not been fully justified and, balanced against the harm that it would cause to the street scene, I have concluded that the appeal should be dismissed.

### **Conclusions**

14. Having read the submissions and seen the site and its context I conclude that the front extension would not be in accordance with the Design Principles. There is insufficient evidence that the personal circumstances that have been put forward justify an extension of this size. The appeal is dismissed.

*Ruth Reed*

Independent Scheme of Management Inspector