

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 September 2016

by L Gibbons BA (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 5 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/W/16/3151779

18 Bushey Close, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP12 3HL

- 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 Mongu Khan against the decision of Wycombe District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/05230/FUL, dated 22 January 2016, was refused by notice dated 24 March 2016.
 - The development proposed is an amendment to previously approved application Ref: 14/06065/FUL – erection of two storey attached 3-bedroom dwelling to include alterations to parking for the existing property and bin store. Amendments include additional one metre increase in depth of first floor including increase in ridge height and formation of loft habitable area. Alterations to fenestration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of No. 18 Bushey Close and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located at the end of Bushey Close which consists mainly of short terraces of two storey houses. The properties are of a simple design with very similar features in each terrace. There is a good sense of rhythm to the front elevations despite the variation in positions of the terraces relative to each other. This includes the windows which have the same position in each house and is a key feature of each small terrace.
 4. The appeal site is a fairly large area of hard-standing and includes garages which would be removed. The proposal would be to extend into this area with a dwelling attached to No. 18. No. 18 has a front porch where other properties do not. However, this does not overly affect the otherwise symmetrical appearance of the terrace. The Council does not object to the principle of development in this location and have granted planning permission for a two storey attached dwelling at the appeal site. I also note that the design of the house is intended to reflect the slope on which the site is located. I accept that the proposal would incorporate materials which would match that of the existing property and the surrounding houses.
 5. There would be a small increase in height from the original proposal and as a result of this the ridge of the roof would match that of No. 18. The position of the ground floor and roof over the porch would be slightly lower than that of
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the adjoining property. I consider that these features would lead to the appearance of a much more elongated property in comparison with No. 18 and one which would not be symmetrical with or subordinate to that property. This would be exacerbated by the lower position of the ground floor windows. I accept that saved Policy G3 of the Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011 (LP) does not specifically require windows to match existing properties. Nevertheless, the front elevation of the dwelling would appear out of context with the rhythm found in the rest of the terrace generally and in relation to the adjoining property irrespective of the porch at No. 18.

6. The proposed dwelling would be partially screened at ground floor level on the approach along Bushey Close. Nevertheless, it would be visible at roof and first floor from this angle. It would also be very obvious from the street and properties to the north and the north-west and the height of the proposed dwelling would be seen as an overly dominant feature in the streetscene.
7. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of No 18 Bushey Close and the surrounding area. It would be in conflict with saved Policy G3 of the LP and Policy CS19 (bullet 2) of the Wycombe Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2008. These amongst other things seek new development which achieve a high standard of design and layout that reflects and respects the local urban context and reinforce locally distinctive qualities of place by enhancing landscaping and built characteristics of the site. It would be contrary to Appendix 1 of the LP which provides guidance for development which is sympathetic to the character of an area. It would be contrary to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework in respect of the need for high quality design.

Other matters

8. The Council have stated Policy G8 of the LP in the reason for refusal. However, this refers to the amenity of neighbouring properties including daylight and sunlight, overlooking and visual intrusion. The Council does not raise concerns with regard to these considerations. The appeal site is within an accessible location and would provide an amount of parking which would be acceptable. I acknowledge that the layout of the house is intended to provide flexible and long term accommodation for the future occupiers whilst meeting building regulations. However, these factors do not outweigh the harm I have found.
9. I have been referred to other developments in the area which have been approved by the Council. However, I have not been made aware of the full details of the circumstances that led to those proposals being acceptable and so cannot be sure they represent a direct parallel to the appeal proposal. In any case, I have determined the appeal on its own merits.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L Gibbons

INSPECTOR