

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 November 2016

by M Brookes BA MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/16/3158447

71 Narcot Lane, Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire, HP8 4DU

- 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 Colin Quinn against the decision of Chiltern District Council.
 - The application, Ref. CH/2016/0808/FA, dated 1 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is a side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the extension on the character and appearance of the appeal property and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is located on a corner site at the junction of Narcot Lane and Narcot Way and comprises a small bungalow with a distinctively symmetrical front elevation.
 4. Development along Narcot Lane and Narcot Way in the vicinity of the site comprises detached, semi-detached and terraced single and two storey dwellings of a variety of sizes and designs. There is therefore no distinctive building form or design in the area which is characterised by buildings of individual design and appearance, each of which contributes to the character and appearance of the area as a whole. Although there is evidence that a number of the dwellings have been extended, those extensions are generally subordinate in scale and sympathetic in design such that the character and appearance of the original buildings are largely maintained. In particular, the small number of crown and flat roofs, which are not characteristic of original dwelling designs, are largely on small or discreet extensions.
 5. Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (2011) (CS) and saved Policy GC1 of the Chiltern District Local Plan (1997 as altered and consolidated in 2001, 2007 and 2011) (LP) require development to be of a high standard of design.
 6. Saved LP Policy H15 states that an extension should be designed and sited so as to be in keeping with the existing dwelling and any other buildings in the
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adjoining area. It also indicates how this can be achieved, including that an extension should be designed to respect the scale and proportions of the existing dwelling and reflect its form and design details. A flat-roofed single-storey extension will be acceptable unless it is prominent in the street scene or other public place, in which case a hipped or pitched roof should be used.

7. Further guidance is contained in the Council's Residential Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document (2013) (SPD). This states that an important goal for any extension should be to harmonise with a building, striking a balanced visual relationship with its existing features and integrating in such a way that it does not adversely affect the character and appearance of the locality. Methods to achieve this include ensuring that an extension respects the scale and proportions of an existing building and has a roof style and pitch which matches the original roof.
8. The SPD also states that crown roofs can result in a building which appears bulky and are not generally encouraged. They frequently indicate that a building span or foot print is too large. Crown roofs may however be acceptable in locations where the roof form would not be prominent, especially if there are other acceptable examples of crown roofs in the vicinity.
9. The proposed extension would be to the side of the existing bungalow and would have a crown roof. It would be more than half the width of the bungalow with a substantial roof slope facing Narcot Lane. The front wall and roof slope would also only be slightly recessed. In views from Narcot Lane the extension would therefore not appear appropriately subordinate in scale and would be harmful to the distinctive symmetry of the front elevation of the building. It would not harmonise with the building or strike a balanced visual relationship with its existing features in accordance with SPD guidance.
10. In views from Narcot Way and from its junction with Narcot Lane the extension would overwhelm and largely screen the existing building. Even with appropriate ridge detailing, the large crown roof, which would be out of keeping with the pitched roof style of the existing building and an incongruous feature in the area, would also be a very evident and conspicuous feature on the prominent corner site.
11. Overall, because of its size and design, the extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing building and, because of its prominent siting, would also cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would not represent a high standard of design that is in keeping with and respects the scale, proportions, form or design details of the existing building in accordance with SP Policy CS20 and LP Policies GC1 and H15. It would also conflict with one of the core principles in the National Planning Policy Framework that planning should always seek to secure high quality design.
12. In reaching these conclusion I have had regard to the spacious nature of the site and accept that although the extension would be conspicuous it would not appear cramped on the site or obtrusive in the street scenes. I have also noted that a side extension with a crown roof has recently been permitted on the site. However, that extension would be materially narrower and would be set back much further from the front and rear walls of the existing building. It does not therefore justify the harm that the larger, more prominent extension would cause.

Other Matters

13.I accept that the extension would provide useful additional accommodation on a substantial site, but that benefit does not outweigh the harm it would cause.

Conclusion

14.The proposed extension would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the appeal property and surrounding area and would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole. For that reason and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

M Brookes

INSPECTOR