

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2016

by M Brookes BA MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 06 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/N0410/D/16/3160456

Holly Cottage, 10 South Park Crescent, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8HJ

- 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 Ms N Dereza against the decision of South Bucks District Council.
 - The application, Ref. 16/01033/FUL, dated 31 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 July 2016.
 - The development proposed comprises first floor extensions, single storey rear extensions and a front porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The appeal proposal includes development for which there is an extant planning permission. The main issue therefore relates to the effect of the proposed extension to the northern side of the dwelling on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Development in South Park Crescent comprises buildings of very varied sizes and designs. Although there are exceptions, the distinctive character and appearance of the area therefore derives largely from the generally spacious and/or landscaped setting of those buildings. The spacious setting comprises a combination of space in front of and between buildings, particularly above ground floor level, and the landscaping comprises substantial trees and hedges along the road frontages. These characteristics are reflected in the classification of the road as being within a Green Suburban Roads Character Typology area in the South Bucks Townscape Character Study Part 2 Revision A (July 2015). The Study identifies threats to the established character of such an area including buildings that are spaced too close together – not allowing sufficient space for tree planting and so reducing the landscape character.
 4. Relevant Development Plan policies include Policy CP8 of the South Bucks Core Strategy (2011) (CS), which requires all development to be of a high standard of design and make a positive contribution to the character of the surrounding area. To achieve this, it identifies the role of identified character areas that will be defined. More detailed provisions are contained in saved Policy EP3 of the South Bucks District Local Plan (1999) (LP) which states that the retention and
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provision of space between buildings should respect the scale of spaces in the locality. Saved LP Policy H11 is more specific in stating that where the proposal is for an extension of more than one storey or for an extension at or above first floor level, the extension would be at least one metre from either flank boundary of the site.

5. The appeal property is a detached house with first floor accommodation within the roof. It and the adjacent two storey house to the north at 8 South Park Avenue are sited relatively close to the road with limited landscaping within their front gardens. The front gable wall of the appeal property lies parallel to the road but its north eastern side wall is at an angle to its side boundary and to the adjacent detached house. As a consequence the gaps between the house and the boundary and to the adjacent house taper towards the rear.
6. The appeal proposal includes a two storey extension with first floor accommodation within the roof on the same footprint as a carport which would be removed. The eaves of the extension would not exceed the highest part of the carport roof and the roof would be hipped away from the boundary. It would comprise a two storey extension within one metre of the boundary, contrary to LP Policy H11, but the small part within that proximity would be only a little over single storey building height.
7. However, the one metre gap in Policy H11 is a minimum requirement. Furthermore, the extension as a whole would be a solid and much more substantial structure than the existing carport and would significantly reduce the gap between the appeal property and the adjacent house above ground floor level. Overall the development would detract from the spacious setting of both adjacent properties and this would be readily apparent in views from South Park Crescent and from its junction with South Park View because of the proximity of the two houses to the road and the relative lack of landscaping in front of them.
8. My conclusion is that extension to the north side of the dwelling would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the spacious or landscaped character and appearance of the surrounding area. In this respect it would not represent a high standard of design and would not make a positive contribution to the character of the surrounding area in accordance with CS Policy CP8. It would also not accord with one of the core principles in the National Planning Policy Framework that planning should always seek to secure high quality design. More specifically it would not respect the scale of spaces between buildings in the locality in accordance with LP Policy EP3.

Other Matters

9. The extension would provide useful additional accommodation at the appeal property, but that benefit does not outweigh the harm it would cause and the proposal would conflict with the Development Plan when read as a whole.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

M Brookes INSPECTOR