
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 December 2016

by Jonathan Hockley BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 15 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/16/3159173

Jay House, Dean Wood Road, Jordans HP9 2UU

- 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 & Mrs C Marianczak against the decision of Chiltern District Council.
 - The application Ref CH/2016/1080/FA, dated 9 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 2 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is a part single/part two storey extension and alterations to existing roof to provide hip roof extension together with lower ground floor garage (alternative to 2016/0555/FA).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters and Main Issue

2. The appeal site lies within the Green Belt. The Council consider that the proposal accords with policies GB4 and GB12 of the Local Plan¹, which concern residential development and extensions to dwellings within the Green Belt. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt, subject to a number of exceptions, including the extension of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Based on all that I have seen and read I have no reason to disagree with this view. The proposal would therefore not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
3. However, this does not mean that the proposal would be automatically acceptable in terms of other planning issues. The Council refused the application on the effect of the scheme on its surrounds and the house itself. Therefore, the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. Jay House lies on Dean Wood Road, a small cul-de-sac which climbs steeply from Longbottom Lane at the southern end of the small and spread out settlement of Jordans. The lane is home to a small number of large detached properties, all set within their own grounds. The area has a spacious, peaceful

¹ The Adopted Chiltern Local Plan 1997 (including the Adopted Alterations May 2001 and July 2004) Consolidated September 2007 and November 2011

air which is considerably enhanced by a wide range of mature woodland surrounding and encompassing the area. There are a variety of styles of dwellings sited on the lane, with some red brick and some yellow brick houses, a painted brick property, and some rendering also evident. Some of the properties have tile hanging on their upper elevations, with an example nearby also of wooden boarding. As a result, no one facing material predominates. However, roof styles are similar, with hipped clay tiled roofs, many with pitched roof dormer windows. Many of the homes have been, or are being, extended.

5. The appeal property is constructed in red brick with a dark tiled hipped roof. There are also areas of tile hanging on the house. The building is set back from the road considerably more than many of the neighbouring properties, and is set gable on to the road, with the main façade, with central bay window and three flat roof dormers facing towards the garden of the house.
6. The proposal seeks to construct an extension running across the road fronting gable, altering the plan of the property from a linear shape to an 'L' shape. The majority of the extension would be two storeys and would replicate the hipped roof of the original property. An integral double garage would also be constructed underneath the side of the proposed extension. Consent was granted previously in 2016² for a similar scheme. It is agreed between the parties that the only differences between the approved scheme and that before me is a proposed change in materials, and the introduction of the garage.
7. The proposal seeks to clad the extension and the existing house in western red cedar cladding. Such cladding would cover the full elevations of the property, aside from a small area of rendered wall around the proposed lower level garage. The entire roof of the house, including the extension, is proposed to be clad in a standing seam aluminium/zinc roof.
8. The cedar cladding would be untreated. In time, this would weather to a silvery grey colour and would, despite the proposed extent of it, blend in well with the sylvan nature of the site and surrounds. The cladding would help to reduce the bulk of the proposal on the site and would introduce a differing, yet complementary material to the neighbourhood which in my view is characterised by a range of differing facing materials.
9. However, the houses in the area have a common roof material and style. The dark tiled roofs assimilate well into the environment, with their bulk and mass reduced visually by the use of the dormers and their hipped design. The colour and material of the proposed zinc roofing system would contrast adversely and appear dramatically different to this predominating local roof style. Whilst the property is set back from the road, the extension would introduce a large new roof elevation facing the lane which would be clearly visible.
10. Examples are provided of a property elsewhere in Jordans with similar materials used, as well as others from further afield. I do not have the full details of the nearby property, but I note from the photograph provided that this building appears significantly more modern in design than that proposed in this case. The other examples provided appear to be located in differing

² Chiltern District Council ref CH/2016/1080/FA

areas with different climates than the appeal site where such roof materials may be more appropriate. Moreover, each case must be considered on its own merits.

11. Policy GC1 of the Local Plan states that the Council will permit development which is designed to a high standard. Subsection (f) of the Policy states that in an area where certain facing materials predominate, such as bricks of a certain colour, or clay tiled roofs, development should use matching or similar materials. For the reasons given above whilst I consider that the proposed cedar cladding would comply with this policy, the proposed roofing materials would not.
12. Whilst I note the contents of paragraphs 59 & 60 of the Framework which consider that planning policies and decisions should not be overly prescriptive, attempt to impose architectural styles, and should not stifle innovation, or originality, this paragraph also states that it is proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. Furthermore, I also note the key core planning principles of the Framework, which states that planning should take account of the different character of different areas and always seek to secure high quality design.
13. The proposed garage would utilise the levels of the site, excavating into the land to create the space required. However, the size of the proposed double garage, stairwell and small WC would add a considerable amount of bulk and mass to the proposal. The flat roof of the garage would jut forward of the new proposed building line, and the mass of the extension would also add considerably to the depth of the proposal of the house on its north western façade. Whilst the extension itself would change the character of the host building, the proposed garage would add another storey to the building, increasing the overall bulk of the house significantly. This would also be contrary to Policy GC1, which states that extensions to existing buildings should be designed to respect the scale and proportion of these buildings.
14. On my visit I noted other properties nearby with integral garages, including at the adjacent property and one located opposite. However, these did not appear to me to have the same effect as that proposed in this case, and appeared to assimilate more into the existing building in terms of bulk and building line than the proposal would in this case. Nor do I consider that the removal of the garage would leave an unnaturally large expanse of bricks on either the road facing elevation or the flank elevation of the property; a substantial amount of excavation would still be required for the garage proposed.
15. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have a significant adverse effect on both the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. As well as policy GC1, the proposal would also be contrary to policy H15 of the Local Plan, which states that extensions should be designed so as to be in keeping with the existing dwelling and other buildings in the adjoining area, and to policy CS20 of the Core Strategy³, which states that new development should be of a high standard of design which reflects and respects the character of the surrounding area and those features which contribute to local distinctiveness.

³ Core Strategy for Chiltern District, November 2011

Other Matters

16. The appellant suggests that should the appeal be allowed, then a condition could be imposed to require an existing timber garage located between Jay House and the road to be removed, thereby increasing the openness of the Green Belt and opening up the front garden. However, this structure by virtue of its materials and size assimilates well into the surrounding area and I do not consider that any benefit of removing the building would outweigh the harm caused by the proposed development outlined above.

Conclusion

17. I have concluded that the proposal would have a significant adverse effect both on the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Therefore, for the reasons given above, and having regard to any other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Jon Hockley

INSPECTOR