

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 March 2017

by L Fleming BSc (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 22nd March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N0410/D/17/3168504

8 Buckland Gate, Wexham SL3 6LS

- 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 Gordon Errington against the decision of South Bucks District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/02085/FUL, dated 4 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 20 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is a three storey side extension to existing house and demolition of the part rear canopy to ensure the overall increase in space does not exceed 50%.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area;
 - whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and development plan policy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal dwelling forms part of a group of large detached dwellings formally arranged around a private drive. The dwellings have subtle height variations and sloping roofs where they meet creating a sense of space between the buildings. Thus, Buckland Gate has a formal but relatively spacious character and appearance.
 4. Although the proposed extension would be set off the boundary with No 7 Buckland Gate (No 7) at first floor level and set down from the ridge of the main roof, it would be significantly taller than the existing ridge line of the part of the appeal dwelling adjacent to No 7.
 5. I acknowledge the proposed extension would match the details of the existing property and would not be widely visible from No 7. However, it would be highly prominent in the Buckland Gate street scene.
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6. The significant loss of space between the side elevations of Nos 7 and 8 Buckland Gate would result in an uncharacteristically cramped relationship between the two dwellings. In my view, this would erode the spacious character and appearance of the area.
7. For these reasons, the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Thus, it would be in conflict with saved Policy EP3 of the South Bucks District Local Plan (1999) (LP) which seeks to ensure new development is in keeping with the character of its surroundings.

Inappropriate development

8. The proposed development would be within the Green Belt. Paragraph 89 of the Framework makes clear that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt except where among other things they comprise the extension or alteration of a building and does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
9. Moreover, saved Policy GB10 of the LP makes clear that extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt will be allowed where the proposal when considered with other extensions is small in scale and do not result in a disproportionate increase in size. The justification makes clear that extensions will not be regarded as small in scale where they would increase the floor space by more than half of that of the original dwelling. Insofar as saved Policy GB10 of the LP seeks to ensure extensions are not disproportionate it is consistent with the Framework.
10. I am told that the proposed extensions when taking account of a canopy which would be removed and historical additions would equate to an increase in floorspace of original floor space of the appeal dwelling of some 41%. I find no reason to question this. On this basis I am satisfied that the appeal proposal would not result in a disproportionate increase in size of the building and in this regard it would accord with paragraph 89 of the Framework and saved Policy GB10 of the LP.

Other Matters

11. I acknowledge that the appeal proposal would result in an increase in residential floor space which is required to support the needs of a growing family. I also note there may be economic opportunities associated with building the extension.
12. I have also noted that amendments have been made to the proposal through the planning application process. However, these matters or any others raised do not outweigh the harm I have identified.

Conclusion

13. Whilst I have found the proposal would not represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt, I have found it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Thus, on balance the proposed development is in conflict with the development plan and I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L Fleming
INSPECTOR