
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 November 2017

by Robert Fallon B.Sc. (Hons) PGDipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 19th December 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/D/17/3181834

Gransden Lodge, Goodacres Lane, Lacey Green, HP27 0QD

- 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 Ross Dowsett against the decision of Wycombe District Council.
 - The application Ref 17/06020/FUL, dated 17 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 27 June 2017.
 - The development proposed on the appeal form is described as "Construction of first floor side extension, single storey side extension and two storey front extension together with dropped kerb".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. The development description on the application form does not correspond with the decision notice or appeal forms and also does not refer to the full extent of proposed works. I have as a consequence used the description shown on the appeal form and am satisfied that this has not prejudiced the interests of any party.

Main issue

3. The Council raises no concerns regarding the first floor side extension, single storey side extension and dropped kerb. Accordingly, the main issue is the effect of the proposed 2-storey front extension on the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site contains a mature 2-storey detached dwelling, which has previously been extended and is characterised by its front elevation catslide roof, dormer windows (which were a later addition) and narrow 2-storey front projection. To the north-east of the appeal site lie two detached properties (Stepping Stones and Brambleside) which were originally the same architectural design as the appeal property, but have subsequently been significantly extended. A further similar property (Byways) lies to the south-west on a corner plot and fronts onto Main Road. The remaining built form in Goodacres Lane and the wider area varies from these 4 properties in design, scale, form and maturity.

5. The proposed development would occupy the entire front elevation of the property with 3 new protruding hipped roofs and a wider central front projection. It would be an unduly dominant, intrusive and harmful development and would erode the overall integrity of the existing roof form and front elevation, which is characterised by its narrow 2-storey front projection and catslide roof with dormer windows. As a consequence, it would give rise to an entirely different roofscape and obliterate the original form and character of the dwelling.
6. Although the appellant states that the development would still maintain a significant gap to the front boundary, the depth of its projection would nonetheless interrupt the common building line on this part of the road shared by the host property, Stepping Stones and Brambleside. Furthermore, whilst the appellant states that the eaves of the development would match that at first floor level on the host property and not result in an increase in its overall height, this would not overcome the harm to the form and character of the dwelling arising from the loss of its narrow 2-storey front projection, catslide roof and dormer windows.
7. Although the appellant has drawn my attention to the eclectic mix of architectural styles in the surrounding area, I consider the appeal property to be primarily seen within the context of the adjacent properties Stepping Stones and Brambleside. The appellant states that because these two dwellings have been subject to significant extensions, the unity generated by the original design of all 3 properties has been lost. However, whilst I recognise that these two neighbouring dwellings no longer match the overall appearance of the appeal property, I nonetheless consider their extensions to have preserved the original form and character of the dwellings through the retention of the original 2-storey front projections and catslide roofs, and by incorporating dormer windows into their design. The proposed development would disrupt these common unifying design elements that still exist on all 3 properties and as a consequence, be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The public views of the proposal and its relationship with these neighbouring dwellings would be clearly visible when approaching from both directions on Goodacres Lane, which would intensify this harmful impact.
8. The appellant has drawn my attention to the design of the relatively modern dwelling known as Valletta opposite the appeal site, but this is not comparable to proposal in terms of context or architectural design. I am also not aware of the particular circumstances where planning permission was granted for this and in any event, I must consider the appeal scheme on its own merits. The existence of this development does not therefore justify the harm I have identified and nor do the private benefits of providing additional living accommodation for the appellant. Similarly, the letter of support and lack of objections do not in themselves demonstrate a lack of harm.
9. In view of the above, I have concluded that the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. The proposal would as a consequence conflict with Policies G3, H17 and Appendix 4 of the Local Plan¹ and Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy² which

¹ Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011, Adopted January 2004 (As Saved and Extended September 2007); and replaced by the Adopted Core Strategy July 2008 and the Adopted Delivery and Site Allocations Plan July 2013, Wycombe District Council

² Adopted Core Strategy, Development Plan Document, July 2008, Wycombe District Council

cumulatively seek to ensure that new development is of a high quality design that respects the built form of the host property and its locally distinctive context.

10. The appellant has referred to the presumption in favour of sustainable development and design policy contained in the Framework³ at Paragraph 14 and Chapter 7. However, I have determined that the proposal does not accord with the development plan and that the relevant policies referred to are not out of date or inconsistent with the Framework. Furthermore, in accordance with Paragraphs 58, 60 and 64 of the Framework, I have concluded that the development would fail to reinforce local distinctiveness and take the opportunity to improve the character and quality of the area. In view of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development as outlined in Paragraph 14 of the Framework is not engaged in this instance.

Conclusion

11. I have found that the appeal proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area. All representations have been taken into account, but no matters, including the scope of possible planning conditions, have been found to outweigh the identified harm and policy conflict. For the reasons above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Robert Fallon

INSPECTOR

³ National Planning Policy Framework, Communities and Local Government, March 2012