



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 July 2019

by David Wallis Bsc (HONS) PG DipEP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/W/19/3227525

The Coach House, New Road, Princes Risborough HP27 0BD

- 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 Louis Catlett against the decision of Wycombe District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/5011/FUL, dated 2 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side extension of existing property to create new 2 bedroomed residential unit.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues for the appeal are the effect of development upon:
 - surface water drainage
 - living conditions of existing and future occupiers with regard to private garden space.

Reasons

Drainage

3. The appeal site is within Flood Zone 1, which indicates that there is a low risk of fluvial flooding. Nonetheless, Policy CS18 of the Wycombe Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document July 2008 (CS) still requires developments to demonstrate that they would not be at risk from, or increase the risk of, surface water flooding. Buckinghamshire County Council acting as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has raised concerns since no details have been provided to demonstrate that appropriate surface water drainage or management can be achieved.
4. In some circumstances it is possible to secure such details through appropriately worded conditions. However, there appears to be significant constraints regarding infiltration techniques. Consequently, the LLFA has requested that site specific ground investigations should be carried out prior to the grant of any planning permission. In the absence of these investigations, I am unable to assess whether or not a surface water management plan secured conditionally could provide a viable method of surface water disposal.

5. The appellant proposes using the existing drainage system serving the site but no details of this are provided. I observed on site that an existing drain within the garden of No 2 The Coach House would be removed if the appeal were to succeed. The surfacing of the car park would not, on its own, suffice as a reliable method of drainage. Whilst the proposal may be small-scale it is likely to have an impact on surface water drainage conditions in this area. I cannot be certain that the proposed dwellings would not be susceptible to surface water flooding or that surface water flood risk would not increase elsewhere as a result of the proposal.
6. For these reasons, I am not satisfied that the proposal would make adequate provision for reducing the risk of surface water flooding. It would therefore fail to comply with Policy CS18 of the CS insofar as it seeks to avoid risks from surface water flooding. It would also be contrary to emerging policy DM39 within the Wycombe District Local Plan Submission Version March 2018 (LPS), which is at an advanced stage of preparation. I attach moderate weight to this policy accordingly.

Living Conditions

7. There are few gardens of notable scale within the Princes Risborough Conservation Area, a consequence of a compact urban form. The land to the side of No 2 is of limited value and quality as a private useable garden space. Given the urban form of the surroundings, particularly the layout of the attached No 1 The Coach House, the lack of a sizeable private garden space would not be a circumstance resulting in harm to the living conditions of No 2 nor those of future occupiers.
8. I conclude that the living conditions of existing and proposed occupiers would not be harmed. The proposal would not therefore conflict with policies G8, H19 or Appendix 1 of the adopted Wycombe District Local Plan 2004 (LP) that seek to safeguard future amenity of residents and other occupants as well as provide useable amenity space.

Other Matters

9. I note that the conversion of the Coach House to two dwellings was achieved under the prior notification procedure. Whilst that may be the case, the appeal relates to a planning application that has to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan.
10. The appellant notes the development as being in keeping with the area. Such would be expected within a Conservation Area wherein proposals should preserve or enhance the character or appearance. Limited weight is attributed to this accordingly.

Conclusions

11. I conclude that the scheme does not include sufficient information to demonstrate that the development would not increase the risk of flooding through surface water run-off.
12. Whilst I conclude that the living conditions of existing and future occupiers would not be harmfully affected, the other considerations before me carry limited weight and certainly would not outweigh the harm identified.

13. I dismiss the appeal.

David Wallis

INSPECTOR