



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 May 2019

by G Jenkinson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/J0405/W/19/3223501

Finches, Thame Road, Long Crendon, HP18 9AS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by G May-Brown against Aylesbury Vale District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/02325/APP is dated 29 June 2018.
 - The development proposed is two-storey side extension, raising the existing roof and altering its shape and removal of an existing lower side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by G May-Brown against Aylesbury Vale District Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Procedural Matters

3. The description of development in the banner heading above has been taken from the application form. The description of development was amended throughout the application process to more accurately describe the proposal. I have therefore based my decision on the amended description of development.

Main Issues

4. The appeal follows the non-determination of the application. However, the Council has provided an officer report, which sets out, its areas of concern. I find no reason to disagree and consider the main issues in this case are:
 - Whether the proposed development would be contrary to the aims of Local Policy which seeks to resist the loss of homes especially for local people; and
 - the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

Whether the proposed development would be contrary to the aims of Local Policy which seeks to resist the loss of homes especially for local people

5. The village has a high percentage of older people and the projected population figure estimates are that by 2020 over 25% of the village's population will be over 65 compared with 19% for the Vale of Aylesbury district as a whole.

6. As such the Long Crendon Parish Neighbourhood Plan (2017) (LCNP) seeks to prevent the loss of housing for older people within the village in Policy LC4. This states that *"proposals to increase the gross internal floor space of existing bungalows of a scale that requires planning permission and that will result in the loss of local homes especially suited to occupation by older people, will normally be resisted"*. The proposal would increase the floorspace of the property from circa 87 square metres to circa 185 square metres and includes the creation of a first floor of accommodation and as such the dwelling would be fit to cater for differing socio economic groups and not solely older people.
7. I accept that a larger dwelling may suit some older peoples needs and that the existing dwelling is in a state of poor repair and requires renovation. I accept that bungalows are not necessarily just suited to occupation by older people and that mobility and disability aids can be fitted to adapt most properties nowadays. For these reasons I find that the proposed alterations to the dwelling would not necessarily result in a dwelling that would be unsuitable to be occupied by older persons.
8. For the reasons given above I conclude that the proposed alterations to the existing dwelling would not result in the loss of a home especially suited to older people. As such I find no conflict with LCNP Policy LC4.

The effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

9. The appeal site comprises a detached single storey bungalow with attached carport to the side elevation. The site is situated at the end of a cul de sac with one other bungalow referred to as 'Morningside'. The dwelling is set in a large, leafy plot. The properties to the rear and the other side elevation are slightly elevated due to a rise in topography. The surrounding area is predominantly residential and the majority of properties are 1.5 to 2 storeys in height. The dwelling falls within the settlement boundary for Long Crendon. The site is accessed via a long, uneven driveway from Thame Road. The site is within walking distance of the local shopping parade.
10. The proposal would result in an extension that would link the existing frontage gable with the new side extension; a mono pitch roof is proposed to create a porch and veranda on the front elevation. To the rear the mono pitch roof will cover the 6 metre wide new aperture. The proposal seeks to re-roof the resultant dwelling in zinc, the front and side elevations will be clad in timber. The other side elevation would be brick and the rear elevation would be render. Ten roof lights are proposed and the first floor extension would result in two new first floor windows in the frontage gables. The site is within close proximity of the Long Crendon Conservation Area (CA). However, despite this proximity the Council are satisfied that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the CA and I find no reason to disagree. Detached residential dwellings in large plots with mature gardens surround the property. The majority of properties in the area are finished in brick or render with red tile rooves.
11. The contemporary design of the proposal is almost industrial in style. The zinc roof and timber cladding are completely at odds with the character and appearance of the area. The proposed materials are out of keeping with the intrinsic character of the village. I accept that the proposed materials are of a

high quality, however I find that the zinc roof would introduce an industrial style of design to this picturesque village setting. I accept that whilst the modern materials proposed may introduce variety in the street scene, they would be thoroughly at odds with the prevailing materials of nearby properties.

12. I accept that the site is not highly visible from the street scene, however, it is visible from a number of neighbouring properties, partly due to their elevated siting.
13. I find that the increased ridge height and mono-pitch roof extending towards the neighbouring property 'Morningside' would result in an overbearing form of development on the site that would appear visually intrusive to the setting. Whilst I have no objection to the proposed increase in ridge height or the introduction of windows at first floor level, I find the proximity of this to 'Morningside' would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area, significantly reducing the spacing between the properties.
14. I find that the design of a front porch with veranda is uncharacteristic of the neighbourhood and therefore out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area.
15. I acknowledge that the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) supports innovative design, however, development must be sympathetic to local character.
16. I therefore conclude on the second issue that by virtue of its scale, form, massing and material finish the proposal would be at odds with the scale, character and appearance of the original dwelling and the character and appearance of the surrounding area, thereby creating a strident form of development that is harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies GP.9 and GP.35 of the Aylesbury Vale District Plan (2010), Policy LC9 of the LCNP, the Council's Residential Extensions Design Guide and the Framework, which amongst other things all seek to ensure the development is visually attractive and sympathetic to the local character.

Other Matters

17. The appellant argues that a similar or greater floor space could be achieved through the exercise of permitted development rights to extend the bungalow significantly with a number of single-storey extensions. However, this 'fall-back' alternative would result in a completely different form of development to that proposed, and is not something which has greatly influenced my reasoning as I have to consider the proposal before me.
18. I acknowledge the letter of support from the neighbour and whilst I acknowledge this and note the concerns raised, it has not altered the considerations which have informed my decision.

Conclusions

19. I have concluded that the proposal would not result in the loss of a home especially suited to older people. However, my conclusion with regard to the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area represents a significant and overriding objection, which must

be decisive. For this reason I conclude that the proposal would not be consistent with the principles of sustainable development as it conflicts with the policies of the development plan and the Framework when taken as a whole.

20. For the above reasons and having considered all the matters raised in evidence and from what I saw during my site visit, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gemma Jenkinson

INSPECTOR