
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2019

by Richard Aston BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Friday, 30 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/P1940/D/19/3233691

Long Roofs, Commonwood, Sarratt WD4 9BA

- 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 and Mrs Perry against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/0437/FUL, dated 5 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 7 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is 2 dormers to the south east elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The appeal site lies within the Green Belt but the Council concluded that the proposal should not be regarded as being inappropriate development. On the evidence before me I have no reasons to disagree. The Council refused the application on the grounds of its effect on the character and appearance of the host property and area and accordingly, that is the main issue in this appeal.

Reasons

3. The name of this single storey property, 'Long Roofs', gives a clear indication of its form, character and appearance, derived in this case from a long expanse of terracotta clad mono pitched roof, the full extent of which faces onto Commonwood Common on the edge of this attractive rural hamlet and next to Commonswood House, a 'Locally Important Building' constructed in a mock Tudor style.
4. Despite being set down from the ridge and in from the sides, the flat box projecting form and appearance of the dormers would be wholly unsympathetic to the pitched and uninterrupted form and appearance of the roof and the prevailing domestic vernacular of such additions within the locality. Such unsympathetic additions would appear unduly dominant and visually jarring given the prominence of the roof slope within the streetscene and the eye would be unacceptably drawn to them on the approach into this part of the settlement.
5. Further, having observed at my visit that pitched roof dormers were under construction on the rear roof slope, the introduction of such a markedly different roof form would result in an inappropriate mix of dormer styles on the

host property. Although they would not necessarily be seen together, in such a context this would not represent a high standard of design.

6. For these reasons, the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host property and area. It would therefore conflict with Policy CP12 of the Three Rivers Core Strategy 2011 and Policy DM1 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies Local Development Document 2013. When taken as a whole and amongst other things these require a high quality of design having regard to context whilst enhancing the amenities and quality of an area and not leading to a deterioration in the quality of the built environment.

Other Matters

7. Although the Council have referred me to Policy DM3, this appears to relate to actual works to locally listed buildings and is not therefore relevant to my determination of this appeal. I acknowledge that a positive recommendation was given by officers but was overturned by the relevant committee. However, the Council's administration and determination of the proposal are not matters for me to address and it is the decision of the Council that I must have regard to as opposed to a recommendation from one of its officers. Members are not bound by that view and are entitled to take a different one, especially on one which involves subjective matters of planning judgement, as is the case here.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons set out above, the harm and conflicts are such that the proposal would conflict with the development plan, when read as a whole. Material considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework do not indicate that the proposal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan.
9. Having considered all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Richard Aston

INSPECTOR