
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 September 2019

by S Shapland BSc (Hons) MSc CMILT

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/D/19/3232815

15 Hollycroft, Ashford Hill, Thatcham RG19 8BU

- 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 Nick Burdett against the decision of Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00455/HSE, dated 13 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is two storey front and a single storey side extension.
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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 including the locally listed neighbouring property May Cottage, and the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of May Cottage, with particular regard to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is a large detached dwelling with a sizeable curtilage located within a small housing development known as Hollycroft, within the residential area of Ashford Hill. Properties within Hollycroft are generally characterised as being of a good size within large curtilages. This leads to a pleasing open feeling street scene. The appeal property has a detached double garage located to the front of the property, which is a common feature with a number of properties on the estate. Adjacent to the appeal property is the locally listed building known as May Cottage.
4. The appeal proposal is for the construction of a two-storey front extension which would be attached to the existing double garage. This would extend approximately 3.5 metres beyond the position of the existing garage into the front driveway. In addition, the appeal proposal includes a single storey side and rear extension to the host property which would attach to the existing detached double garage.
5. The proposal would significantly increase the footprint of the host dwelling, and the overall size and mass of the proposal would result in an extension which is

- not subservient to the host property. Furthermore, the proposal would link the detached dwelling with the detached garage, giving the property a sizeable 'L' shape overall, which is not in keeping with other properties in the area. The scale of the extension and the fact it would not appear subservient to the host dwelling means the appeal proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling.
6. The appeal site is located at the end of a short driveway which serves nos. 13, 14 and 15 Hollycroft. The site is well screened from the public highway by mature hedgerows. The proposal includes a significant extension of the building line away from the host property, with the proposed extension to the garage. This extension would be visible from a number of nearby properties and is not in keeping with the pattern of development in the locality.
 7. The neighbouring property of May Cottage is a two-storey red brick cottage, with clay tiled roof and sash windows dating from the mid to late 19th Century. The cottage is locally listed. The Council's conservation officer has stated that there is a clear visual connection between May Cottage and the appeal site. Paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken in account when determining applications. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset
 8. The appeal proposal would introduce considerable new built form along the boundary between the two properties. The proposed garage extension would bring the garage element much closer to May Cottage than the existing arrangement, and this reduction in separation distance harms the setting of the locally listed building.
 9. The appellant has drawn attention to a number of properties within Hollycroft which have garages forward of the front elevations of the host properties, and this was apparent during my site visit. This includes no.11 Hollycroft which is a triple garage which was granted consent by the Council to raise the roof to provide additional accommodation. I have not been provided with the full details of that scheme to be certain that it is directly comparable to the appeal proposals in front of me. In any event I must determine the appeal on its own planning merits, which is what I have done. The appeal proposal before me is extending the footprint of the garage by a considerable distance away from the host dwelling. It would lead to a significant increase in built form in front of the property, and this is not in keeping with the general pattern of development in the surrounding area.
 10. Consequently, I find that the appeal proposal would be an incongruous addition to the host property. The increase in mass means the proposal does not appear subservient to the host dwelling. Subsequently I find harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area. This includes the locally listed building May Cottage. This is in conflict with policies EM10 and EM11 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011 – 2029 (LP). These policies seek, amongst other things, that development is of a high-quality design which positively contributes to the local area and respect the built historical environment. Furthermore, the level of harm would be sufficient to place the proposal at odds with the Framework. The proposal would also conflict with the

Basingstoke and Deane Design and Sustainable Supplementary Planning Document (2018) (SPD), and Heritage SPD (2019).

Living conditions

11. The increased length of the garage combined with the additional height of the proposal would have a significant impact on the occupiers of May Cottage, especially from within the garden. The proximity of the existing garage to the garden of May Cottage means it is a noticeable feature from within the garden. The proposed extension of the garage and the increased height would add additional bulk and mass along this boundary. Furthermore, the extension would move the built form much closer to the building of May Cottage. There are a number of windows within the rear elevation of May Cottage which would look out onto the proposed extension, and its bulk and mass would lead to an overbearing impact both from within the garden and the rooms at the rear of this neighbouring property.
12. The appellant has indicated that new hedging has been planted along the boundary which would reduce the views and feeling of bulk from the proposal. Whilst the introduction of hedgerows will help to break up the built form of the proposal, I do not find that this would remove the views entirely. It would be likely that the structures would still be clearly visible from several points within May Cottage.
13. Consequently, I find conflict with LP policy EM10, which seeks, amongst other things that development is of a high-quality design which provides high quality amenity for neighbouring properties.

Conclusions

14. For the above reasons the appeal is dismissed.

S Shapland

INSPECTOR