
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 March 2020

by David Carter BSc MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th April 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/19/3243540
58 Shefford Road, Meppershall SG17 5LL

- 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 Jackson against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref CB/19/03725/FULL, dated 4 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is a 2 storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The references on the plans that have been made available to me are the same both on those originally submitted as well as on amended plans. The only differentiation between the versions is the electronic file name. The Council Officer's report indicates the planning application was determined on the basis of the amended plans which featured a scaled back version of the proposed extension. For the avoidance of doubt, I have determined the appeal on the basis of the amended plans.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of both the host building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property, No 58, forms part of one of several similar semi-detached pairs of dwellings on the south-eastern side of Shefford Road in the village of Meppershall. The houses have a rural setting featuring long gardens which face onto open countryside. Many of the dwellings on Shefford Road have been extended, including the appeal property which has 2 storey extensions to both the front and rear of the original dwelling as well as a conservatory and a free-standing double garage.
5. The appeal would add a third 2 storey extension to the property. On the side elevation the extension would be setback from the building line of the original dwelling. To the rear, it would extend back in-line with the existing rear extension. Although the size of the extension has been substantially reduced from that originally submitted, its depth would exceed that of the original

- dwelling. Its width, when combined with the existing rear extension, would exceed the width of the original house and, in its own right (4m) be more than 50% of the width of the original semi-detached dwelling. The effect would be to modify its appearance, adding considerably to the bulk of the building when viewed from both the front and rear. This would be to an extent that would be out-of-scale and disproportionate, not only in relation to the original dwelling, but also in undermining symmetry with the attached semi-detached dwelling (No 56).
6. In support of the proposal the appellant has pointed out nearby properties that have extensions which have similarities in design. No 78 is the most relevant since this has a 2 storey side extension including a car port. However, the key difference in that instance is that that dwelling had not been previously extended, particularly to the front as is the case with No 56. The appellant has suggested the appearance of the building would be improved by the hipped roof to the extension but this does not overcome my concern over the cumulative effects of the 2 storey extensions to the front, side and rear of No 58.
 7. In relation to the wider street scene, the extension, as proposed, would be visible from the public domain and would increase the bulk of No 58 to the extent that it would break the rhythm of the run of semi-detached properties. The adjacent property at No 60 is set back from the front of No 58 which means that the proposed extension would also be visible from some distance away when approached from the north east.
 8. On this main issue I conclude that the proposed extension would have a harmful effect on the appearance of the host building through being over-sized in relation to the original building which, in-turn, would harm the character and appearance of both the adjoining semi-detached dwelling as well as the wider area. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy Development Management Policies (2009). Policy DM3 seeks to encourage high quality of design for new development including house extensions by being of an appropriate scale and design in their setting. The Council's aspirations are then set out in greater detail in the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (2014). The proposal also conflicts with the approach towards design in Section 12 of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

9. I note that the Council did not raise any concerns over the effects of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of Nos 56 and 60 and also that the extension as proposed would not have a harmful effect on highway safety. From my assessment, I have no reason to disagree but, in relation to this appeal, these are neutral matters.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

David Carter

INSPECTOR