



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 August 2020

by Michael Boniface MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/20/3250659

21 High Street, Eyeworth, SG19 2HJ

- 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 & Mrs S Hennessy against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref CB/19/04082/FULL, dated 5 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 28 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is single storey and two storey extensions to the side and rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for single storey and two storey extensions to the side and rear at 21 High Street, Eyeworth, SG19 2HJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. CB/19/04082/FULL, dated 5 December 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 19028-SP, 19028-04, 19028-05 and 19028-06.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in materials matching that of the existing building.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect on the character and appearance of the area; and the effect on the living conditions of neighbouring occupants', particularly any loss of light to the adjoining property.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling located on a rural country road on the edge of Eyeworth. Further semi-detached dwellings are located either side of the appeal site with gaps between and long gardens stretching back towards countryside. There is some variation in the design and form of the pairs, the majority of which appear to have been altered and extended to various extents.

4. The proposed development would substantially enlarge the existing property but has been designed to respect the existing features of the building with brick detailing, fenestration design and arrangement. Whilst the form and appearance of the building would be altered, I do not accept that the resulting building would be harmful in its context. The sensitively designed extension could be accommodated within the large plot whilst maintaining a degree of spaciousness.
5. The development would appear integrated with the existing property. I accept that it would not appear subordinate, nor is there any reason why it should given the variety of buildings surrounding, many of which incorporate substantial extensions. The original symmetry with the neighbouring property is already diminished by the neighbour's large side extension and this is not a strong characteristic of the street scene. For this reason, I attach limited weight to the Council's Design Guide¹ in this case, so far as it seeks subservience and the maintenance of symmetry.
6. The development would not harm the character and appearance of the area and I find no conflict with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) (CS&DMP) or the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), both of which require high quality design.

Living conditions

7. A single storey lean-to extension would be added to the rear of the property close to the boundary with the adjoining dwelling and a rear facing kitchen window. The extension would be visible from the neighbour's window but it would be small in scale and unintrusive. The orientation of the buildings is such that little loss of sunlight would result and any impact in terms of daylight would be minimal given the small scale of the addition. That is notwithstanding that the Council's 45 degrees 'rule of thumb' would be breached.
8. The living conditions of neighbouring occupants would not be materially harmed. As such, I find no conflict with policy DM3 of the CS&DMP or the Framework, which require the protection of neighbouring amenity. Notwithstanding conflict with an element of the guidance contained in the Council's Design Guide, I have identified no resulting harm and so this matter attracts little weight.

Conditions

9. The Council has suggested a number of conditions in the event that the appeal is allowed. I have attached the standard time period for commencement of development and a requirement for accordance with the approved plans in the interests of certainty. It is also necessary to ensure the use of materials matching that of the existing building in order to achieve an appropriate appearance for the development.

Conclusion

10. The development would not harm the character and appearance of the area or the living conditions of neighbouring occupants. I have found no conflict with the development plan.

¹ Design in Central Bedfordshire (2014)

11. In light of the above, the appeal is allowed.

Michael Boniface

INSPECTOR