
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2020

by Darren Hendley BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/20/3251519

18 Pulpit Close, Chesham HP5 2RZ

- 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 Neal against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council - Chiltern Area.
 - The application Ref: PL/20/0157/FA, dated 15 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 18 March 2020.
 - The development is a detached shed to the front of the property.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The development has already been carried out and, therefore, I have dealt with the appeal on a retrospective basis.
3. Subsequent to the determination of the planning application, Chiltern District Council has merged with a number of other authorities into a single Unitary Authority. The name of the new planning authority is set out in the banner heading details above. The development plan remains unchanged as is relevant to this appeal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The shed is located on part of a narrow landscaping strip that is found to the side of this part of Pulpit Close. It is of a timber construction. The associated dwelling is on the opposite side of the roadway to where the shed is found. To the rear of the shed is a close boarded fence. The landscaping strip extends around the roadway, opposite the dwellings at 17 to 20 Pulpit Close (Nos 17 to 20) and up to a turning head where it is bordered by a hedgerow.
6. Apart from the shed, the landscaping strip is largely of an open form. It pleasantly contributes to the local character as part of the planned layout of Nos 17 to 20, which are a more recent addition to the dwellings along Pulpit Close. They are distinct in so far as they are the only properties that have such an arrangement with the landscaping strip.

7. The siting of the shed on the landscaping strip significantly detracts from its prevailing open character. It appears at odds with the pattern of development because it is positioned considerably further forward than the host dwelling and as it is distanced from it by being on the opposite side of the roadway. With its proximity to the road, it also appears highly prominent in this grouping of properties as a strident and intrusive feature. As it is forward of the boundary fence, it is not effectively screened.
8. The shed also comes into view in the streetscene from the more established part of Pulpit Close, as Nos 17 to 20 are approached. Whilst the alignment of the road to the front of the shed and the vegetation limit longer ranging views, the local character is eroded because the contrast with the landscaping strip is clearly evident. That it appears as a domestic shed does not overcome these concerns because the undue harm arises from its untypical siting.
9. The Council's Residential Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2013) cautions against the siting of buildings forward of the dwelling, pointing to that such buildings have the potential to disrupt the existing pattern of development, as is also stated in the Planning Officer Report. The shed is clearly a case in point. The SPD has a material bearing on my decision because it contains the relevant local design standards that support development plan policy.
10. The appellant has also referred to the National Planning Policy Framework. As this identifies that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, it also does not favour the development.
11. The potential for planning applications for similar development coming forward has a limited bearing as each would need to be considered at the time of its submission. Nevertheless, the development itself is detrimental to the character of the surrounding locality and so this renders it unacceptable in these terms. The appellant has drawn my attention to a letter of support and I am also aware of objections from residents outside of Nos 17 to 20. In considering these, I have determined the appeal on its own merits.
12. I conclude that the development has an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. As such, it does not comply with Saved Policies GC1, H13 (ii) and H20 of the Chiltern District Local Plan (1997, as altered and consolidated), and with Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (2011) where they are concerned with a high standard of design that reflects and respects the character of the area, that the character and appearance of the streetscene or locality would not be adversely affected and where they refer to compliance with other policies, amongst other considerations. It also does not accord with the SPD as it disrupts the pattern of development.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all matters that have been raised, the appeal should be dismissed.

Darren Hendley

INSPECTOR