The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 November 2020

by D Szymanski BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/20/3256966
13 Grange Road, Ampthill MK45 2PA

- 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 Mrs Marianne Mann against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
- The application Ref CB/20/01420/FULL, dated 29 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2020.
- The development proposed is a loft conversion.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion at 13 Grange Road, Ampthill MK45 2PA in accordance with the terms of the application Ref CB/20/01420/FULL, dated 29 April 2020, subject to the following conditions:

   1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.

   2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan/drawing Ref DD 6121.1A.

   3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be those set out on the approved plan/drawing and section 5 of the planning application form dated 29 April 2020.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises one of a pair of semi-detached dwellings. The appeal site has a two storey side extension with a part hipped gable, set back from the front and set below the main roof ridge. A number of other properties in the street scene have been extended but mostly with gable roofs, some with significant variance to their set back, height and overall appearance. Such extensions are frequently visible in this part of the street scene, with some having visibly reduced the symmetry between neighbouring dwellings.

4. The street scene also integrates a variety of other styles of dwellings, such as differently styled semis and detached dwellings, integrating varying hipped and cross hipped roof forms. Dwellings to the rear of the appeal site on Paddocks Close integrate multiple part hipped roof forms visible to the rear of the appeal site and a number of neighbouring properties. Therefore, overall, there is a considerably mixed character, appearance and roofscape to the area.

5. The appeal site and a number of extended properties have retained a small section of their original hipped gable roof form. Due to the width of the extension roof and the way it defines the shape of the roof line, the extension and part hipped gable has a strong influence on the overall form and appearance of the appeal site dwelling. The thin section of original hip now comprises a small part of the roof, no longer forming a particularly strong or defining characteristic of the dwelling.

6. The change of the remaining part of the original hip into a part hipped gable would be of a shape and angle in keeping with the extension. By not protruding further forwards and aligning with the original side wall, it would be a modest change. It would have the beneficial effect of providing matching roof forms on the front and side parts of the roof, resulting in an improved unity and coherence. Its small size, depth and shape means it would neither be bulky or discordant with the host dwelling.

7. Many dwellings in this part of Grange Road lack full symmetry and balance due to additions to the original dwellings. The existing side extension to No 13 reduces symmetry and balance with No 15. By maintaining a part hip at the top of the roof and the lower section aligning with the original corner wall, the development would be a small change that would have little overall effect upon balance or symmetry. In the context of the character and appearance of the area and having regard to the improved coherence of the appeal site roof, the small change would not overall result in material harm. This change, therefore, would not be out of keeping with or result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the street scene.

8. The Council has not set out an objection to the dormer or front rooflights. The rear box dormer would be set in from the sides of the roof, below the main ridgeline. It would be well screened from the street scene by the appeal site and neighbouring dwellings to the side and the rear. The rooflights would be small additions to the front of the dwelling that due to their size and positioning would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the area.

9. For the reasons set out above the proposed development would not be harmful to and would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area. Consequently, it would not conflict with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) which requires that development is appropriate in scale and design to its setting and respects and contributes positively to the sense of place and the character and appearance of the area.

10. The Council has cited a conflict with section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). However, in the absence of a specific reference I do not find conflict with the policies, which in combination and amongst other things, requires development adds to the quality of an area and is sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment. In the absence of a

specific reference and in light of my findings above, I do not find any overall conflict with the advice in the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (2014) in respect of scale, design and symmetry in the context of the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.

Conditions

11. As well as the standard condition for the commencement of the development, for certainty a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plan is necessary. To ensure a satisfactory appearance, a condition requiring the use of external materials to be those set out on the approved plan and application form is necessary.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted.

Dan Szymanski

INSPECTOR