



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 October 2020

by A Denby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J0405/D/20/3252059

10 High Street, Waddesdon, HP18 0JA

- 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 T Band against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref 19/03118/APP, dated 23 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 3 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension with alterations to front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. On the 1 April 2020, Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) merged, along with other Councils, into a new single Unitary Authority called Buckinghamshire Council. Whilst the original planning application was submitted to AVDC, the decision was issued under the authority's new name which has been referred to in the banner heading above.
3. In its evidence the Council has referred to policies within the emerging Vale of Aylesbury District Local Plan, 2013-2033 (VALP). This plan has completed Examination in Public and Main Modifications have been subject to consultation. Having regard to the advanced stage of preparation of the emerging plan and in light of paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I give moderate weight to these policies in my decision.
4. The proposals were amended during the application process. The Council made its decision on the amended drawings and I have determined the appeal on the same basis.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host property and the Waddesdon conservation area (CA); and
 - highway safety, with particular regard to parking provision.

Reasons

Character and appearance

6. The appeal property comprises a two-storey dwelling with enclosed garden to the side and rear, located within the CA. As identified in the Waddesdon conservation area Review, 2014 (CAR) there is a distinct linear arrangement to the settlement and strong feeling of regularity which comes from the form, mass and unified colour palette that transcends buildings of different social status. These factors, in addition to its development as part of the Rothschild estate village, form a key part of its special interest and hence significance.
7. The building is a substantial double fronted property, set back from the road and following the strong linear pattern of development in the area. Whilst there is a link to the adjacent terrace this is narrow and has a much lower eaves height. The appeal property, with its elements of symmetry remains the focus, and stands out as being visually distinct from the terrace.
8. Due to its scale and positioning, at the end of the terrace, with open space to three sides, it is also a visually prominent building within the street scene. The property is identified as an 'important building' in the CAR, and as such contributes positively to the CA, being an integral part of its special character and interest.
9. The proposed extension would, due to its width and overall bulk, be a substantial addition and, whilst it incorporates slight insets from the front and rear elevations and set down from the ridge, it would not appear as subordinate. It would compete visually with the host property, and this would result in an unbalanced appearance that would be at odds with and detract from its established character.
10. Furthermore, considering the location of the site in the street the extension would be a prominent feature, it would dominate the existing building in certain views and significantly erode the open, spacious character of the plot. This would have an unacceptable harmful impact on the character and appearance of the existing building and its appearance in the street.
11. The proposal would therefore have a negative effect on the significance of the CA, the result would be "less than substantial" harm when considered in the context of the Framework. The proposals include improvements to the character and appearance of the existing building, such as replacing UPVc with wooden sash windows and refurbishment of the bay windows. However, these public benefits would not outweigh the harm I have identified above, and to which I have attached considerable importance and weight.
12. Therefore, the development would be contrary to Policies WAD1 and WAD8 of the Waddesdon Parish Neighbourhood Plan, 2013-2033 (WNP), Policies GP9, GP35 and GP53 of the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan, 2004 (AVDLP) and VALP Policies BE1 and BE2, which amongst other things, seek to ensure that development achieves a high quality of design, having regard to massing, bulk, scale and height, respecting their host building, reflecting and preserving the special interest and appearance of the CA. For the same reasons the proposals would also fail to achieve the high-quality design requirements of the Framework.
13. The Council's decision notice refers to WNP Policy WAD 11, although referenced as an important building in the CAR, the property does not appear to be listed as a building of local note within the WNP, and I therefore do not find conflict with this policy.

Highway safety

14. There is currently space within the site to accommodate parking and the submitted layout shows tandem parking would be provided adjacent to the proposed extension. Although these spaces may achieve minimum width requirements for a standard parking space, the spaces would be significantly constrained by the proposed extension and existing boundary treatment. There is little detail provided to demonstrate that the available space would be sufficient for vehicles to manoeuvre into and out of these spaces whilst also allowing for access into and out of the vehicle itself.
15. The appellant has indicated that an area of hardstanding to the rear of the site could accommodate one parking space. Nevertheless, this would still not provide the required level of off-street parking provision and, from the evidence before me I cannot be certain that sufficient, useable parking provision within the site could be achieved. The proposal therefore has the potential to lead to increased demand for on-street parking.
16. I saw on my site visit that there was very high demand for on-street parking in the vicinity of the appeal site and in the surrounding streets. I also saw vehicles parked inappropriately, partly on verges and the pavement. I appreciate my observations provide just a snapshot though it does reflect the concerns raised.
17. Any increased demand for on-street parking would add to this and be likely to reduce visibility for pedestrians and vehicles at junctions. This could lead to conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles to the detriment of highway safety. Furthermore, the increased competition for scarce spaces would be likely to result in unnecessary travel, with drivers cruising nearby residential streets looking for available spaces and with attention diverted towards finding somewhere to park rather than on road conditions. These factors lead me to conclude that there would be unacceptable harmful road safety implications arising from the proposal.
18. Therefore, for the reasons stated the development would be contrary to WNP Policy WAD 12, AVDLP Policy GP24, VALP Policy T6 and Paragraph 109 of the Framework which seek to ensure that developments provide an appropriate level of parking and do not have an unacceptable impact on road safety.

Other Matters

19. The appellant has referred to other development proposals to properties in the CA and which they consider have not been subject to the same level of scrutiny as their proposals. I do not have the full details of those sites or schemes, though in any event I must consider the appeal on its own merits. I also note that the appellant amended their proposal in an attempt to address the Council's concerns, though this does not alter the harmful effects I have found. These other matters do not, therefore, lead me to a different conclusion.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A Denby

INSPECTOR