



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 November 2020

by A Denby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/20/3258423

3 Belvedere Close, Amersham, HP6 6BA

- 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 Burrige against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref PL/20/1454/FA, dated 6 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 1 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is hip to gable roof extension, replacement roof over existing rear projection and front, rear and side dormer windows and rooflights to facilitate a loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The site comprises a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling, positioned at the end of the cul-de-sac. There is a lack of symmetry to the semi-detached properties from the frontage, though the appeal site retains simple roof lines and a compact form. The other side boundary of the site adjoins open fields, and there are extensive and open views of the existing dwelling across the open countryside and from a public footpath to the west.
4. The arrangement of the existing dwelling to the rear is more complex, though the main roof form retains an overall simplicity. Although the attached property has been extended in a slightly different manner, from the rear, there is a greater degree of symmetry between the properties, particularly in longer range views, and I saw on my site visit that the existing dwelling is a clearly visible and prominent feature from the nearby public footpath.
5. The proposed gable roof would add substantial bulk to the existing roof, and it would be a dominant addition. Although views from the street would be limited, it would be an imposing feature when viewed from the open countryside and detract from the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and semi-detached property of which it forms an integral part.

6. The dormer proposed to the front roof slope would also not be an overly prominent feature when viewed from the street, though there would be some views of it from the adjacent open fields. However, due to its overall height and design, with glazed elements being greater in height than those on the existing dwelling, it would compete visually with the host property, and combined with the proposed gable roof, result in a top heavy appearance to the building that would be at odds with its established character.
7. The proposed hipped roof to the rear projection would have a visibly steeper pitch and appear particularly discordant. Although its ridge height would be slightly lower than the existing main roof, it would still result in a substantially bulky roof form that would be a dominant and incongruous addition.
8. Furthermore, the large flat roof dormer proposed to the side of the rear projection would, due to its siting, overall size and design, in itself be a prominent feature. The appellant states that the dormer has been kept to the minimum size required for the staircase, nevertheless, it would still be a sizeable feature and its intersection with the proposed gable roof is not well considered.
9. Whilst in isolation the small flat roof dormer proposed to the rear may have limited impact on the character and appearance of the existing property, it would still be visible from the surrounding area. The overall combination of the roof alterations and dormer windows would result in a bulky, complicated and awkward roof arrangement that would lack architectural subtlety and would not complement the simple style and design of the host property.
10. It is acknowledged that the appeal scheme would adhere to certain aspects of the Council's Residential Extensions and Householder Development, Supplementary Planning Document, 2013 (SPD) such as dormers being set down from the ridge and set up from the eaves. Nonetheless, this does not necessarily equate to an acceptable development and each site needs to be considered on its own merits. The SPD is also clear that proposals for roof alterations and dormer windows should respect the scale and proportions of the existing property and not result in bulky or overly dominant features. As detailed above this would not be the case with the appeal scheme.
11. Although views from the street would be limited, there are extensive views of the side and rear of the property from the public realm, and the proposals would be prominent incongruous additions which would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.
12. Therefore, for the reasons stated above the development would be contrary to Policies GC1, H13, H15 and H18 of the Adopted Chiltern District Local Plan, 1997¹ and Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District, 2011, which amongst other things, seek to ensure that development is of a high-standard of design, in keeping with and respecting the scale, character and proportions of the existing dwelling and having no significant detriment to the character and appearance of the street or locality. For the same reasons the proposal would

¹ Adopted 1 September 1997 (including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) Consolidated September 2007 & November 2011

fail to achieve the high-quality design requirements of the SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.

13. The site is not within the Green Belt, conservation area or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is not listed. The Town Council did not object and the proposals would utilise appropriate materials and not adversely impact on the living conditions of existing occupiers. Nonetheless, these factors would have a neutral effect, and do not, therefore, weigh in favour of the appeal.
14. The proposal would provide for improved living accommodation for the appellant, though I am mindful that this benefit would be personal to the appellant and would not outweigh the harm identified above.

Conclusion

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

A Denby

INSPECTOR