



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 December 2020

by A Denby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Y0435/D/20/3260164
49 High Street, Hanslope, MK19 7LQ

- 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 Andrew Archer against the decision of Milton Keynes Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01244/FUL, dated 27 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 28 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is two storey rear extension and replacement of thatch roof with slate roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have taken the description of the proposed development from the Council's decision notice. It adequately and simply describes the proposed development and reflects that used by the appellant on the appeal form.
3. On the site visit I noted that works were being undertaken at the appeal site, though in determining this appeal my decision has been considered on the basis of the proposed plans submitted, and on which the Council made its decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property and the Hanslope conservation area (CA).

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located within the CA, which covers the historic core of the village. The CA derives much of its significance from the varied mix of building styles and designs which utilise an eclectic mix of materials. These are particularly special characteristics of the CA and show the evolution of the settlement. The scale and setback of the buildings also varies, adding interest in to the streetscene. The buildings however follow a generally linear arrangement along the main thoroughfares, with tightly knit development along High Street transitioning to the more spacious character of development on Gold Street.
6. The dwelling at the appeal site, being a two-storey thatched cottage, set back from its frontage with High Street, is reflective of the eclectic mix of building styles within the CA. Although two-storey the property has a low eaves level

and its steeply pitched roof is a substantial and distinctive feature. It is an attractive and characterful property which makes a positive contribution to the CA.

7. The site also has a boundary with Gold Street, and there are clear, open views of the rear of the property from Gold Street and a public footpath to the south, and the site therefore occupies a prominent position.
8. The proposal is to construct a two-storey extension to the rear which would span the width of the existing property. At ground floor the extension would extend substantially from the existing rear elevation, having a depth almost comparable to that of the existing dwelling.
9. The eaves height to the proposed extension would be at a significantly higher level than the existing building. Although the ridge height would remain unchanged, the angle of the roof slope would be altered, raising the height of the roof and creating a catslide roof. In addition, in order to accommodate living space at first floor level, 3 pitched roof dormer windows are also proposed.
10. The proposed dormers would extend significantly from the new roof slope and would not be set back from the eaves. Although dormer windows are not an alien feature in the surrounding area, those proposed would be of a significantly greater bulk and size. They would not sit comfortably within the roof slope, and from the rear they would be dominant features of the dwelling. Due to their size, design and materials the dormers would, visually, be both obtrusive and incongruous additions.
11. Overall, the proposed extension would be a substantial and bulky addition. It would dominate the existing building, and in views from the rear, there would be little visual reference to the character, scale or form of the existing building. In addition, the proposal would alter the roof material, replacing the thatch with a slate roof. This would further diminish the character of the existing property and its contribution to the CA.
12. The appellant has stated that the roofing material could be changed within their permitted development rights. This would however be on the basis of the roof remaining as existing and not being extended or altered. The scale and form of the existing building would therefore be retained. The change to the roofing material does fall to be considered as part of the current appeal scheme, and having considered the proposal on its own merits, I do not find that any such fall-back position would provide justification for overcoming the harm I have identified here.
13. The proposal would therefore, overall, adversely impact on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and have a negative effect on the character and appearance of the CA. I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the CA, and the result of the proposal would be less than substantial harm when considered in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). There are no public benefits which would outweigh the harm I have identified above, and to which I have attached considerable importance and weight.
14. Therefore, the development would be contrary to Policies D1, D2, D3 and HE1 of the Milton Keynes Council Plan: MK 2016-2036, adopted 2019, which

amongst other things, seek to ensure that development achieves a high quality of design, with extensions relating well to the existing building and not detracting from its character or that of the surrounding area, and where possible, enhancing the significance of the CA. For the same reasons the proposals would also fail to achieve the high-quality design requirements of the Framework.

Other Matters

15. The appellant has drawn my attention to other developments in the vicinity of the site. I saw on my site visit that there is a wide variety of building styles and designs in the surrounding area, some of which appear to have been extended in differing styles.
16. Whilst I have considered the detail submitted, there are none which appear to be directly comparable to the appeal site when considering siting, design or prominence within the streetscene. Furthermore, I do not know the full circumstances of those schemes, and in any event each case must be considered on its own merits. Even if it were to be demonstrated that negative forms of development exist in the CA, this would not justify the harm I have identified.
17. The appellant has also referred to an earlier approval at the site for a single storey extension. I have not been provided with the details of that scheme, though from the limited information before me, as it only proposed single storey accommodation, its impact would not be comparable to the scheme before me.
18. The appellant has stated that they would have been willing to discuss amendments during the planning application process, though the Council did not engage in any discussions. Whilst I appreciate this would have been a disappointment to the appellant, it does not alter the harmful effects I have found. These other matters do not, therefore, lead me to a different conclusion.

Conclusion

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

A Denby

INSPECTOR