



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 18 February 2021

by Scott Britnell MSc FdA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/20/3263391

201 Great Hivings, Chesham, Buckinghamshire HP5 2LQ

- 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 Saj Butt against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref PL/20/1913/FA, dated 12 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 18 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as 'two storey side extension, part single'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site at No 201 Great Hivings is located in a very visually prominent location at the junction between Great Hivings and Wykeridge Close. The access to Wykeridge Close is fairly narrow with the gardens to the side of the properties either side of the junction providing a welcome sense of openness. While I saw that there is variety in terms of architecture in the area, including in the form, scales and layout of buildings, the gaps between buildings and at junctions are an important feature of its character and appearance. Although the character of the area is not formally protected, in my view those strong characteristics merit an appropriate degree of preservation.
4. I appreciate that the dwelling at No 199 Great Hivings has been extended by a two storey addition to the side and that this feature forms part of the surroundings to the appeal site. However no details of the circumstances of that development are before me. Moreover, each case must be assessed on its own merits.
5. The appeal proposal, as a result of its height and width would result in a substantial addition to the appeal property and would significantly increase the bulk and mass of the dwelling while extending it towards the junction with Wykeridge Close. As a result, and notwithstanding that a gap would be retained to the side boundary of the appeal site, the proposed extension would appear overly dominant within the streetscene and would unacceptably reduce the sense of openness at the junction. This would be particularly apparent from the footpath immediately alongside the appeal site from where it would appear overbearing. In addition, due to the splayed boundary of the appeal site the proposal would sit unacceptably cramped within its plot.

6. Moreover, the proposed extension would project beyond the line of the front elevation of No 1 Wykeridge Close, the dwelling situated immediately to the rear of the appeal site. Although the building line in Wykeridge Close is staggered the projection of the proposed extension beyond this dwelling would exacerbate the undue prominence of the proposal within the streetscene and the sense of enclosure at the junction.
7. The proposal is also for changes to the doors and windows on the rear elevation on the host dwelling and a single storey extension. Those elements would be relatively minor alterations to the property given its surrounding context, and the Council raise no objection to the scheme in those respects. However they cannot clearly be separated from the development proposed as a whole, which I have reasoned above would be unacceptable.
8. I conclude that the proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. There would be conflict with saved Policies GC1, H13, H15 and H16 of the Local Plan¹ and Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy². In summary, these seek, amongst other things, to ensure that development is designed to a high standard and that the character and appearance of an area would not be adversely affected. There would also be conflict with the Residential Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document September 2013 which seeks to ensure that extensions blend into the streetscene.

Other Matters

9. While the proposal would provide additional space for the appellant's family, this is a private benefit which does not outweigh the harm that I have identified. Due to its distance from neighbouring dwellings the proposal would not have unacceptable effects on the living conditions of their occupants, and I note that the Council have reached the same conclusion. However, the absence of harm in this regard is a neutral factor in my overall considerations.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons, having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the National Planning Policy Framework, and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Scott Britnell

INSPECTOR

¹ Chiltern District Local Plan Written Statement Adopted 1 September 1997 (Including alterations adopted 29 May 2001) Consolidated September 2007 & November 2011

² Local Development Framework Core Strategy for Chiltern District adopted November 2011