



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 16 June 2021

by Jonathan Edwards BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/J0405/W/21/3268534

16 The Granary, Warren Farm, Warren Road, Little Horwood, Milton Keynes MK17 0PZ

- 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 Miss Imogen White against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref 20/03258/APP, dated 24 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 19 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as "16 The Granary is a two storey apartment, solely occupying the top 2 floors of The Granary. Proposed works are for the installation of Juliet balcony to the rear, west facing elevation. This will be centrally located on the 3rd floor, west facing gable wall, between the two existing windows. This serves the kitchen diner of the property. The design and style to be in keeping of other Juliet balconies within the development."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development in the header above is taken from the application form. This indicates the proposal would be to the west facing elevation but the appeal drawings show it would be to the east elevation. Through the appeal process, the appellant has confirmed that the proposal relates to the west elevation and I have assessed the appeal on this basis.
3. The emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (the eLP) has been the subject of examination and proposed modifications have been consulted upon. However, it is unclear whether there are unresolved objections to referred to eLP policies and so they attract moderate weight in my assessment.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is an apartment that occupies the upper 2 floors of a 4 storey building. While it is not a conversion, the building replaced a granary on a like for like basis. It lies in a small cluster of properties in a rural area.
6. The proposed French doors and Juliet balcony would be at second storey level. They would be on the rear elevation but would be seen from the adjacent communal car park and lawn areas to the back of the site. The appeal building

stands out amongst the cluster as it is comparatively tall. As such, and by virtue of its height above ground level, the development would be conspicuous.

7. The windows on the first and second floors of the rear elevation are set apart from each other, which results in a marked high brick area to window ratio. The proposal would reduce this ratio and would appear unusually close to the windows on either side in contrast to the existing spaced out fenestration. Also, the balcony would be a new type of feature on the rear elevation and would add to the cluttered appearance. There is little evidence that a larger opening at higher floor levels such as that proposed is typical of granary buildings.
8. The proposed white frames and soldier arch would reflect similar features on and near the site. Also, French doors are at ground floor of the appeal property and are on nearby buildings at ground floor and with balconies at first floor level. However, the appeal property has a specific and distinctive appearance which relies to a significant degree on the positioning and size of its openings. The proposal would adversely affect the simplistic fenestration arrangement and plain appearance of the building. The existence of features nearby similar to the proposal fails to address or override this harm.
9. While it would be seen from the area directly outside and to the rear of the appeal property, the proposal would be largely hidden from views in the surrounding area. It would not be seen at all from the road and buildings and trees in leaf would screen the doors and balcony from a nearby public right of way. In times of leaf-fall they would only be glimpsed by users of the footpath from a distance. Consequently, I conclude the development would have no harmful effect on the rural character of the area.
10. Nevertheless, for the reasons set out above, I conclude the development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host property. In these regards, it would not accord with policy GP.35 of the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan 2004. This aims, amongst other things, to ensure development is designed to respect the characteristics of a site and building.

Other considerations

11. The proposal would serve an apartment on the upper floors of the building and so there is no scope for the appellant to address the above concerns by moving the development to a lower level. However, there is limited evidence that demonstrates existing windows are inadequate to serve the needs of occupiers of the apartment. As such, these factors fail to affect my overall conclusion.

Conclusion

12. The proposal would be contrary to the development plan policies when considered as a whole. There are no factors of such weight that justify a decision other than in accordance with the development plan. As such, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Jonathan Edwards

INSPECTOR