

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 September 2021

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 September 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/21/3275805

Orchard House, Three Households, Chalford St Giles HP8 4LJ

- 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 Paul & Rachel Reeves against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref PL/21/0643/FA, dated 16 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 28 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is for a first floor extension over existing garage and infill link to main dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, and upon the setting of nearby Listed Buildings.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a modern detached house set within a generous plot in a backland location behind development fronting the road known as Three Households. Immediately to the north west of the appeal dwelling itself is a terrace of 3no cottages known as Three Households Gallery which comprise a grade II listed timber framed former farmhouse of three bays and two storeys.
4. The host dwelling currently has a double garage projecting forward to the north west with a single storey link connecting it to the main range, and which appears wholly subservient to it. In contrast, the proposal before me would give rise to a raising of the eaves level of the garage such that they would almost be the height of the aforementioned link.
5. I note that the Council's Historic Building's Officer commented that the elevation facing the Listed Buildings would be fairly well balanced in its architectural treatment and to which I have been given no substantive reason to disagree. However, the proposed side elevations would appear contrived in their appearance principally by the increased verticality of their elevations and the elevated eaves which would appear out of proportion, giving it a top-heavy and incongruous appearance which would be accentuated by a dormer window on the south west facing elevation.

6. Therefore I cannot agree that the extension would be subservient to the main house, notwithstanding the fact that it would remain lower than it, further due to the short length of link, the south west facing side elevation in particular would visually compete with its host, creating an uncomfortable visual duality.
7. I accept that due to its backland location that the proposed garage would not materially affect the street scene, I also acknowledge that Orchard House is sited within a very generous sized plot and that the proposal would not detrimentally affect the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties. I noted that there is a line of trees situated on the boundary between Orchard House and the listed buildings, however in the main those trees are deciduous and in any case their long term provision as a method of screening cannot be guaranteed, particularly due to their maturity. I note that permission was granted in 2003 for the garage to be extended closer to the boundary and therefore closer to the listed buildings, however I have not been provided any details of this and furthermore each case must be assessed on its own merits.
8. In conclusion, I consider that by reason of its height and the dormer feature, the proposal would fail to appear subordinate to the host dwelling, rendering it incongruous in its appearance and harming the setting of the listed building.
9. I therefore find that the proposal would give rise to less than substantial harm to the setting of designated heritage assets and no public benefits have been advanced to outweigh this harm.
10. The proposal is contrary to Policy CS20 of the Adopted Core Strategy for Chiltern District and Policies GC1, H13, H18 and LB2 of the Adopted Chiltern District Local Plan which together require new development to be of a high standard of design which reflects and respects the character of the surrounding area, require proposals for dormer windows to respect the scale proportions, existing windows and other features of the external appearance of the roof and elevation in which they would be constructed; and in respect of the historic environment, will not grant planning permission for any development in the vicinity of a listed building which would adversely affect its setting.

Conclusion

11. Having regard to the above and all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR