
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 February 2022

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 21ST February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/21/3288937

53 Monument Lane, Chalfont St Peter, Bucks, SL9 0HY

- 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 S Dudman against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref PL/21/3209/FA, dated 10 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 5 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is a single storey front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey front extension at 53 Monument Lane, Chalfont St Peter, Bucks, SL9 0HY in accordance with the terms of the application Ref PL/21/3209/FA, dated 10 August 2021, subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule.

Main issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development: (a) on the character and appearance of its surroundings, and (b) on the living conditions of the residents of 51 Monuments Lane with specific reference to visual impact.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property is set within a pleasant residential street comprised of a variety of house types. It forms part a small group of bungalows, all well set back from the road, with spacious front gardens. The appeal property has been altered at the front so that it no longer has a front protrusion, common to the other bungalows.
4. Reference has been made to a previous appeal affecting this property¹. That appeal involved the erection of a garage to the front of the dwelling. I have not been provided with drawings of that proposal, so I am not been made aware of its precise siting or scale. However, it is described in the Inspector's report as having '*a significant bulk*', given its width and depth.
5. The proposed extension could not be described in similar terms. It would be clearly subservient in scale to the host property, and of a similar, matching

¹ Ref: APP/X0415/D/15/3033958 dated 19 August 2015

design. However, the Council's objection relates not so much to the detailed design of the extension, but that:

The resultant dwelling would be at variance with the bungalows within the row and it is considered that, by virtue of its size, siting and forward projection, the proposed front/side extension would be at odds with the prevailing character of the area and pattern of development and would appear as a highly intrusive feature within the street scene and out of keeping with the scale and design of the neighbouring bungalows.

6. The front extension would introduce a feature set forward of the front protrusions evident on the other bungalows in this group, but that to my mind is insufficient reason, in itself, to withhold permission. As previously explained, the property has a sizeable front garden, so that the extension could be comfortably accommodated without appearing cramped and without impinging harmfully on the current sense of spaciousness.
7. Moreover, from most vantage points when approaching from the south, the extension would barely be noticeable, since it would be so well screened by high mature hedges and trees. Front gardens are more open to the north, but even so, the modestly sized structure because of its set back siting, would not, in my view, catch the eye in such a manner that it could justifiably be described as 'highly intrusive'. In time, when viewed from this direction, the development, in my opinion, would appear acceptable in its visual context.
8. On balance, I am satisfied that, whilst the proposal may be regarded as unusual, it would not harm the character and appearance of the host property or its surroundings. Accordingly, I find no material conflict with those provisions of Policies GC1, H13 and H15 of the Chiltern District Local Plan 1997 (CDLP), Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District and the guidance provided in the Residential Extensions and Householder Development SPD, directed to promote good design and safeguard the visual amenity of the area.

Living conditions

9. The extension would project forward of 51 Monument Lane's front elevation by around 4m, and would be sited a distance of over a metre from the common boundary which is demarcated by a fence. The officer report on the application says:

By virtue of its close proximity, siting and forward projection, it is considered that the resultant dwelling would appear overbearing and visually intrusive when viewed from the front amenity area of No.51 Monument Lane.

10. The proposed extension would be clearly seen from No 51's front garden. However, judging from its layout and appearance, the front garden serves as a pleasant, lawned setting for the house rather than as an actively used amenity area. That function would not be impaired by the proposal, and I am content, particularly having regard to the extension's modest length and separation from the boundary, that it would not have the effects feared by the Council on No 51's occupants. Although not decisive in my considerations I note that the adjoining residents, on being consulted, did not object to the proposal at application stage.

11. I conclude that the development would not harm the living conditions of the residents of 51 Monument Lane. Accordingly, I find no conflict with the provisions of CDLP policies GC3, H13 and H14 designed to protect neighbouring amenities from the unacceptable effects of development proposals.

Conditions

12. The Council has suggested the impositions of conditions in the event of planning permission being granted. A condition identifying the approved plans is necessary in the interests of certainty. A condition relating to materials shall also be imposed in the interests of visual amenity.

Other matters

13. All other matters raised in the representations have been taken into account but no other matter is of such strength or significance as to outweigh the considerations that led me to my conclusion that the appeal should be allowed.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawings Ref JFP-ML-60 Rev C and JFP-ML-61.
3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.