
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/21/3287579

Edgerton, 40 Orchehill Avenue, Gerrards Cross, Bucks., SL9 8QJ

- 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 G Tressider against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref PL/21/2737/FA, dated 6 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 3 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is two-storey side, first floor side, and single storey front/side extensions; insertion of 1 front and 1 rear dormer in roof and erection of rear pergola.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matters

2. I have adopted the Council's description of the proposed development used in its decision notice in preference to that in the application form since it more completely describes the proposal.
3. Reference has been made to a previous appeal affecting the property¹. I conducted that appeal in 2016, so that I am reasonably familiar with the site and its surroundings.

Main issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings.

Reasons

5. The current scheme bears striking similarities to the previous scheme dismissed on appeal. As to the aspects where they differ, the Council raises no objection to the proposed pergola or the dormers, and I see no reason to object either. In respect of the proposed two storey extension at the north western end of the site, the appellants advise that in comparison with the proposal subject of the previous appeal, the roof's has been reduced and the eaves level has been reduced by 650mm.

¹ Ref: APP/X0415/D/15/3137253

6. In addition to the design modifications the appellants also argue that the Avenue's character has changed significantly since the previous appeal. Reference is made to several planning permissions for various forms of development, including extensions, new and replacement dwellings. The appellants have also produced street scene comparison drawings showing the appeal property in its context, and Nos 49-53 Orchehill Avenue.
7. These examples and illustrations are designed to persuade me that, in practice, the size of gaps between dwellings have been permitted to reduce in recent years. The appellants maintain that the street scene has changed since the previous appeal, with the Council's blessing.
8. The appellants draw particular attention to these recent decisions, since in the context of the application of policies H11 & H16² I had previously said:
I consider it desirable, so as to guard against the harmful erosion of the overall spacious character of the locality, that this policy guidance should be closely followed. The two-storey extension proposed would be perceived as harmfully elongating the bulk of the property virtually to its side boundary. The gap at first floor level, which would be established were the permitted scheme built, would be lost – to be replaced by solidity. Whilst acknowledging that the next dwelling to the west (No.44) is set further back in its plot than the appeal property, the overall perception that would be gained of the proposal, if built, would be that of a cramped overdevelopment and loss of spaciousness, harmful to the area's character.
9. Most elements of the currently proposed scheme are unobjectionable to me, and I do not share the Council's concerns about the detailed design of the extension to the north west. Indeed, I acknowledge the steps taken by the appellants to modify its roof in an attempt to reduce its visual impact. However, the amendments to the design alone are not such as to convince me that the basis of my previous objection to the two storey element of the scheme at this end of the site have been overcome.
10. In the context of the appellants' contention that the character of the street has changed significantly since the previous appeal, I note that two of the dwellings where recent development was approved are located well away from the appeal site around the corner, and could not realistically be said to form part of its visual context. As to Nos 43 – 51, they too are set away from the appeal site on the other side of the street, in a different visual context. Accordingly, I am not persuaded that the recent planning permissions granted by the Council have significantly altered the appeal property's visual context or the character of its immediate surroundings.
11. It should also be borne in mind that in making my previous assessment I took account of the presence of the infill development and extensions which had previously taken place.
12. I therefore conclude, as I did previously and for the same reasons, that the proposed two-storey extension proposed would materially erode and harm the spacious character of its surroundings. Accordingly, a clear conflict arises with those provisions of DLP policies GC1, H11 & H16 and policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (CS) that, in combination, encourage a high

² Of the Chiltern District Local Plan (DLP).

quality of design, especially in house extensions, and development that respects the street scene and local character.

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 dismissed.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR