

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 February 2022

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 FEBRUARY 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J0405/D/21/3287331

1 Springhill Road, Grendon Underwood HP18 0TG

- 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 Mrs C Hibbert against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01156/APP, dated 19 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is for two storey side and rear extensions, erection of a 2m closeboarded fence and resurfacing of driveway.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I note that on validation the Council revised the description of the proposed development to include the erection of a 2m closeboarded fence and resurfacing of the driveway. This provides a more accurate description of the proposal and therefore I have included it within the banner heading above.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located at a junction within Springhill Road where residential development deviates away from the main access to HMP Grendon Springhill. It is in a quite prominent location and whilst I noted on my site visit that a number of houses in similar locations have been extended in the past, these tend to be simpler in their design and scale.
5. The proposal comprises a number of component parts which would give it a jumbled appearance and would be of a size that would lack subordination to the host dwelling. Whilst I consider that the existing gap to its side provides little value to the aesthetics of the street scene, nonetheless being in close proximity to the north-western boundary, the proposal would appear cramped; notwithstanding that space would be retained within the curtilage to the front and rear.

6. I acknowledge that the proposal would not amount to an over-development of the plot per se and I have been given no substantive reason to doubt the figures and percentages that the appellant has provided in respect of the ratio of built footprint to undeveloped land. However whilst I accept that the gable ends facing the road and the rear would be lower and set back from the front of the property, the variety of component parts would cause it to appear incongruent and it would not match the street scene, due to the fact that the majority of houses within the locality are of a very simple design and form. I say this notwithstanding the staggering of ridge lines due to the fall in the road.
7. I note references to the General Permitted Development Order, however, it is for me to determine the proposal that is before me and in the absence of any fall-back scheme being tabled, I afford such considerations limited weight. I note the specific examples of extensions that have been permitted by Aylesbury Vale District Council in the past, however ultimately, each case must be assessed on its own merits. I therefore find that the proposed extensions by reason of their size, design and siting would give rise to harm to the character and appearance of the area.
8. With regard to the proposed 2m high fences, there exists a high conifer hedge that does little for the character and appearance of the street scene and I note that closeboarded fences are common place within the area. As has been demonstrated by the closeboarded fence that has been erected along the side of the rear garden boundary, they can be of a smart appearance and therefore I consider that this aspect of the proposal would be acceptable with it neither causing an overbearing or visually intrusive form of development.
9. However, my finding on the fence does not outweigh the harm that I consider would be caused by the proposed extensions and I find that the proposal would be contrary to Policy BE2 of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (2021) which stipulates that all new development proposals shall respect and complement a number of criteria, including the physical characteristics of the site and its surroundings.

Conclusion

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

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR