

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 June 2022

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 June 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/D/22/3293751

3 Fox Field, Hazlemere HP15 7AQ

- 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 and Mrs Lowe against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref 21/07746/FUL, dated 11 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 15 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is a part single and part two storey side/rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the house and the local area.

Reasons

3. 3 Fox Field is a semi-detached house on a corner plot within a suburban residential area, fronting onto Fox Field whereas the other half of the pair fronts Cedar Avenue. The proposal is to build a part single storey/part 2 storey extension across much of the Fox Field frontage, wrapping around to also form a 2 storey extension to the side farthest away from Cedar Avenue.
4. The Council's Householder Planning and Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) advises that front extensions will be highly visible in the street scene, so particular care should be taken to ensure that they do not detract from the appearance of the dwelling or the general character of the street.
5. The existing house is of a relatively simple rectangular form, with 2 end gables. An important aspect of its design is that it has habitable room windows facing both Fox Field and Cedar Avenue, creating interest and aiding in surveillance of both streets. The proposal would substantially complicate the structure. The form of the 2 storey element including its hipped roof and forward projection would make it look slightly detached from the rest of the building. The single storey element would block out much of the existing front wall. The extension, though fairly large in scale, would only have a door and 2 small ground floor

windows facing Fox Field. This would detract from the existing front elevation, giving the building a much more defensive, closed off appearance.

6. The proposal would therefore be a somewhat disjointed and awkward design that would fail to complement the existing building and street scene. I note that some other 2 storey front extensions have been built in the local area. Only one of these, at 12 The Warren, seems at all similar to this proposal. Even in that case, however, the extensions seem to be better integrated into the form of the building and maintain a much better frontage to The Warren. None of these other extensions alter the character of the area in such a way as to make the appeal proposal fit in well.
7. I conclude that the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the house and the local area. It therefore conflicts with the aims of Policies CP9, DM35 and DM36 of the Wycombe District Local Plan and the SPD, to ensure that new development is of high quality design and that extensions respect the character and appearance of the existing property.
8. I have also taken account of the other points raised by the appellant. In particular I recognise the appellant's reasonable wish to improve the standard of accommodation at No 3, but this is insufficient to override my concerns about the design matters raised in connection with the key issue.
9. I have furthermore taken into account the concerns raised by a neighbour. The proposed side extension would be close to a dining room window at 72 Cedar Avenue, but its height would only step up further away from that house, so that the extension would not have a significant effect on No 72's light to or outlook. There may be a minor but important discrepancy in the plans, as pointed out by a neighbour, but this could likely have been resolved if the proposal was otherwise acceptable.
10. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR