



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 August 2022

By A. J. Boughton MA (IPSD) Dip.Arch. Dip.(Conservation) RIBA MRTPI
an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2ND September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/N0410/D/22/3301296

49 Seeleys Road, Beaconsfield HP9 1TB

- 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 Arundel against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref: PL/22/0298/FA dated 26 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 28 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage, two storey side extension with single storey extension to the rear, new materials to existing dwelling, new porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing garage, two storey side extension with single storey extension to the rear, new materials to existing dwelling, new porch in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: PL/22/0298/FA dated 26 January 2022, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The works authorised by this consent 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: DrgNo.10_21 Rev:E; DrgNo.10_10 Rev:C; DrgNo.10_11 Rev C.

Main Issue

2. On 6 June 2022 the Council approved proposals identical to those which are the subject of this appeal save only in respect of the facing materials to be employed (the June permission)¹. There being no dispute between the parties other than this, the main issue is, accordingly:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area with particular regard to the external facing materials employed

Reasons:

3. 49 Seeleys Road (No.49) sits within a well-defined area of evocatively suburban mid-late twentieth-century housing featuring low-pitched roofs using flat concrete interlocking tiles and a horizontal emphasis in use of materials or fenestration. The Seeleys Road Area of Special Character identified in the

¹ Application No. PL/22/1109/FA dated 29 March 2022.

Chiltern and South Bucks Townscape Character Study SPD (Character Study) associates the special character of this area with a 'consistent material palette of red and yellow brick and timber cladding'.

4. The justification which appears to direct the contrasting decisions of the Council at the appeal site relates only to the introduction of 'brick' upper gables in the June permission in substitute for full height render appearing on the elevations in the earlier proposal here appealed².
5. Given the significance attached to the use of materials by their refusal it is surprising that the Council appears content to rely upon generic terms such as 'brick' and 'timber effect cladding' without further clarification as to the qualities and appearance of those materials referred to and it is notable that Condition 2 of the June permission lacks precision as to definition of the 'type and quality' or colour of the brick to be employed on the newly introduced gable. Similarly it is apparent that many houses in this character area have replaced original materials including 'timber cladding' with modern alternatives not available at the date of original construction, most likely doing so on grounds of performance or durability. These include composite materials of differing colours (noting existing glossy plastic shiplap profile on No.49) and aluminium or UPVC windows.
6. Such changes reflect what may happen in the normal course of maintenance and repair over decades since original construction and I have nothing before me to suggest the Council have sought to prevent what has taken place, over time, to affect the appearance of houses adjacent, opposite the appeal site and elsewhere in the estate. Against that background it would be unduly onerous to prevent a use of render (found in other parts of the estate) which could facilitate, for instance, improved thermal performance of this unlisted building.
7. Policy EP3 (e) of The South Bucks District Local Plan (March 1999) (SBLP) requires amongst other things that external materials in new developments should be of a 'type and quality which harmonise with the materials of the surrounding development'. However, given the variety of material used in the area I find little justification for the distinction made between what the Council have already approved (the June permission) and the basis of refusal for the matter here appealed.
8. Overall the proposed appearance of the dwelling would not detract from the character and appearance of the dwelling or the surrounding area and would not be inconsistent with the objectives of the policies identified as to harmonising with the materials of the surrounding development.
9. I therefore conclude there is no conflict with the development plan³ and that in consequence the appeal should succeed subject to appropriate conditions.

Andrew Boughton

INSPECTOR

² Drawing No. 10_21 Revision G.

³ On 1 April 2020 Buckinghamshire Council was formed through the amalgamation of the four former Buckinghamshire District Councils including South Bucks. The application was therefore determined by the new Buckinghamshire Council. Nevertheless, all of the planning policies set out in the decision notice remain extant and relevant to this appeal.