

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 October 2022

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/D/22/3304388

1 Fairfield Close, Bourne End, SL8 5PX

- 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 L Green against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council (Wycombe Area).
 - The application Ref 21/06638/FUL, dated 24 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is raising roof to incorporate new first floor and single storey wrap around side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The appellant states that, over the course of the planning application, he experienced long and significant delays to the determining of the scheme; that the Council's advice was inconsistent; and that he felt aggrieved at the Council's consideration of an objection to the proposal. These are matters between the appellant and the Council.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and its effect on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers with regards to privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a detached bungalow with a gable roof. The bungalow is of modest appearance and draws little attention to itself in its surroundings. It has a detached garage behind a parking area to the front of the house and an attached side/rear conservatory.
 5. The appeal property is set within a relatively small garden plot, with narrow gardens to either side of the dwelling and a larger garden area to the rear. The dwelling forms part of a small cul-de-sac accessed from Wendover Road, a short distance to the east.
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6. The surrounding area is residential. It is largely characterised by the presence of detached two storey modern dwellings, to the north, east and west of the appeal property, set within garden plots and by that of semi-detached period properties, to the south of the appeal property, with gardens to the side and rear.
7. During my site visit, I observed there to be a significant sense of greenery and spaciousness, afforded by the considerable presence of comfortable garden plots, hedgerows, occasional trees and planting. Resultantly, dwellings tend to appear “nestled” within green and spacious surroundings.
8. The proposed development would transform the existing small bungalow into a large and prominent one and two storey property. In so doing, I find that the proposal would introduce a tall and visually bulky new main roof, along with a tall single storey element with a high flat roof. This single storey extension would exceed the eaves height of the existing bungalow and would, due to its scale and flat-roofed design, appear as a bulky and awkward addition.
9. The harm arising from the above would be exacerbated as a result of the proposed development being of such an overall scale as to fail to appear subservient to the host property. Rather, it would overwhelm the appearance of the existing dwelling. Further, the mass and bulk of the proposal would appear disproportionately large within and would unduly dominate, the appeal property’s modest garden plot, leading it to appear, to some considerable extent, “squeezed-in.”
10. As a consequence of this, the proposal would draw the eye as an incongruous feature within an area characterised by dwellings set within comfortable garden plots. It would appear awkward and would detract from the surrounding area’s identified attributes.
11. Taking the above into account, I find that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework; to Local Plan¹ Policies CP1, CP9, DM35 and DM36; and to the Council’s Householder Planning and Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2020), which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Living conditions

12. The proposal would include a number of windows at first floor level facing out towards surrounding dwellings. However, whilst these windows would inevitably result in some increase in overlooking and perceived overlooking, this would generally be from oblique rather than direct angles and would be from some considerable distance from the windows of neighbouring properties. It would also be within an area where some degree of overlooking already exists.
13. Given the above, I find that the proposal would not result in significant harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, with regards to privacy and in this respect would not be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework; or to Local Plan² Policies CP9 and DM35, which together amongst other things,

¹ Reference: Wycombe District Local Plan (2019).

² Reference: Wycombe District Local Plan (2019).

seek to protect residential amenity. However, the absence of significant harm in this regard does not mitigate the identified harm to local character and hence the decision below.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR