



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2022 by M Long BA (Hons)

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/D/22/3303482

**1 Hilltop Cottages, Treadaway Road, Flackwell Heath, Buckinghamshire
HP10 9PX**

- 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 Ekendahl against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref 22/06119/FUL, dated 22 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 28 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is a hip to gable roof extension, two rear dormer windows and a front rooflight to facilitate a loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of The Common Flackwell Heath Conservation Area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The site is located in The Common Flackwell Heath Conservation Area which predominantly derives its significance from its variety of historic buildings and their arrangement around a triangular plan of roads. The appeal site is a two-storey dwelling located at the end of a terrace of three properties which are characterised by a sense of uniformity. In particular, the terrace has a hipped roof that appears to be in its original form which contributes to visual balance and symmetry across the properties. The terrace is orientated side on to the main road so that both the front and rear roof slopes are visible from the public realm; the appeal dwelling is located closest to this road and therefore has the most prominent position.
5. The proposed development is a hip to gable roof extension. The extension would accommodate two dormer windows on the rear roof slope. The dormers would be set in from the eaves and sides and down from the ridgeline. The proposal would also install a rooflight to the front-facing roof slope. The proposed external materials would match those used on the existing house.

6. The hip to gable conversion would substantially alter the roof form of the main dwelling and therefore would not preserve the symmetry of the terrace's roofscape. As a result, the terrace's roof form would appear unbalanced, to the detriment of its character and appearance. The addition of two dormers would also be discordant features that would further reduce the sense of uniformity that characterises these three terraced properties. Given the prominent position of the terrace, particularly the appeal dwelling, and the clear public views of both the front and rear roof slopes, the proposal would be viewed as an unsympathetic addition to the wider streetscene. Although the proposed materials would relate to the existing dwelling, this would not mitigate the harm that would arise from the scheme's overall design.
7. While the Conservation Area Character Survey 1995 identifies a number of buildings around the War Memorial to the south-west of the site as an important grouping, the Conservation Area boundary includes Hilltop Cottages which also contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area. In particular, the Character Survey notes a significant view from the north-east along Treadaway Road, which the appeal dwelling forms a prominent part of. This document states that to preserve and enhance the appearance and special character of the Conservation Area special care must be taken to ensure that views looking into and out of the hamlet are not spoilt. Given the harmful visual impact of the proposed scheme, there would be conflict with this aim.
8. While similar schemes may be possible under permitted development rights on properties outside of conservation areas, I must consider the appeal scheme on the basis of its individual planning considerations, including how it would impact the character of the Conservation Area of which it would form part of. The appeal dwelling benefits from being viewed in the wider context of a visually balanced terrace. Therefore, the proposal would detract from the appearance of both the wider terrace and the appeal dwelling itself. Given the prominence of the terrace and its contribution to key views in the Conservation Area, the proposal would also harm the character of the Conservation Area.
9. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention is paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Due to the limited scale of the proposal, the extent of the development's harm to The Common Flackwell Heath Conservation Area, as a designated heritage asset, would be less than substantial. In such circumstances, paragraph 202 of the Framework indicates that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. However, no substantive benefits have been put forward to outweigh the harm that would be caused to the Conservation Area, a matter to which I give great weight in line with the Framework.
10. Given the above, the proposed scheme would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of The Common Flackwell Heath Conservation Area. As such, it would be contrary to the Wycombe District Local Plan, adopted August 2019, specifically Policies CP9 and DM31 which collectively seek to ensure that development conserves the historic environment. There would be conflict with Policy DM35 which requires development to demonstrate attractive and high quality design and appropriate character in the spaces around them, as well as Policy DM36 which requires extensions to respect the character and appearance of the existing property and surrounding area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. The proposed development would not accord with the development plan, when considered as a whole. Based on the above, and having regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Long

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

K Taylor

INSPECTOR