
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2022

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/22/3302863

61 Mount Pleasant, Aspley Guise, Milton Keynes MK17 8JX

- 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 S Graham against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref CB/22/00291/FULL, dated 25 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is single storey front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey detached dwelling with a gabled roof and single storey flat roofed detached garage to the side.
4. It is located in a mature well-established residential area with a mixture of properties of varied styles and design. The appeal site is situated in a row of detached properties set back from the road behind a front garden/driveway on relatively spacious landscaped plots, which adds to the open and verdant character and appearance of the area. This is further enhanced by the presence of mature landscaping and established trees within the surrounding gardens.
5. The appeal proposal would involve the construction of single storey extension that would project out about 7m from the front of the property. It would be set back from the public highway behind a high mature hedge and fence along the front of the site and stepped down with a flat roof with a central glazed lantern.
6. The appeal property is on a relatively spacious plot and as such the extension would not appear overlarge, relative to the overall plot size. Equally, the closing of the gap between the front elevation of the appeal property and the adjacent public highway would not appear out of character. From my site visit I noted a number of properties in the road appear to have been built up to the front boundaries or in close proximity to such. The reduced space between the extended property and the adjacent public highway would be offset to some

degree by the boundary treatment along the front of the appeal property and the different styles and set back distances of the properties in the area.

7. The scale and form of the proposed single storey extension built in the front of the main house would nevertheless still be a significant addition relative to the main property. As such, although set back and stepped down, the proposed single storey extension coupled with the flat roof design, would result in additional bulk at the front of the main dwelling that would be out of character with the more modest scale, form and appearance of the host property.
8. The consequential harm would not in my view be sufficiently resolved by the limited effect of the proposed extension on the street scene. In any case, the proposal would be visible from the surrounding properties. The proposed front extension, by virtue of its scale, siting and design, would fail to achieve an appropriate degree of subordination to the host property and would detract from its architectural integrity. As such, I consider that the proposed extension would result in an incongruous and out-of-keeping addition that would cause unacceptable harm to the host property and the area.
9. I have considered the appellants arguments that the design and layout of the proposed extension have been carefully considered in order to take into account the character of the host property and to minimise any impacts on the area. I also note the main parties comments regarding the hedge along the front boundary of the site. However, whilst the use of matching materials, fenestrations and boundary treatment would assist in integrating the proposal with the host property and the area, these aspects do not overcome the adverse effects outlined above.
10. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to the aims of Policy HQ1 of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2021 and the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide 2014 which, amongst other things, require development proposals to be of the highest quality that relate well to the existing local surroundings and enhance or reinforce the distinctiveness and character of the area. In addition, the proposal would not accord with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) that developments should seek to secure a high quality of design (paragraph 126) that are sympathetic to the local character (paragraph 130).

Other Matters

11. I have noted the other developments in the area drawn to my attention by the appellants. However, the various garages with flat roofs associated with the properties within the surrounding area have different development characteristics to the appeal scheme. In any event, each proposal falls to be assessed primarily on its own merits and I am unaware of the full circumstances associated with these other cases.
12. I note the appellants comments regarding the context provided in the Framework for need for flexibility and good design, but I find that the development does not achieve the standards the Framework seeks.
13. I have considered the appellants comments regarding the lack of formal objections from the neighbours or Aspley Guise Parish Council to the appeal proposal. Whilst this maybe so, this does not preclude the proper planning

assessment of the impact of the proposal on the host property and the area and is not a determinative factor on its own.

14. I note the appellants comments regarding the various benefits arising from the proposal including the scheme's high quality design and to create additional accommodation to meet the needs of the appellants. While I have given them some weight, these benefits would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified. For all these reasons, there are no other material considerations to outweigh the development plan conflicts identified.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Troy

INSPECTOR