



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 July 2023 by Ifeanyi Chukwujekwu BSc MSc MRTPI MIEMA CEnv

Decision by Martin Seaton BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/J0405/D/23/3319566

1 The Green, Nash, Buckinghamshire MK17 0EN

- 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 Hodgkins against the decision of the Council of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref 22/03931/APP, dated 22 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is two storey side and rear extension with internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the building and the surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The existing property is a two-storey traditional cottage located within a sizeable plot on The Green, which is a private road accessed via Winslow Road in Nash. The cottage is constructed mainly of stone with a slate roof and wooden sash windows. The property has been extended and altered over time with a single storey rear extension. Nevertheless, it has a simple linear form.
5. The building is mostly screened from the road and neighbouring properties by mature planting and the surrounding area is predominantly residential. The distinctive character of The Green is derived predominantly from traditional cottages within sizeable plots surrounded by open green space and mature vegetation.
6. The appellant has drawn my attention to a planning permission granted on 6th October 2020 (LPA ref: 20/01617/APP) for a two-storey side extension and part two storey, part single storey rear extension to the property. Furthermore,

the appellant has indicated on the proposed plans submitted with the appeal the extent of the previously approved, and still extant scheme.

7. Whilst the appellant has not explicitly referred to it as such, there is no evidence before me to suggest that the extant planning permission represents anything other than a realistic fallback position in the event that the appeal scheme was to be dismissed. Although the weight to be ascribed to the extant scheme as a material consideration is a matter for the decision-maker, in this instance there would seem to be no reason why the previously approved scheme would not be implemented, and therefore I attach significant weight to the previous approval as a material consideration. In effect, the extent of development approved by the previous scheme represents a baseline for assessment of the current appeal proposal.
8. It is noted from the Council's planning officer report that amended plans were submitted for the above-mentioned scheme, which reduced the bulk of the extensions to the rear. It was these amendments that were considered acceptable; hence the scheme was approved. Nevertheless, I note that the appeal proposal has returned to a position where it is significantly larger in footprint and volume than the previously approved scheme.
9. The proposal would increase the building footprint by more than half and would also increase its quantitative volume. The development would overwhelm and dominate the traditional character of the dwelling. It would not appear subservient to the host dwelling as the rear element would present as an almost parallel structure of similar size.
10. The appellant argues that the development is, essentially, replacing the existing two storey and single storey rear 1960's addition to the dwelling. However, it is evident that the combined extensions as proposed would be significantly larger than the existing property, including these highlighted additions and would result in a significant overall increase in floorspace and volume over and above the size of the host dwelling. The proposals would represent a disproportionate addition which would be harmful to the host dwelling by virtue of its dominance.
11. This visual juxtaposition of the proposed extensions would awkwardly contrast with the linear form of the host dwelling and to the prevailing pattern of development within the local area. It would present a muddled building form and a substantial part of the original dwelling would be obscured by the extension. It would thus diminish the contribution the host property makes to the character of the area.
12. It is acknowledged that the proposal would only be partially visible to the passers-by at brief intervals on The Green. However, the character of the area comprises of all spaces whether publicly visible or not. The requirement for good design is not limited to elements visible from public vantage points. Thus, this would not outweigh the harm which the proposed extension would have on the existing building.
13. The proposal would, therefore, by virtue of its scale, bulk, massing and design harm the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and consequently the surrounding area. As such it would be contrary to policy BE2 of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) 2013-2023 (Adopted September 2021) as supported by the Aylesbury Vale District Council Design Guide-Residential

Extensions (amended 2013), which amongst other aims, requires that proposals for new development should respect and complement the physical characteristics of the site and its surroundings including the scale and context of the site and its setting.

14. For similar reasons, the proposal would be contrary to the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021, including Paragraph 130 which indicates the developments should be visually attractive and be sympathetic to the local character of the surrounding built environment.

Other considerations

15. I acknowledge that the proposal would provide socioeconomic benefits with regard to the provision of a family-sized home to replace the existing dwelling, which the appellant contends is also in a poor condition and unsuitable for modern comfortable living. However, whilst I accept that the provision of a family-sized home would attract some limited weight, I can see no justification linking by necessity the improvement of the condition of the existing dwelling to the scale of the proposed works.
16. The appellant also suggests sustainability benefits would be achieved, as consideration is being given to the installation of solar panels and water harvesting tanks at the time of construction. However, these measures do not form an integral part of the plans and no means of securing them as a benefit has been suggested. I therefore attribute only very limited weight to this suggestion.

Conclusion and Recommendation

17. The proposal would adversely impact the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area. Given this, the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the NPPF, which outweigh this finding.
18. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Ifeanyi Chukwujekwu

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

19. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's recommendation and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Seaton

INSPECTOR