



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 September 2023

by A Wright BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/U2235/D/23/3317997

Upper Boy Court Farm, Boy Court Lane, Headcorn, Kent TN27 9LA

- 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 Bardsley against the decision of Maidstone Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/504804/FULL, dated 4 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is a two storey rear extension and internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The submitted plans show an extension which has an extant planning permission that has not yet been built (planning application ref 22/501188/FULL). For the avoidance of doubt, I have considered the appeal on the basis of the additional proposed extension above that shown on the existing/consented plans but have had regard to the previous permission in my decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the countryside.

Reasons

4. The site comprises a two-storey detached dwelling located in a sizeable plot at the end of a rural lane within the countryside. There is some sparse development in this part of the lane, and the site is largely surrounded by fields. The original house has been previously extended and there are also outbuildings within the grounds. There are some hedges and trees within the site and tree belts beyond it to the rear.
5. The proposal is for a two-storey, double gable rear extension which would significantly enlarge the size of the existing dwelling. The gable walls would extend above the existing rear walls on this elevation and the roof would have ridgelines only slightly lower than the existing house, with the same height eaves. The development would extend across much of the rear of the house, obscuring most of this façade of the property. Further, the proposed projection would be almost the same as the depth of the existing house. Overall, the scale, height and form of the proposed development would not be subordinate

to the existing dwelling and would result in a bulky, dominant, and discordant addition to the host property.

6. The site is not affected by any landscape or heritage designations and the extension would not alter the topography or cause harm to landscape features. Whilst there are hedges and trees on the site and in the wider area, these would only partially screen the proposal and could be removed, become damaged or diseased and may only provide screening in the spring and summer months.
7. The proposed development would occupy a limited amount of the curtilage and maintain space to the boundaries. However, due to its size, the extension would overwhelm the form of the existing dwelling in short and long range views and harm the openness of the countryside.
8. The effect of the proposal would be exacerbated when combined with the rear extension which has extant planning permission. The length of the two developments combined would be approximately 24m, significantly more than the existing house. The two extensions would be a prominent feature at the rear, with the existing property barely evident.
9. Consequently, I conclude that the development would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the countryside. It would be contrary to Policies SP17, DM1, DM30 and DM32 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2017. Together, these require developments in the countryside to not harm the character and appearance of the area, with extensions required to be of a scale which relates sympathetically to the existing dwelling and rural area, amongst other things. It would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which requires decisions to recognise the intrinsic character of the countryside and development to be sympathetic to local character.
10. The proposal would also fail to comply with the Council's Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2009 where it sets out that extensions to dwellings in the countryside should be modest in size, subservient to the original dwelling and should not overwhelm or destroy its original form.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the Framework, that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

A Wright BSc (Hons) MRTPI

INSPECTOR