

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 August 2023

by J Bell-Williamson MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Z1510/D/23/3324428

Mannings Farm, Dawes Hall Road, White Colne, Essex CO6 2QH

- 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 Paul Shadbolt against the decision of Braintree District Council.
 - The application Ref 23/00883/HH, dated 12 April 2023, was refused by notice dated 8 June 2023.
 - The development proposed is 'demolition of existing extension and construction of new extension. The newer extension is more in keeping with the original dwelling and will give the family additional bedrooms so that all the family can live in the house. The new extension will be thermally efficient and reduce the carbon footprint of the dwelling. The extension will be high quality and use traditional finishes'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is in a rural location, surrounded by open countryside and outside defined settlement boundaries.
 4. Policies LPP47 and LPP52 of the Braintree District Local Plan 2013-2033 Section 2 (2022), concerning the built environment and layout and design, require a high standard of design in all new development. Policy LPP36 concerning residential alterations and extensions requires that their design, siting, bulk, form and materials should be compatible with the original dwelling and character of the area.
 5. The original dwelling is a two storey brick-built farmhouse, with a rectangular plan form, of traditional character and appearance. Later additions are in the form of a modest conservatory to one side of the property's front elevation and a single storey, full width extension with a mono-pitch roof to the rear. I note and agree with the parties' views that the proposal is a rear extension and that the front of the property would remain unchanged.
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6. The proposal involves the replacement of the existing rear extension by a large part two and part single storey extension. However, the depth of the two-storey central gable together with the additional side-facing gable would be substantive when set against the modest scale of the original building. As such, the depth and overall extent of the new development would add considerable bulk and mass and, therefore, would be disproportionate additions, which would materially alter the original built form of the dwelling.
7. With regard to the rear elevation, the single storey elements would not integrate effectively with the central gable feature due to their asymmetrical design and high eaves adjoining the two storey pitched roof. Furthermore, the extensive glazing would be incongruous given the more traditional and smaller casement windows to the other elevations. As such, this feature would pay little regard to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. Similarly, the overall extent of the composite cladding would appear incongruous and uncharacteristic against the brickwork of the original dwelling. Consequently, the proposal would fail to comply with the requirements of the policies referred to above.
8. Taking these findings as a whole, therefore, the overall size of the extension would be disproportionate to the scale of the original building and its design would pay little regard to its character and appearance. Despite the open surroundings, I accept that the appeal building may not be readily visible from public viewpoints. However, the relevant development plan policies do not make such a distinction concerning their requirements for good design and, therefore, this is not sufficient reason to set aside the above findings of material harm.
9. I acknowledge that the proposal would be more environmentally sustainable than the existing extension and the contention that the current extension is poorly constructed. I acknowledge also that the proposal is intended to create additional living space. However, these matters do not overcome the harm and conflict with development plan policies that I have found would result from the proposal.
10. Reference is also made by the appellants to their consideration of alternative options raised by the Council. However, this matter cannot have a direct bearing on the appeal decision as I am required to consider the proposal as submitted on its planning merits.
11. Accordingly, for the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Consequently, it is contrary to Policies LPP36, LPP47 and LPP52 of the Braintree District Local Plan 2013-2033 Section 2, as described above. It is also contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, which promotes well-designed places.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given it is concluded that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Bell-Williamson

INSPECTOR