



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 October 2023 by Darren Ellis MPlan MRTPI

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/23/3319896

**Moorhen Cottage, Craddock Drive, Leighton Buzzard, Central Bedfordshire
LU7 3BW**

- 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 Michael Hunt against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref CB/22/04156/FULL, dated 24 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 22 February 2023.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing garage, conservatory, dormer and side extension. Erection of single, double storey and first floor extensions, including
 - attached garage.
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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 main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal property comprises a two-storey and fairly simply designed detached dwelling set in a large plot. The properties on Craddock Drive are detached bungalows or two-storey dwellings with a range of designs and materials. The scale and land take of local dwellings also varies.
 5. The Council has calculated that the proposed extensions would result in an increase of 66% to the footprint and 61% to the floor area from the building's original size. These figures are not contested by the appellant. The size of the extended dwelling would not be dissimilar to other properties in the street.
 6. While such an increase in footprint and floor area alone may not result in an addition being disproportionate to others, there is a strong feel of the proposed works being disproportionate to the building itself. In the case of the projection of the extensions over ground and first floor, the original house would be almost entirely subsumed. What would result, in regard to the single storey
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lean to extensions to the front and the multiple new first floor gables to the rear in particular, is something that would appear more as a row or group of houses than an individual one. The eventual design would lack cohesiveness in this respect and lead to a noticeable disfunction of form overall.

7. The extensions would visually dominate the building and lack the subservience one would expect. I appreciate that the lack of subservience alone would not amount to harm per se, but combined with the other characteristics of the scheme as I have assessed them, they do not strike me as contributing sufficiently to the high quality design requirements of the development plan, specifically Policy HQ1 of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2021 and section 7 of the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide 2014, which both seek to ensure that development is of a high-quality design that responds positively to its context.
8. While the existing boundary treatments prevent views of the ground floor of the house from the street, the first floor and roof remain in view. As such the extent of the works would be visible in the street. Despite the variety in design of the properties therein, the proposed extensions would be unsympathetic, detracting from the character and appearance of the host dwelling and by association the area. They would accordingly conflict with the aforementioned policies, the aims of which I have set out. For the same reasons, the proposals would also fail to accord with the design aims of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and the National Design Guide.

Other Matters

9. It has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the enhanced thermal efficiency of the proposals could not be achieved in a way that does not cause the harm identified. As such I afford these benefits limited weight. The proposals would be finished in brickwork to match the original property, with the first floor in render. None of these would appear out of place in isolation and suitable materials would in any case be expected with a scheme to extend a dwelling. I am not however led to recommending allowing the appeal in their light for the reasons I have set out.

Conclusion

10. The proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight which indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance therewith. I therefore recommend the appeal be dismissed.

Darren Ellis

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

11. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis I dismiss the appeal.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR