



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 April 2024

by Ian McHugh DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14.05.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/24/3336464

56 Manor Road, Barton-Le-Clay, Bedford, MK45 4NP

- 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 Gregory Shelock against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref CB/23/01659/FULL, dated 17 May 2023, was refused by notice dated 24 October 2023.
 - The development proposed is 2 x two storey side extensions, one and a half storey front extension and raising roof ridge.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of both the appeal property and the area; and the effect on the living conditions of the occupants of number 58 Manor Road, with regard to outlook.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property is a detached 'chalet style' dwelling with ground and first-floor accommodation, including a dormer at the rear. It is situated in a residential area, where dwellings in the locality are mixed in terms of their age, scale and appearance. A number of the existing dwellings have been altered and extended in various ways. I was able to view some of the extended properties during my site visit, including a large extension at number 61 Manor Road.
4. The proposal is to construct extensions as described in the heading above. It would significantly alter the character and appearance of the dwelling and it would take on the appearance and scale of a traditional two storey dwelling. The proposed extensions include a one and a half storey front extension that would project forward of the property by approximately 5.5m. That extension would contain a garage and wc on the ground floor with a bathroom and en-suite above.
5. The Council considers that the proposal would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of both the appeal property and the area due to its scale and design. The decision notice makes particular reference to the impact

of the projecting front extension. The Council states that the proposal conflicts with Policy HQ1 of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2021. This policy seeks (amongst other things) to ensure that the design of new development, including extensions, is of high quality and responds positively to its surroundings. It requires the scale, massing and appearance of a proposal to relate well to its surroundings.

6. The Council also refers to a conflict with Section 11 of the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide 2023 and with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (The Framework). Paragraph 135 of The Framework also seeks high quality design and for development to be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character, whilst The Design Guide advises that extensions should be subservient and not dominate the existing building. In reaching my decision, I accept that the Design Guide is for guidance only and that it will not necessarily apply to all proposals.
7. It is clear that the scale and overall mass of the extension could not be described as being subservient to the existing dwelling. Furthermore, the character and appearance of the property would change significantly. However, whilst in that regard, the proposal would conflict with the Local Plan and the Council's Design Guide, I am not persuaded that the property could not be extended in a sympathetic manner, even though its appearance and character would change as a result. As stated above, the character and appearance of this part of Manor Road is mixed and large extension would not always be unacceptable.
8. However, I do share the Council's concerns over the projecting front extension. Although the front of the dwelling is currently screened by trees and other vegetation, the side of the front extension would be clearly visible when viewed from the east across the front of the neighbouring property, number 58 Manor Road. It would appear as an incongruous and bulky addition that would fail to blend in with its surroundings and it would be out of character with its surroundings, where features of this scale are uncommon. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the provisions of the Local Plan, The Framework and the Council's Design Guide, as referred to above.

Living Conditions

9. Policy HQ1 of the LP also states that development should not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of nearby uses. This is also reflected in the Council's Design Guide, which states in paragraph 11.18.1 that care needs to be taken to ensure that the design of an extension does not cause harm to the living conditions and amenity of neighbours. Paragraph 11.33.1 of the Design Guide also states that extensions should not be overbearing to neighbours. Furthermore, paragraph 135 of The Framework states that planning decisions should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
10. The proposed front extension would be positioned close to the side boundary with number 58 Manor Road. Whilst the closest part of number 58 is an attached single storey garage and the extension would not breach a line drawn at 45 degrees from the neighbouring windows, the mass, height and length of the proposed front extension would still appear overbearing and oppressive to the occupiers of number 58. Accordingly, the proposal would conflict with the

provisions of the Local Plan, The Framework and the Council's Design Guide, as referred to above.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, it is concluded that the appeal be dismissed.

Ian McHugh

INSPECTOR