



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 January 2025

by Eleni Marshall BSc (hons) MSc FRICS FAAV MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/24/3350463

1 Eyeworth Road, Wrestlingworth, Central Bedfordshire, SG19 2HG

- 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 Goodenough against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application reference is CB/24/01372/FULL.
 - The development proposed is single and 2-storey side and rear extensions with associated internal alterations (resubmission with reductions applied).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for single and 2-storey side and rear extensions with associated internal alterations (resubmission with reductions applied) at 1 Eyeworth Road, Wrestlingworth, Central Bedfordshire, SG19 2HG Ref: CB/24/01372/FULL and the plans submitted with it subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission;
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: JJ24-001 sheet 001 Rev E (proposed floor plans and elevations), JJ24-001 003 Rev A and JJ24-001 sheet 002 (location and block plans);
 - 3) The materials utilised within the development hereby permitted shall match those utilised within the existing dwelling. The materials will be maintained for the lifetime of the development and any changes shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority;
 - 4) The first-floor windows in the side (eastern) elevation of the development hereby permitted shall be permanently fitted with obscured glass of a type to substantially restrict vision through them at all times and shall be non-opening, unless the parts of the windows which can be opened are more than 1.7m above the floor of the rooms in which the windows are installed. No further windows or other openings shall be formed in the first-floor eastern elevation.

Procedural Matters

2. The National Planning Policy Framework was revised on 12 December 2024 since both the determination of this proposal and the submission of this appeal; however, the key changes are not considered to impact upon the determination of this appeal in relation to the main issue noted below. In addition, the refusal reason before me is based upon policies within the Local Plan.

3. I note that the Council have submitted a letter, dated 18 September 2024, on the basis that the appellant has submitted an appeal statement. Submission of such a document is due to the requirement for an appellant to set out their statement of case and why they are appealing. Given that the appeal is a householder appeal no further information, such as the Council's response to the appellant's statement of case, should have been submitted as part of this process. I have, however, taken into account the Council's suggested conditions in the event the appeal is allowed as noted under the relevant heading below.
4. The Council, within their submissions, have provided drawing number JJ24-001 sheet 003 Rev A which I also note is referred to within the appellant's original application form. Despite this, within the notes to the applicant within the decision notice, it is stated that the decision refers to plan numbers JJ24-001 Sheet 001 Rev E and JJ24 -001 Sheet 2 with no reference to this additional plan. Based upon the fact that this is referred to within the appellant's original application form and that the plan has been sent over with the Council's questionnaire as a plan submitted with the application, I have included drawing number JJ24-001 sheet 003 Rev A within the plan condition outlined above.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the impact of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the locality.

Reasons

6. The appeal site is a detached residential dwelling which stands at the end of a ribbon of development extending along Eyeworth Road to the southwest of the main built-up area of the village of Wrestlingworth. The existing dwelling is an older style bay windowed house which is set back from the road standing within an overall large area of garden. At the time of my site visit I noted that the dwelling stands at a slightly lower site level than the road itself and is well screened, visually, from the southeast, as well as the front elevation, due to the presence of existing trees and hedgerows even given the winter leaf cover on the surrounding vegetation.
7. The host dwelling benefits from a number of smaller, rear, extensions which have a total depth, existing, in the region of approximately 6.1 metres. I do not find that, as these stand, they contribute positively to the character or appearance of the host dwelling resulting in ad-hoc and poor-quality additions to the rear elevation. The proposal seeks to erect a single and two storey side and rear extensions with the existing two storey lean to and two single storey projections to the rear being demolished as part of the proposals. At the rear, a part two storey, part single storey extension would be erected with a total depth in the region of 8 metres with the single storey element extending across the full width of the rear of the dwelling with a mono pitched roof and would also wrap partly around the side elevation.
8. I note that both parties refer to a previously refused application (CB/24/00607/FULL) with the appellant having included imagery from the plans in question within their statement of case. Whilst this previous application is noted, it falls to consider the proposal before me within the context of the appeal on its own merits. The Council's delegated report confirms that the single storey side extension is subservient and visually acceptable. I have no reason, or evidence,

before me to conclude differently on this element in isolation. Whilst flat roof gulleys, between hipped gables, can be indicative of achieving first floor floorspace whilst not increasing bulk, I do not, in this case, consider such a design to be of poor quality. Whilst the extension would incorporate some large, modern style window openings I do not find that these windows would themselves be sufficient to warrant refusal. The proposed windows would, to some extent, conflict with the traditional bay windows of the existing dwelling but such modern windows are not uncommonly seen at ground floor level where extensions generally seek to maximise access to the remaining garden area. The windows would be viewed, within the appeal site, in the context of an extension and would not be viewed in shared views with the traditional bay windows.

9. The proposal would result an 8-metre-deep extension at the rear, and I acknowledge that this would be greater in size, siting, design, and overall bulk compared to the host dwelling. Despite this, with houses of this nature, with reduced/limited general depth, it can be more difficult to appropriately achieve modern living space and proportions typically associated with, and required by, those seeking high quality family homes. The proposal would not necessarily be read as a subservient addition to the existing house; however, the existing character and appearance of the front elevation I find would be retained as a result of the proposals which would retain the charm of the existing front elevation within very limited views of the appeal site from Eyeworth Road.
10. Whilst the appeal site is noted to be located on the rural edge of the linear group of housing which extends along this side of the road I find that at the time of my site visit, which was in January (and therefore in the middle of winter) that mature trees and shrubs along the west boundary still largely prevented views of the host dwelling from Eyeworth Road. Taking into account that there is no guarantee that the planting would be retained I still find that the proposal would be acceptable, visually, in the context of the general site and neighbouring development. The two detached dwellings to the east of the appeal site appeared to have good sized footprints and depths compared to both the appeal site and the terraced dwellings then located to the northeast. In terms of both character, and appearance, the built form within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site is varied and although a large extension, I do not find that the proposal would be entirely incongruous in an area where the immediately adjacent dwellings are also large and occupy spacious plots.
11. I find that the proposal does not cause harm to living conditions and amenity for neighbours and that, considering the overarching objectives of the design guide, the proposal is not a poorly designed alteration or extension which could be said to cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would have a limited impact upon the wider area, and, in this case, I find that the context is appropriately considered as the character of the street within which the proposal would stand. The additions, in this case, although large taking into account the host dwelling itself would relate well to the character and context of the surrounding area.
12. I find that the proposals are sympathetic insofar as, in this case, the front elevation of the host dwelling and its existing character and charm, would be retained and whilst the proposal would result in a larger, more modern extension beyond this front elevation the development would result in a balanced appearance which

would still comfortably fit into the wider street scene. The extension has been designed as an addition and, whilst I acknowledge this is a large addition, the proposals before me provide an opportunity to extend the property in a manner which would create quality living space with appropriate proportions within the context of the plot within which would stand.

13. The proposal would be consistent with Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2021 (LP) Policy HQ1 which requires developments to respond positively to their context with size, scale, massing, orientation, materials, and appearance relating well to the existing local surroundings. The proposal would also be consistent with the overarching objectives and guidance contained within the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide 2023 which, ultimately, confirms that development should aspire to deliver a range of house types for different people's needs, and which seeks to avoid poorly designed alterations and extensions which could harm the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would, in this case, I find relate appropriately to the varied character and adjacent development visible within the street scene in a manner which would be appropriate to the context of the surrounding area. Whilst I note that the host building would be subjected to a large extension, which would not necessarily be subservient, I find that the character of the existing building would be retained as a result of retention of the existing front elevation, bay windows and consideration as to the appropriate nature of the single storey side extension which is visually appropriate.

Conditions

14. The Council have suggested conditions in the event that this appeal is allowed which I have considered and applied as appropriate. A time condition is attached to comply with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A condition requiring the development to be in accordance with the approved plans as required to control and define the development which is granted consent. A materials condition is required to ensure that an appropriate finish in accordance with the details submitted – to match the host dwelling. Finally, a condition relating to the first-floor windows in the side (eastern) elevation of the proposal is required to safeguard the privacy of occupiers of the adjoining properties.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons outlined above, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed subject to conditions.

Eleni Marshall

INSPECTOR