



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 October 2024 by S Indermaur

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/D/24/3342236

Warmwell House, Lower Church Street, Stokenchurch, Bucks HP14 3TG

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs N Meredith against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council - West Area.
 - The application Ref is 23/07559/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a single storey front (porch) extension.
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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 area with specific regard to the Stokenchurch Conservation Area (SCA) and the Chilterns National Landscape (CNL).

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal building is a good quality surviving example of an early 19th century double fronted detached dwelling. Historic features such as brick dentil eaves, sash windows and a centralised and canopied front entrance featuring door contribute positively to its historic and architectural significance as a Non Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA). The side entrance to the building is secondary. It has a timber double door and a simple flat canopy with decorative corbels above it. The positive contribution this and the above elements make to the building itself extend to its prominent street frontage location in the SCA. The appeal building is set in amongst a variety of others, some more obviously modern. The wider SCA has something of an organic layout and varied property types interspersed with green space. The boundary of the SCA is tightly round the appeal building.
5. The proposed porch, whilst small, subservient and using materials befitting of the house's existing exterior, would not only obscure the existing simple flat header and double timber doors but it would add something of a modern feature. This would both detract from the period qualities of the building and specifically the focal and ornate nature of the flanked entrance door on the

front elevation. The porch would be partially obscured from the front, and slightly recessive being on the side, but that elevation is highly visible on the road approach from the south and thus it would be an obvious addition in the street scene. These factors would combine to detrimentally affect the traditional period features of the building and reduce its qualities as a local example of its type.

6. The Council also allege that the proposed development would cause harm to the intrinsic qualities of the CNL. However, given the scale of the scheme in the context of the building and its siting within the built up parts of the settlement, I would not agree. As such, I see no conflict with Policy DM30 of the Wycombe District Local Plan 2019 (LP) which states that development is required to conserve and where possible enhance the CNL's natural beauty.
7. That said, the harm to the building, given its prominence in the street scene, would extend to the significance of it as both an NDHA and the SCA. The harm to the SCA would be less than substantial with which, as per the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework), the scheme's public benefits should be weighed. The proposal would provide a dry area to remove outer clothing and footwear, but this would be a private benefit. The existing side timber doors appear to be in less than ideal condition and there would be benefits associated with their replacement, but this would not be reliant on the appeal scheme.
8. I remain to be convinced therefore that the public benefits would be sufficient to outweigh the harms I have found which would, by virtue of the above, neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the SCA. The proposals would therefore fail to meet the criteria set out in Policies CP9, CP11, DM31, DM35 and DM36 of the LP. Together, and amongst other things, these policies seek development that is of high-quality design that respects the character and appearance of the existing property and surrounding area and for development to conserve and where possible enhance the significance of the historic environment. Furthermore, there would be conflict with the Framework which, in respect of the appeal scheme, seeks to resist development that is of poor design, is not sympathetic to local character and to conserve the historic environment.

Other Matters

9. The Tippings, a substantial grade II listed house immediately west of the appeal building, is another attractive period dwelling, contained within its own verdant grounds. Whilst in close proximity to the appeal building geographically, it is read independently and is visually distinct therefrom. The Council are satisfied that the scale and siting of the proposed development would not unacceptably impinge on its setting and, for the above reasons, I am inclined to agree. A smaller porch might be allowed under rights afforded by permitted development but that is not for me to determine as part of this appeal. In any case, such a scheme is not before me.

Conclusion and Recommendation

10. The appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan for the reasons I have set out. There are no material considerations, including the approach of the Framework, that would indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance therewith. I therefore recommend the appeal is dismissed.

S Indermaur

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

John Morison

INSPECTOR