
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2016

by Patrick Whelan BA(Hons) Dip Arch MA MSc ARB RIBA RTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 21 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/T0355/D/16/3157893

4 Gordon Road, Maidenhead SL6 6BT

- 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 Craig Irvine against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
 - The application Ref 16/01491, dated 4 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 12 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a 2-storey side extension following demolition of existing garage and 2 sheds.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of a 2-storey side extension following demolition of existing garage and 2 sheds at 4 Gordon Road, Maidenhead SL6 6BT, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/01491, dated 4 May 2016, and the plan submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, P001 Proposed Development, and; P002rev01 Proposed Plans and Elevations.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The Council raises no issues of character and appearance, and none regarding the living conditions of surrounding occupiers. I have no reason to disagree with its conclusions in these respects. The main issue is whether the proposal would provide sufficient off-street parking and the effect of any shortfall on surrounding street parking, highway safety, and the flow of traffic and pedestrians.

Reasons

3. The proposed development would involve the redevelopment of the garage for a 2-storey side extension in the side garden of the house which would appear to increase its number of bedrooms from three to four. This, the Council maintains, would require three off-street parking spaces in order to meet its
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parking standards. It considers that one of the two parking spaces indicated in the proposal is unusable and that it would therefore result in a shortfall of two off-street parking spaces. As a consequence, the proposed development would place additional pressure on the street parking in the area where there are known issues. It would also harm highway safety and the flow of traffic and pedestrians.

4. While I note that the appellant says it is not presently possible to park on the plot at all, from my inspection of the garage on the site there is sufficient space to park one car within it. While the plan of the proposal indicates two parking spaces in the front garden, I agree with the Council that parking two cars in the front garden would be an unrealistic proposal, especially if any cars parked in the street were to come close to the dropped kerb. Notwithstanding this, with one accessible parking space in the front garden, the amount of off-street parking on the site would appear not to be reduced by the proposed development.
5. As regards the adequacy of the provision of off-street parking in the proposed development, at the time of my site visit, which was on a weekday morning, I did not see any restrictions on parking on the highway in the vicinity of the site, and the occupancy of the street parking was less than 50% of the spaces available. I appreciate that demand is likely to be higher at the end of the working day and at weekends, however, the amount of space available does not indicate a high degree of parking stress or overload in the locality. The existing dropped kerb would provide access into the site and it has not been demonstrated that there would be a harmful effect on highway safety, and traffic or pedestrian flows as a result of the access into the development or any additional, on-street parking that might result from it.
6. The Council refers to Policies DG1, H14 and P4 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (Incorporating Alterations) 2003. These require that developments do not have an unacceptable effect on local roads, do not impair highway safety, and that they provide adequate off-street parking as set out in the Council's parking standards. I am unable to consider the proposal against the parking standards to which the Council refers as they have not been provided in the appeal. However, from my visit to the site and the surrounding streets, I do not consider that the number of parking spaces for the proposed development would be unreasonable nor would it result in unsustainable pressure on the street parking in the area.
7. Furthermore, the site is in a relatively sustainable location, within walking distance of the railway station and the town centre. The Framework¹, which has a core principle of making the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, advises that parking standards should take account of the type of the development and its accessibility. I also note the Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament of 25 March 2015 which states that local planning authorities should impose local parking standards only where there is clear and compelling justification that it is necessary to manage their local road network.
8. On the evidence before me, I can identify no conflicts with the Policies above and conclude that the proposal would provide sufficient off-street parking, and even if there were a shortfall, it would not increase pressure on street parking

¹ Department for Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework 2012, para 39

to an unacceptable degree. Nor would it have an adverse impact on highway safety and the flow of traffic or pedestrians.

Conditions and Conclusion

9. I have considered the conditions that have been suggested by the Council against the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance. In addition to a time condition, a condition specifying the approved plans is necessary. I have applied a condition relating to external materials, in order to safeguard the appearance of the area. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Patrick Whelan

Inspector