
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2017

by Chris Forrett BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 26 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/ED/16/3164773

105 Urquhart Road, Thatcham, Berkshire RG19 4RE

- 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 & Mrs Dawes against the decision of West Berkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 16/02278/HOUSE, dated 1 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 13 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is a two storey extension to the front of the property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey extension to the front of the property at 105 Urquhart Road, Thatcham, Berkshire RG19 4RE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/02278/HOUSE, dated 1 August 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1617-01, 1617-05, 1617-06, 1617-09.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development shall match those used in the existing dwelling.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located on a modern residential development which consists of a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings, together with blocks of flats. In general, most properties on the overall development do not have front two storey projections, although some examples do exist on Urquhart Road (Nos 93 and 95) together with several examples of three storey front projections on buildings which contain flats.
 4. Whilst vehicular access to the appeal property is from the rear, the dwelling fronts onto a small cul-de-sac which three other properties also front onto. Additionally, there are also parking spaces and garage accommodation for some properties on Rotary Way which back onto the cul-de-sac.
 5. The proposed front extension would have its eaves height significantly lower than the eaves of the original dwelling and as such would appear as a
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subservient addition to the host property. Additionally, the siting of the extension, in the centre of the property frontage, would also maintain its symmetrical appearance.

6. Turning to the impact on the wider streetscene, there is not a strong building line within the cul-de-sac. The built form consists of the appeal property, the frontage of 107 Urquhart Road and the side elevation of 109 Urquhart Road. When looking from the main road, the blank rendered wall of 54 Rotary Way (a two storey building) and the larger gable of 56 Rotary Way dominate the view.
7. At my site visit I observed several properties in the vicinity of No 105 which are close to their respective front boundaries including 62, 64 and 66 Urquhart Road (opposite the cul-de-sac entrance) and several properties on Rotary Way. Whilst the appeal property is currently set further back from the footway than No 107, it would project further forward should the extension be constructed. However, the distance between the extension and the front boundary would be similar to these other properties.
8. Taking all of these factors into account, and the medium to high density nature of the surrounding area, the front extension would respect the overall character and appearance of the area especially given the backdrop of the Rotary Way properties.
9. My attention has been drawn to the Councils House Extensions Supplementary Planning Guidance 2004 (SPG) which states that two storey front extensions are not generally acceptable. However, in assessing front extensions particular factors to consider include their prominence in the streetscene, the relationship with other properties, the depth of front gardens and landscaping.
10. In this case, the Council have not raised any concern in respect of landscaping and I have found that the development would not be prominent in the streetscene, would maintain a satisfactory relationship with the surrounding properties and the depth of the front garden would be consistent with other dwellings in the area.
11. For the above reasons, the extension would not result in any harm to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore the development would accord with Policy CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2012) and the SPG which seek, amongst other matters, to ensure that development has a high quality design which respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

Conditions

12. Other than the standard time limit condition, it is necessary to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans for the reason of certainty. A condition relating to matching external materials is appropriate in the interest of the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

13. Taking all matters into consideration, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Chris Forrett

INSPECTOR