

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 January 2017

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/D/16/3163751

12 Gadd Close, Wokingham RG40 5PQ

- 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 and Mrs D Rees against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 162630 was refused by notice dated 15 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is a garage side extension and conversion.
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Application for Costs

1. An application for costs was made by Mr and Mrs D Rees against Wokingham Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a garage side extension and conversion in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 162630, dated 20 September 2016, 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 following approved plans: 3333-02 and 3333-03.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building and house.
 - 4) The extended building hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as 12 Gadd Close.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

4. 12 Gadd Close is a large detached house sitting at the end of a cul-de-sac within a fairly spacious, leafy residential estate. Many of the houses here have
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either forward projecting integral garages or detached garages set forward of the house. The house at No 12 is set more or less side on to the street with a low, detached double garage in a prominent position across the drive. The proposal is to convert this outbuilding to habitable accommodation including a side extension plus new windows to replace the garage doors.

5. The proposed extension would be small in scale and subsidiary in design. It would be set away from the street so that it would not be at all intrusive in views from Gadd Close. A generous gap would remain between the house and outbuilding, maintaining views through the site to a strip of woodland beyond. These same trees would filter and screen views of the extension from Binfield Road to the rear, so that it would hardly be noticeable from there.
6. The new windows and doors would be in keeping with the house in scale and design. This change to the character and appearance of the outbuilding would not be at all harmful to the street scene. There is no particular visual benefit from the existing garage doors and the building would retain the appearance of a small domestic outbuilding, next to this sizeable house.
7. I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character or the appearance of the local area. It therefore accords with the aims of Core Strategy Policy CP3 and the Council's Supplementary Planning Document *Borough Design Guide*, to ensure that alterations and extensions are of a high quality of design that responds positively to the original building and relates well to neighbouring properties. It also accords with the National Planning Policy Framework's emphasis on securing high quality design that reinforces local distinctiveness.
8. I impose a condition specifying the relevant plans to provide certainty. The use of matching materials is necessary in order to protect the character and appearance of the area. A final condition limiting the use of the building to ancillary purposes is justified in order to clearly limit the scope of the approved use. The Council's suggested condition requiring the provision of parking space on-site is not necessary. There is no evidence of parking pressure or danger from on-street parking in this area and there is plenty of space within the site. I leave the provision of parking to future occupiers.
9. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR