The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2017

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPl MRTPI

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

Decision date: 3 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/T0355/D/16/3165825
24 Clarefield Drive, Maidenhead SL6 5DP

- 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 P Catchpole against the decision of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council.
- The application Ref 16/02260, dated 5 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 25 November 2016.
- The development proposed is for part single part two storey rear/side extensions, widened front dormer, enlargement and conversion of loft into habitable accommodation with 3 x rear dormers and amendments to fenestration. Hip to gable, porch.

Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a detached part chalet/part two storey house situated at the end of a residential cul-de-sac which largely comprises detached houses situated on generous plots. Roof forms generally vary in the street between hipped and gable ended constructions. In addition, external finishes to dwellings in the locality tend to be either brown or yellow brick to elevations, with a minor application of vertical brown boarding or brown hanging tiles to recessed panels and dormers on some dwellings in Clarefield Road. Some houses have been altered and extended over time, this includes 20 Clarefield Drive which has been subject to quite significant extensions.

4. The proposal before me would significantly alter the appearance of the host dwelling, giving rise to an increase in ridge height over the existing, and through the conversion of the roof from a hipped form to a gable ended one, the overall bulk of the roof would increase quite dramatically. The proposal would result in a significant front roof plane above the front dormer and would give the dwelling a top-heavy appearance, the impact of which would be accentuated due to the fact that the south western flank elevation would largely be seen from the street. In addition, the proposed single storey flat roof front

element would also have a rather awkward relationship, clashing with the front eaves line.

5. Other elements of the proposal that would be at odds with the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area include the substantial two storey and single storey flat roof elements proposed to the north eastern flank and rear elevations; and the proposed 3no rear dormers which would break through and extend below the truncated rear eaves. The dormers in themselves would be of a quite significant scale that would dominate the roof, and in combination with the aforementioned elements would give rise to the rear elevation as a whole being of a rather jumbled composition, at odds with the prevailing simpler architectural forms within the area. I also consider that the proposed finishing materials, including painted render and dark grey fibre cement tiles would be incongruent when compared with the vast majority of dwellings within the street.

6. I wholly acknowledge that the dwelling is generally in a poor state of repair and is quite clearly in need of renovation. I also note that the Council do not object per se to alterations and extensions being made to the dwelling, and it is right and proper that the appellants and their family enjoy a good standard of living accommodation. I also sympathise with the appellants who have experienced a protracted decision making process with the Local Planning Authority, including the refusal of an earlier proposal. I must, however, stress that whilst examples of contemporary building makeovers, including the application of painted renders to some buildings within the wider area are noted, such finishes and styles are not readily found within the street that the appeal site finds itself situated, bar 1 Clarefield Drive. In any event each case must be assessed on its own merits.

7. I note that the appellants sought pre-planning advice from the Council, and that the informal Officer view was that they would support the proposal if an application was made, subject to further amendments. It is not clear from the evidence before me whether any such amendments were made. Whilst I acknowledge that the appellant received contradictory advice from Officers regarding the likely decision appertaining thereto, such advice cannot formally bind a Local Planning Authority to making a particular decision when determining a planning application.

8. I also note that a sketch redesign of the rear dormer windows was submitted to the Council, but that these were never formally submitted as an amendment to the scheme, however no agreement was reached between the appellant and the Council on any of the suggested changes to the scheme. If I had been so minded to allow the appeal, details of revised finishing materials could have been secured by way of planning condition, notwithstanding this, I find that by reason of its overall size, scale and design the proposal would be visually intrusive and unsympathetic to the character and appearance of the area.

9. I find that the proposal is contrary to one of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework which is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. The proposal would also be contrary to Policies DG1 and H14 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (incorporating alterations adopted in June 2003) which require extensions not

to have any adverse effect upon the character and appearance of the original property or the street scene in general.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR