

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2017

by R Barrett BSc (Hons) MSc Dip UD Dip Hist Cons MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 28th March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/D/16/3167456

Osgoods Gully, Bucklebury, Reading RG7 6RT

- 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 C Tarrant against the decision of West Berkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01926/HOUSE, dated 7 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is two storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey extension at Osgoods Gully, Bucklebury, Reading RG7 6RT, in accordance with application Ref 16/01926/HOUSE, dated 7 July 2016, subject to the conditions set out in Annex A to this decision.

Main Issues

2. The effect of the appeal proposal on the character and appearance of the locality, with particular regard to whether it would conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Reasons

3. The appeal site includes a large dwelling set within extensive grounds. It is at a lower level than its surroundings and is generally well screened by large trees and substantial woodland. A public footpath No. BUCK/20/4 runs along the site's eastern boundary, some distance from the appeal dwelling. The appeal building is located within the AONB.
 4. The appeal building is of brick and tile, with a large and complex footprint and roof form. Large upright chimneys add interest at roof level. The appeal building has had large extensions throughout its recent history.
 5. The character and appearance of the locality is generally rural. The appeal building, its size and design and relationship with the gently undulating landscape and woodland, contributes to the character and appearance of the locality.
 6. The proposed addition would be at the rear of the host dwelling, with a lower overall height and would fit between two existing rear projections, which have a greater depth and overall height. The double pitched roof would work to reduce the overall bulk and would add to the complex array of pitched roof forms that make up the host dwelling. The overall design would include
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windows and other detailing to match the host dwelling or to blend in with it. It would replace an existing flat roof addition, which would be an overall improvement to the appearance of the rear of the dwelling. Overall, its design would relate appropriately to the host dwelling and due to this and its discreet siting, it would not appear disproportionate, even when taking into account the other large extensions.

7. As the dwelling is set at a lower level to surrounding land, it would not appear as prominent in the wider landscape. As it is set within extensive grounds and for all the reasons given, it would not appear overdeveloped. As the appeal site is well screened by large trees and substantial woodland, no neighbouring properties are nearby and the public footpath referred to is some distance from the host dwelling, very limited distant views of the appeal proposal would be afforded. Even if the screening were reduced or removed, due to the separation distance to the edge of the appeal site and public footpath, views of the appeal proposal would still be limited. All in all, even though the appeal proposal would be large, together with previous extensions would cumulatively significantly add to the original dwelling, for all the above reasons, it would not result in overdevelopment of the site or a material increase in visual intrusion into the countryside.
8. In coming to this conclusion, I have had regard to West Berkshire Council House Extensions Supplementary Planning Guidance (2004) and West Berkshire Council Replacement Dwellings and Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Guidance (2004). I note that the cumulative increase in volume of the appeal dwelling would be significantly more than 100% and in accordance with paragraph 3.3.1 of the latter document, would normally be regarded as disproportionate. However, that is a guide and in the circumstances of this appeal, the siting, bulk, scale, height, massing and design of the appeal proposal render a development that does not materially impact on the character of the countryside.
9. I conclude that the appeal proposal would not adversely affect the character or appearance of the locality and would conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB. For that reason, it would generally accord with West Berkshire Local Plan West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) (2012) Policies CS14 and CS19 along with Policy ENV24 of the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 (Saved Policies) (2007). Those policies, together, aim for high quality and sustainable design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area, ensure that the diversity and local distinctiveness of landscape character of the District is conserved and enhanced, and seek to prevent the overdevelopment of sites and a material increase in visual intrusion into the countryside. It would also accord with Quality Design-West Berkshire Supplementary Planning Document Series Parts 1 and 2 (Residential Development) (2006), which, together, aim to achieve design quality.
10. It would also generally accord with emerging Policies C3 and C6 of the West Berkshire Council Proposed Submission Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document. Those policies, together, aim for development in the countryside to have regard to the character of the area. As those policies are at an advanced stage of preparation, to them I accord some weight.

Planning Conditions

11. A list of suggested planning conditions is before me. I have agreed with the imposition of those, subject to refinement to improve clarity and ensure consistency with national policy and guidance.¹ A list of planning conditions to be imposed is set out in Annex A to my decision.
12. Standard time and plans conditions are required to ensure clarity and certainty in the planning process. A condition to ensure external materials match those of the rest of the building is necessary to ensure that the proposal blends into the locality.

Conclusion

13. For the above reasons, and taking all other matters raised into consideration, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed, subject to the planning conditions set out in Annex A to my decision.

R Barrett

INSPECTOR

Annex A

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with approved plans: 1112/6; 1112/7; 1112/8.
- 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

-----END OF CONDITIONS-----

¹ Paragraphs 203 and 206 of the Framework and PPG paragraphs 21a-001-034