

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/X0360/D/16/3168067

6 Stowmarket Close, Lower Earley, Reading RG6 3UA

- 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 Sugeenthan against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 162836, dated 3 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as 'double storey side extension, single storey rear extension and conversion of garage into living accommodation'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a householder application for proposed erection of a first storey side extension, single storey rear extension following demolition of existing rear conservatory, front porch extension and conversion of existing garage to habitable accommodation, in accordance with planning application Ref 162836, dated 3 October 2016, subject to the conditions set out in Annex A to this decision.

Procedural Matter

2. I note that the description of proposed development in the banner heading above which is taken from the appellant's application form, differs from that on the Council's decision notice. In my formal decision, I have used the Council's description of development, as it better describes the development sought.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the appeal proposal on the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

4. The appeal site includes a terraced property which sits within a short terrace of similar houses. It sits within a small cul de sac which includes a number of short terraces of houses of a similar ilk. The appeal site includes a single storey garage which sits between the appeal site and its neighbour 7 Stowmarket Close. It provides a break in development and affords high views to the development behind.
 5. The appeal proposal, in extending so close to No.7, would significantly diminish the high level gap between the two properties. However, as terraces are the norm in the locality and the proposed roof form would retain some gap at high level, no material harm would result. As the proposed extension would be set
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back from the front building line and lower than the houses in the terrace, it would appear subservient to them. It would relate appropriately in size and from to the host dwelling and would not appear cramped in the street scene.

6. I appreciate that the appeal development would have the effect of visually elongating the terrace. However, I observed on my site visit that the dominant form of development in the locality is that of rows of terraced houses. Whilst it would result in a slightly longer terrace than others nearby, as those terraces are set at different angles to one another and due to the separation distance between them, it would not appear harmfully out of place. Whilst I appreciate that it would be more difficult for the Council to resist a similar extension at No. 7, if such a proposal were to come forward that would be judged on its individual merits.
7. I have noted the Wokingham Borough Council Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2012) (BDG) sets out on page 56 that first floor extensions should be set in 1 metre from the side boundary. However, that is a guide and the specific circumstances of this appeal indicate that material harm would not be a consequence of a smaller gap.
8. I conclude that the appeal proposal would not harmfully affect the character or appearance of the locality and would generally accord with Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010) Policy CP3. That policy aims for development to be of an appropriate mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area with a high quality of design. It would also generally accord with the BDG, which on page 56, states that the primary considerations for side extensions are the impact upon neighbours and upon the street scene and local character.

Conditions

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

Conclusion

11. I conclude that, for the above reasons and taking into account all other matters brought to my attention, the appeal should be allowed.

R Barrett

INSPECTOR

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

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: 783/01A; 738/03A; location plan dated 18 October 2016.
- 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall be of a similar appearance to those used in the existing building.

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