

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 May 2017

by Jonathon Parsons MSc BSc(Hons) DipTP Cert(Urb) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 24 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/D/17/3171913

Pontell, 2B Conifer Drive, Tilehurst, Reading RG31 6YU

- 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 David Griffiths against the decision of West Berkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 16/02917/HOUSE, dated 20 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 24 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is a first floor extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effects of the proposal on (a) the character and appearance of the area and (b) the living conditions of the occupiers of 174 Long Lane, having regard to outlook and overshadowing.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site comprises a bungalow which lies adjacent to a two storey house at 2 Conifer Drive, and the rear garden and flank of a house at 174 Long Lane. The remaining dwellings along Conifer Drive frontage are of differing scale, design and position relative to the road. Consequently, the street scene is varied with a staggered building line.
 4. There would be a first floor extension with gable above extending across much of the frontage width of the appeal dwelling. Such a width and height would result in an extended dwelling of considerable mass which would be emphasised by the incorporation of three first floor windows serving a hallway and bedroom.
 5. The extended dwelling would be forward of its neighbour at No 2 and especially its first floor elements which are stepped back from the building's frontage. On this neighbouring dwelling, there is a first floor frontage bay but this is considerably narrower in width than the first floor proposed here and in any case, it would still be sited behind the proposed extension at No 2B. The extended dwelling would also be sited behind the first floor elements of 2A Conifer Drive which is of similar form and articulation as No 2. As a result, the first floor extension would be dominant and prominent in views along Conifer
-

Drive towards Long Lane which the street view visual does not consider by reason of its one dimensional depiction.

6. Along Conifer Drive, there is a variety of different housing forms but mostly the street is characterised by graduation in dwelling scales from the road with higher storey elements sited further back. Full height two storeys are not in close proximity to the road. There are two chalet style dwellings on Conifer Drive but they are not overly prominent given they only have modest scaled gables above ground floors. Consequently, the extended dwelling would appear prominent and would adversely affect the visual qualities of the area.
7. In relation to No 174, this neighbouring property is orientated towards Long Lane and has a rear garden separating its dwelling from that on the appeal site. Therefore, the extended dwelling would mainly be seen in the context of the Conifer Drive street scene. Despite its position, the existing dwelling has a low profile by reason of its single storey nature and is in keeping with the general graduation in dwelling scale along the street. The extended dwelling would result in poor design quality because of its prominent mass projecting forward in the street. In respect of detailed design, the height and great width of the first floor including gable would also appear out of proportion with the rest of the dwelling, especially in relation to the lower height of the roof behind.
8. In conclusion, the development would harm the character and appearance of the area by reason of the extended dwelling's scale, mass, height and design in a position close to the highway. Accordingly, the proposal would be contrary to policies CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (CS) 2006-2026, which collectively and amongst other matters, requires high quality and sustainable design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area, development to contribute to local distinctiveness and a sense of place, and to be appropriate in terms of location, scale and design.

Living conditions

9. The flank of the resultant two storey dwelling would lie approximately 1m off the common boundary with 174 Long Lane. Beyond this boundary, there is the rear garden and dwelling of this neighbouring property. The rear garden measures approximately 10m up to the rear face of the dwelling on this neighbouring property.
10. The first floor extension would be of approximately 7.7m in depth and would have a roof eaves height of approximately 4.4m. However, the extension would be about 1m from the boundary and the neighbouring property has a large garden, considerably greater in area than the footprint of the dwelling sited on it. The rear face of the neighbouring dwelling would also be a minimum distance of 11m from the extended dwelling. For all these reasons, there would be no significant loss of outlook to the occupiers of the neighbouring dwelling.
11. A daylight and sunlight report shows overshadowing of the rear garden of the neighbouring garden during the afternoon. However, this would not be significant even in winter given the overall extent of garden available to this property. The report shows no significant loss of sunlight to the rear windows of the neighbouring dwelling.

12. In conclusion, the development would not harm the living conditions of this neighbouring property by reason of the loss of outlook and overshadowing. Accordingly, the proposal would comply with policies CS14 and CS19 of the CS, which collectively and amongst other matters, require high quality and sustainable design, development to make a positive contribution to the quality of life and to be appropriate in terms of location, scale and design.

Other matters

13. My attention has been drawn to policies ADPP1 and ADPP4 of the CS but these policies relate to development proposals of a more strategic nature than that considered here and thus are not relevant.

Conclusion

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

Jonathon Parsons

INSPECTOR