

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 June 2017

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

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

Decision date: 21 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/T0355/D/17/3170221

**Willow Place, Oakley Green Road, Oakley Green, Windsor, Berkshire
SL4 4PZ**

- 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 A Richards against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
 - The application Ref 16/03680 was refused by notice dated 20 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is a 2 storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a 2 storey rear extension in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 16/03680, dated 6 November 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 plan: OGR/16/1C.
 - 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.

Main issues

2. The main issues are:
 - i) whether the proposal constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt; and
 - ii) its effects on the character and appearance of the house and the local area.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development in the Green Belt

3. Willow Place is a detached 2 storey house set down into a sloping site near the end of a cul-de-sac, within a loosely developed area of countryside in the Metropolitan Green Belt. The proposal is to add a 2 storey rear wing, stepped down from the main house.
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4. Paragraph 87 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 89 explains that construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt, except for listed exceptions. These include extensions to buildings provided that they do not result in *disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building*. Local Plan¹ (LP) Policies GB1 and GB4, which pre-date the Framework, likewise allow for extensions where they would not cause a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling.
5. Neither the Framework nor the LP provides any guidance about the scale of increase that is considered disproportionate. The Council states that this proposal would amount to an increase of 43.5% measured in terms of floorspace and it appears to me that the increase in volume would be around the same figure. This scale of increase appears to me to be generally reasonable, amounting to a relatively minor addition. In this case, the original house is not particularly large so the proposed extension is also not overlarge. The narrow plan and set down of the proposal mean that it would not be overly bulky in comparison to the original house despite its length.
6. I conclude that the proposed extension would not amount to a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building. The proposal is therefore not inappropriate in the Green Belt and accords with paragraphs 87 and 89 of the Framework and LP Policies GB1 and GB4. In these circumstances, there is no need to consider the impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Character and appearance

7. Willow Place is a brick and timber house which has been well designed in a rural vernacular style. It sits down into its plot and is largely screened by boundary trees and hedges. The proposed extension would sit next to the blank gable of a much taller and longer agricultural or commercial building next door. The extension has been designed to fit in with and complement the existing house, with similar detailing and proportions. It would be little seen from outside the site and would benefit such views as do exist by partially screening the bulk of the adjacent building. Although it would take up the full depth of the back garden, the resulting building would still fit comfortably on its large plot.
8. I conclude that the proposal would enhance the character and appearance of the house and the local area. It therefore also accords with the aims of LP Policies DG1 and H14 and the Framework, to secure high quality design and to ensure that extensions do not adversely affect the original property or the street scene.

Other matters

9. I have also considered the objections raised by the Parish Council and a neighbour. As set out above, I do not consider this to be overdevelopment of

¹ Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (Incorporating Alterations Adopted in June 2003)

the site. The extension would be set well away from the nearest residence, so that there would be no undue overlooking of that property. I accept that there may be some damage to an adjacent hedge, but this is off-site and is of considerable depth, so that any impact would be limited. I see nothing here of such importance that development should not take place. Technical matters such as drainage can be dealt with under the Building Regulations. Finally, some temporary disturbance is inevitable as part of any construction process, but this does not rule out development here.

10. I impose a condition specifying the relevant plans to provide certainty and another requiring the use of matching materials to protect the character and appearance of the building and the local area.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR