

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 July 2017

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 11th July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/D/17/3174043

57 Havelock Road, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 2XU

- 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 Haskins against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 170018, dated 19 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 2 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two-storey side extension following demolition of existing garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a two-storey side extension following demolition of existing garage at 57 Havelock Road, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 2XU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 170018, dated 19 December 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 plans: Drg Nos 001, 002 and 003.
 - 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.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached, two-storey dwelling set along a fairly narrow residential street that comprises a mix of semi-detached and terraced properties of various ages. The Council is of the view that the gaps between semi-detached properties create a distinctive rhythm and perception of
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spaciousness within the street scene. However, I saw that many semi-detached pairs along Havelock Road are separated from each other by the width of just a narrow walkway. Although there were occasional gaps that were noticeably larger between some, when considering also the absence of any pavements along Havelock Road and only shallow frontages to many properties, my overall impression was of a fairly tightly packed street scene, intimate in its character but with little important sense of space.

4. The appeal proposal would project No 57 to the side with a subservient extension that would reflect the form of the existing dwelling. The extension would reach up to the common boundary with No 55 in breach of the Council's normal guidelines given within the Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) June 2012. This advises that side extensions to dwellings should retain a minimum 1m gap between the building and the site boundary. However, in this case a separation of around 1m would be retained between the flank wall of the extension and the flank wall of No 55. This would be broadly consistent with the spacing between many other properties along Havelock Road. Furthermore, the extension would be recessed well behind the front elevation of No 55, and as such the gap between both would not be overtly seen as narrow within the wider street scene, including in views along Havelock Street, where No 55 and its attached neighbour can be clearly at the end of the vista.
5. I note that the Council is concerned that if No 55 were to be extended in a similar fashion then both properties would appear terraced. However, given the restricted space that exists to the side elevation of No 55 and its boundary, the likelihood of any future proposals coming forward to fill the gap by extending the neighbouring property would be slim. I am satisfied that a sufficient gap would be maintained, and one that would be typical for the spacing of properties within the street scene and reflective of the development pattern more broadly within the locality. I therefore find no conflict with the aims and objectives of Policies CP1 and CP3 of the Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document, January 2010, insofar as they relate to quality of design and respect for the environment.

Conditions

6. A condition specifying the relevant drawings is necessary as this provides certainty. In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the area, a condition is necessary to ensure that the extension is built with materials that would match the existing. An integral garage space is to be provided as part of the proposal and the existing forecourt would be unaffected by the proposal. Conditions are therefore not necessary in relation to the timing for provision of parking spaces or for details of surface treatment. Given the forecourt parking arrangement and the absence of any information with regard to the Council's parking standards, I find no reason to impose a condition relating to the longer retention of parking spaces.
7. The Council has suggested a condition to ensure that the garage be fitted with a roller shutter door. However, there is no substantive evidence before me to suggest that this is necessary in relation to highway safety, convenience or amenity.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons given, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of the area. In the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR