
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 August 2017

by Penelope Metcalfe BA(Hons) MSc DipUP DipDBE MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 10 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/T0355/D/17/3177284

121 Coppermill Road, Wraysbury, Staines, TW19 5NX

- 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 Shamir Davda against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
 - The application Ref 17/00721, dated 27 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 25 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is front and rear/side extension, removal of existing footprint from rear, internal layout refurbishment, raised roof height and addition of first floor in loft space.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for front and rear/side extension, removal of existing footprint from rear, internal layout refurbishment, raised roof height and addition of first floor in loft space at 121 Coppermill Road, Wraysbury, Staines, TW19 5NX, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 17/00721, dated 27 February 2017, and the plans submitted with it, 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: 1:1250 location plan, 1:500 block plan and PL-01 Rev P1 existing and proposed elevations and floor plans.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.

Main issues

2. I consider that the main issues in this case are a) whether the proposal constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt, b) its effect on the character and appearance of the area, and c) if it is inappropriate development, whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

Reasons

3. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) sets out several categories of new buildings which are not inappropriate development in the

Green Belt. It allows for the extension or alteration of an existing building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. It states that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence.

4. Policy GB1 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan adopted 2003 (the local plan) sets out similar categories of new buildings. These include residential development in accordance with policies GB3-GB5. The Council has referred to local plan policies GB2 and GB4 in its reasons for refusal. GB2 relates to all new development in the Green Belt and sets out a number of criteria against which the development should be considered, including its impact on the openness of the Green Belt and on the character of the countryside. GB4 allows for the extension of an existing dwelling provided that it would not cause a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling.

Inappropriate development

5. The Framework does not provide any direction as to what may be regarded as a disproportionate addition, nor does it indicate how this should be measured, for example, by floor space or volume. Local plan policy GB4 refers to the size of dwellings but the supporting text states that floor space will be a guiding factor. Proposals will be considered on their merits against a number of other factors, such as the size of the house and the plot, the nature of the surrounding area, the design and appearance of the extension from public viewpoints and the history of development at the site.
6. In my opinion, relying solely on floor space as a means by which to judge whether an addition is disproportionate has limitations in that it takes no account of height, volume or bulk. In this case, I consider that rather than use the increase in floor area as the sole criterion to calculate the percentage increase in size of the dwelling as extended, it is more appropriate to assess the increase in volume, based on the increase in footprint and overall height.
7. 121 Coppermill Road is a detached bungalow, one of four similar ones in a row along the east side of Coppermill Road and backing on to Wraysbury Reservoir. It does not appear to have been previously extended. The road extends almost the full length of the reservoir with mainly detached houses along all of the western side and much of the eastern side. There is a wide variety of house sizes and styles and most are of two storeys or chalet bungalows with various extensions. The group of four bungalows is something of an anomaly in this context.
8. I consider that the proposed increase in the footprint is minimal and would amount to a very small increase in the percentage of the plot occupied by the dwelling. The overall height of the building would be approximately 1.8m greater than the existing. I have insufficient information to assess properly the volume of the existing and proposed building. However, on the basis of the information which is before me, it seems to me that the increase in volume would not be disproportionate.
9. The width of the elevation facing the street would remain the same and the use of a crown roof rather than a ridged one would help to reduce the bulk of the additional accommodation in the enlarged loft area. Although it would be

noticeably larger than the neighbouring bungalow, No. 123, it would be of a similar bulk to No. 119. It would not appear out of place in the context of the wide variety of larger dwellings along Coppermill Road and I consider that it would not result in any significant reduction in the openness of the Green Belt.

10. The orientation of the bungalow within the plot is such that the narrowest elevations face the road and the rear garden. It is set well back from the road, centrally in the plot, with a detached double garage located prominently at the front. The latter, together with trees and high hedging at the front and at the boundary with No. 119, limit views of the property from the road.
11. In my opinion, the proposed extension would not result in a disproportionate addition in terms of its size. It would be acceptable when assessed against the criteria set out in the supporting statement to local plan policy GB4.
12. I conclude that the proposal would not be inappropriate development and that it is consistent with the Framework and local plan policies GB1 and GB4.

Character and appearance

13. The four bungalows of which this is the most northerly are located at the northern end of the long row of dwellings on the east side of Coppermill Road, separated by No. 119 from a long gap in development. The opposite side of the road is continuously built up along its length. The grassed embankment up to the reservoir is visible from the road in glimpses through the gaps in the dwellings. The general character of development along the road is of large houses, set well back from the road and often with large parking areas and access drives. There are numerous mature trees, hedges and grass verges which give the area an attractive verdant appearance.
14. The four bungalows appear to have been constructed at the same time to the same design. The layout is such that the most dominant features apparent from the road are the large double garages. These, together with the distance the bungalows are set back from the road and a variety of vegetation, mean that the bungalows themselves are not prominent in the street scene and their full width is only apparent from a relatively narrow point immediately in front.
15. The proposed increase in height and bulk would result in a dwelling noticeably larger in direct comparison with the immediate neighbour, No. 123, but not readily visible in juxtaposition with the other two bungalows, No. 125 and 127. It would not appear significantly larger than No. 119 to the north, since the two properties are not readily seen together in views from the road and the latter is set further forward and is therefore more prominent in such views as there are. Although the dwelling would have a completely different appearance from the other bungalows, it would not appear out of keeping with the varied character of the larger properties in the wider area along Coppermill Road or particularly large in itself.
16. I consider that the design is acceptable insofar as it retains the appearance of a pitched roof, albeit at a steeper pitch, the front elevation is stepped to add interest and it is intended to use matching materials. Although the crown roof is a somewhat unattractive element, it would not be readily apparent as what it is from public viewpoints, and in this instance allows for the provision of

additional accommodation without an excessive increase in the height of the dwelling.

17. I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area and that it would be consistent with local plan policies DG1 and H14 which require, among other things, that the design of new development should be compatible with the area, with regard to scale, height and materials, and that house extensions should not adversely affect the character and appearance of the original or any neighbouring properties, or the street scene.
18. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed.

Conditions

19. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council, having regard to the tests set out in the Framework. A condition detailing the plans is necessary to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and for the avoidance of doubt. A condition relating to the materials is necessary in order to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development.

PAG Metcalfe

INSPECTOR