



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 July 2019

by M Allen BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/D/19/3222049

32 Leyland Gardens, Shinfield, Reading, Berkshire RG2 9AN

- 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 and Mrs Ayres against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 181780, dated 18 June 2018, was refused by notice dated 8 November 2018.
 - The development proposed is described as "Single storey front/side extension, Roof extension utilising external area at ground floor level inc. Velux style roof lights, new windows and 1.no dormer window addition".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The decision notice issued by the Council is titled "Notification of Approval of Planning Permission" and states that it grants permission. However, what follows are reasons for refusing planning permission. Despite the conflicting contents, the reasons clearly indicate that the intention of the notice is to refuse planning permission. I have therefore dealt with the appeal on the basis of these reasons.

Main Issues

3. The main issues raised in this case are the effect of the proposal on:
 - i) The character and appearance of the existing property and the surrounding area, and
 - ii) The living conditions of the occupiers of 30 Leyland Gardens, with particular reference to outlook and daylight.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The property is semi-detached and forms part of a group of similar properties arranged at the end of a cul-de-sac. The dwellings within the immediate vicinity have a consistency in terms of their period, scale and design. This creates a rhythm in the streetscene that is reinforced by the generous separation between properties.

5. The pair of dwellings of which the appeal property forms part, is a generally symmetrical pair, as are the surrounding properties, and consequently they have a balanced and regular appearance. The proposal would not appear subservient to the host property and would extend the roofline, adding bulk to the property and this would result in a visually unbalanced building. The existing form of the building would be lost; the nominal setback of the front of the extension and the retention of the half-hipped roof would do little to ameliorate this.
6. The proposal would extend the width of the front elevation and bring development closer to the neighbouring property, 30 Leyland Gardens. This would have the result of reducing the separation between these two properties. Given the general consistency of spacing that is visible currently, this would draw attention to the scale and massing of the extension, highlighting it as a non-subservient addition, disrupting the rhythm of buildings in the street scene. As a result, the extension would appear as an overly prominent addition, which would be at odds with the prevailing scale and form of development in the immediate area.
7. Thus, the scheme would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the existing property and the surrounding area. Accordingly, it would conflict with Policy CP3 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010) (the Core Strategy), which seeks to ensure development is of an appropriate mass, built form and character. The scheme would also conflict with the guidance of the Wokingham Borough Council – Borough Design Guide, which advocates that alterations and extensions should maintain or enhance the street scene and that side extensions should be subservient.

Living conditions

8. The scheme would replace a single storey addition to the side of the property with a two-storey addition that would project further forward than currently. The Council highlight that there are a number of windows to the side elevation of the neighbouring property, 30 Leyland Gardens. The scheme would result in additional bulk and height which would be close to these side windows. This would, in my view, materially reduce the outlook from the windows of the neighbouring property and have an overbearing appearance.
9. The proposed extension would also add significant bulk and height of built development closer to the neighbouring property than currently. As a consequence, in the absence of any substantive evidence to the contrary, this would reduce the amount of light that would reach the windows on the side elevation of 30 Leyland Gardens, by such a degree as to reduce the living conditions of occupiers of this property. This would not be sufficiently mitigated by the inclusion of the half-hipped roof.
10. Consequently, the scheme would have an adverse effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of 30 Leyland Gardens, through loss of outlook and light. The scheme therefore accords with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy, which seeks to ensure that development does not result in a detriment to the amenity of adjoining occupiers. The scheme would also conflict with the guidance of the Wokingham Borough Council – Borough Design Guide, which advocates that alterations and extensions should relate well to neighbouring properties.

Other Matters

11. I have had regard to the examples of other extended properties that have been cited by the appellant. Having reviewed the provided details, it is clear that each example is different in its location and in the details of the development. As such, they do not dissuade me from my findings above.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above and having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Allen

INSPECTOR