
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 August 2019

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/D/19/3231282

53B Chandos Road, Newbury, RG14 7EG

- 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 Khan against the decision of West Berkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00856/HOUSE, dated 26 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is demolition of the existing conservatory and the construction of a two storey rear extension and new pitched roof on the existing single storey detached dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issues

2. I consider that the main issues in this case are its effect on the character and appearance of the area and on the living conditions of neighbouring residents.

Reasons

3. 53B Chandos Road is a single storey detached dwelling. I understand that it was converted from a storage building associated with No. 53, a two storey former Post Office which has been converted into flats. The two buildings are something of an anomaly in the pattern of development along Chandos Road which is generally of a traditional layout with most of the houses along a more or less consistent building line. An exception is the small group of houses to the west which are set well back from the main building line around a small turning head off the bend in the road.
4. The relevant policies in this case include CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) (the Core Strategy) which require new development to be, among other things, of high quality design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of the area and is appropriate in terms of scale and design in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance *House Extensions* 2004 (the SPD) offers additional detailed advice on design and the impact on neighbours in terms of light and outlook.
5. These policies are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (the Framework) which emphasises the importance of good design.

6. I consider that the existing relationship between the two buildings is unusual but that it is reasonable to view No.53B as an infill dwelling behind the main building line. Consequently, it is also reasonable that it should be subject to the general principle that it should remain subordinate to the main building, No. 53.
7. The existing building is brick built, with a flat roof and is of little architectural merit. The proposal would result in a significant increase in size rising from single storey to two storeys at the rear under a long asymmetrical pitched roof. The amount of accommodation would increase from two to four bedrooms, with enlarged living areas and two en suites.
8. The proposed design is somewhat bland and awkward in form and appearance, mainly dictated by the attempt to reduce the impact of the increase in height on the outlook from the rear windows of the flats in No. 53. The appeal site is level and relatively large with an access drive from Chandos Road and a large rear garden. The proposed house would not be readily visible from the road, other than obliquely along the sides of No. 53, and it would be well screened from views from many of the surrounding properties by fences and high hedges and trees.
9. Notwithstanding the limited visibility of the proposed house, I consider that it is of poor design which would be out of keeping with the prevailing style of housing in the surrounding area.
10. I conclude that it would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Core Strategy policies CS14 and CS19.
11. The relationship between Nos. 53 and 53B is such that the latter already has a negative effect on the outlook from the rear windows of the flats in the former, particularly at ground floor level. The north elevation of No. 53B is approximately 1.5m from the rear (south) elevation of No. 53 and extends almost the full width of the rear of the main part of the latter. Consequently the building severely restricts the sunlight and daylight entering the habitable rooms and the outlook from them.
12. The angle of the proposed roof from the height of the existing eaves to the ridge over the two storey element would be such that it might technically satisfy the criteria set out in BRE 209 (*Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: a Guide to Good Practice*), in respect of the windows in No. 53.
13. However, in my view, the impact of a proposal on outlook is no less of an important consideration simply because it is unquantifiable. There would perhaps be no further adverse impact on the ground floor flat than that which exists at present. On the other hand, there would be an adverse impact on the first floor flat which would face a large expanse of new roof rising to the ridge, thus impeding the outlook from its rear window and its small balcony, which face south across the existing flat roof to the open space of the garden beyond.
14. I conclude that the proposal would harm the living conditions of neighbouring residents in terms of their outlook, contrary to Core Strategy policy CS14 and the advice in the SPD.
15. In my opinion, while the proposal would enhance the private accommodation of the appellant, it would fail to make a positive contribution to the quality of life of the occupiers of the neighbouring flats and to enhance the character and

appearance of the area. Its benefit to the local economy would be limited as would its benefit to the environment. It would be contrary to Council policy and the advice in the Framework.

16. I accept the appellant's wish to improve on the poor quality of the existing dwelling and I consider that the building could be satisfactorily extended, particularly as there is a large and level rear garden. However, I am not persuaded that this is an appropriate solution.

17. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

PAG Metcalfe

INSPECTOR