
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 September 2019 by Scott Britnell MSc FdA

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/T0355/D/19/3234272

47 Cookham Road, Maidenhead, SL6 7EW

- 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 P Akhtar against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
 - The application Ref 19/01253, dated 1 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 1 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is proposed single storey front extension and first floor rear extension with addition of 1 no new window to the right elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matters

3. The Council's decision notice refers to the application drawings as being received on 9 May 2019. However, the drawings provided with the appeal are date stamped received by the Council on 8 May 2019. In addition, the notice includes drawing numbers AKHCO 001 and 003. The drawings provided with the appeal include AKHCO 001 A and 003 B. These were submitted by the Council and I have considered the appeal against them.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in this matter are the effect of the proposal on:
 - the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area, having particular regard to the design of the rear extension and
 - highway safety in terms of off-street parking provision.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site comprises one half of a semi-detached pair of dwellings located on the west side of Cookham Road. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature with properties on the west of Cookham Road and Australia Avenue, to the rear, either semi-detached or terraced properties of

similar appearance. On the east side of Cookham Road there is more variety in terms of house styles and sizes.

Character and appearance

6. The proposal includes a single storey front extension to the side of the projecting gable wing, up to the boundary with the adjoining dwelling at No.45 Cookham Road. The Council do not object to this element of the proposal and from what I have seen I have no reason to reach a different conclusion.
7. The host property benefits from a single storey side and rear extension, which wraps around the north side and rear elevations of the dwelling. The depth of the rear extension is similar to that of the host property. The proposed first floor rear extension would extend the depth of the single storey rear extension and almost the entire width of the dwelling, not including the side extension. Although the roof of the extension would be set down from the main ridge, it would feature an uncharacteristic form of two hipped roofs with a central valley. Due to its design, form, scale, bulk and massing, this extension would result in an over dominant and incongruous addition to the property that would be harmful to its character and appearance.
8. The contribution that the host property makes to the character and appearance of the area would be reduced as a result. Although sited at the rear of the property, its uncharacteristic extended form would be visible from the public realm on Australia Avenue to the rear and the gardens of surrounding properties. Consequently, it would be likely to reduce nearby occupiers' appreciation of the quality of the environment within which they live.
9. I have been referred to the neighbouring properties at Nos 49 Cookham Road and 1 Australia Avenue, where two storey extensions have been approved by the Council. The appellant has provided a copy of the approved elevation drawing and I have received nothing from the Council to dispute that this shows the approved scheme, or that the permission is extant. Although the approved extensions appear similar in scale to the appeal proposal, they are of a different design. Moreover, the extensions are replicated across both adjoining properties. This would provide a degree of symmetry that is absent in the appeal case, wherein the proposal would significantly erode the symmetry of the semi-detached pair of which it forms part. The planning permission granted at the neighbouring properties does not justify the unacceptable development proposed.
10. In light of the foregoing I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area, in conflict with Policy H14 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Plan (2003) and emerging Policies SP2 and SP3 of the Borough Local Plan Submission Version (2017). These policies seek, among other things, to ensure that development is of high quality design and should not cause harm to the character of the surrounding area.
11. Policy DG1 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Plan (2003) referred to in the Council's decision notice appears to relate to new development schemes, as opposed to extensions to existing buildings. Consequently, I find no conflict with this policy.

Highway Safety

12. The appellant submits that there is space to the front of the property for 5 vehicles to park, albeit the application drawings indicate that there is space on the existing drive for 4 cars. The Council dispute this, considering that there are discrepancies between two of the drawings in respect of the parking area. Whilst noting the Council's submissions in this regard, I observed on my site visit that the area to the front of the dwelling was block paved, upon which 3 vehicles were parked.
13. However, the single storey front extension, would reduce the size of the hard surfaced area to the front of the dwelling and accordingly the space within which to park vehicles. The proposed space to the front of the lounge window would be likely to be unusable, particularly if the car parking space to the front of the dining window was in use. Moreover, the three adjoining car parking spaces proposed would be unlikely to be practical to use at the same time because of the limited size of this area.
14. In light of my observations and on the evidence before me, there is no certainty that the three off-road car parking spaces required by the Council in this case could be provided. As such it is likely that vehicles associated with the extended dwelling would park upon the highway, in close proximity to the property.
15. Whilst I observed that there were double yellow lines in the highway to the front of the appeal site, and a large number of vehicles parking within the road and upon the pavement in Australia Avenue, there did appear to be space within Cookham Road, a short distance from the appeal site for vehicles to park at the time of my site visit. There is no evidence before me to suggest that on-street parking in the area has reached saturation point or that parking associated with the proposal would result in harm to pedestrian or vehicle safety.
16. I conclude that while the appellant has failed to demonstrate that off-street parking could be provided at the level required by the Council, based upon the evidence before me, this would not affect the safe and efficient operation of the highway. Accordingly there would be no conflict with the purpose of Policy P4 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Plan (2003) which sets out maximum parking standards.

Conclusion and Recommendation

17. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Scott Britnell

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

18. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR