
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 November 2019

by R Norman BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/T0355/D/19/3235624

Meadow View, Bedford Lane, Sunningdale, Ascot SL5 0NP

- 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 Mrs C Curtis against the decision of Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
 - The application Ref 19/01107, dated 18 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 11 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is a two storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey rear extension at Meadow View, Bedford Lane, Sunningdale, Ascot SL5 0NP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/01107, dated 18 April 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing Numbers: 17.127.001; 17.127.101B; 17.127.110B; 17.127.111B; and 17.127.120C.
 - 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.

Procedural Matters

2. The Borough Local Plan Submission Document has been submitted for examination. The Council, in their report, list emerging Policies SP1, SP2, SP3 and SP5 as being relevant to the proposed development. However, I have not been made aware of whether there are any unresolved objections to these policies, nor is it clear how far the examination has progressed. I therefore find that the above policies carry limited weight and I have therefore considered the proposal against the adopted policies.
3. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:

- Whether the development would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework and development plan policies; and
- the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.

Reasons

Green Belt

5. Paragraph 143 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) (the Framework) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 145 goes on to identify that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt subject to a number of exceptions. These exceptions include the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Policy GB4 of The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (Local Plan) reflects this and identifies that extensions to existing dwellings will only be approved where they would not cause a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling.
6. The Council have identified that the proposal would represent around a 37% increase in the floor space of the dwelling which they consider to be in accordance with the aims of Policy GB4. I find that the proposed extension would not be excessive nor disproportionate when considered against the size of the original dwelling and therefore I agree with the Council on this matter.
7. Accordingly, the proposed extension would meet the exceptions listed in paragraph 145 of the Framework and would comply with Policy GB4 of the Local Plan and would therefore not be inappropriate development within the Green Belt. As such there is no requirement to consider the need for very special circumstances in this instance.

Character and Appearance

8. The host building is an attractively designed, semi-detached dwelling set within a large curtilage. It is largely screened from Bedford Lane by dense hedging, which is punctuated by the driveway into the site. There is a large TPO tree and area of private garden to the rear of the property.
9. The proposed extension would sit in line with the existing side elevation and would extend across the majority of the rear elevation. It would be set down from the existing ridge and the roof would slope down to the rear. Two dormers would be introduced into the rear roof plane.
10. The existing property is well screened from the road however the side elevation of the proposal would be partially visible from the driveway. The subservience to the host dwelling, siting and overall design of the proposed extension, would serve to reduce its overall bulk and ensure that it would not appear excessive or dominant.

11. The proposed roof form has been designed to avoid adverse impacts on the protected tree whilst allowing suitable living space within the property. The proposed roof form would not appear out of keeping with the host dwelling and views of this would be limited as a result of the set back of the property and the siting of the proposed extension. I find that the overall design of the roof compliments the appearance of the existing dwelling. Furthermore, the designs of properties and their roof forms in the surrounding area show some variation. As such, I find that the proposed extension would not appear bulky or incongruous, nor would it harm the rural character and appearance of the semi-detached properties or the area.
12. The adjoining property has a large rear extension, which would remain visible above and to the rear of the host property and proposed extension. Whilst I note the Council's comments about the design of the roof of the neighbouring extension, I find that the proposed development would not be harmful for the above reasons.
13. Consequently, the proposed development would not be unduly harmful to the character and appearance of the host property or the area and would therefore comply with Policies H14 and DG1 of the Local Plan. These seek to ensure that extensions do not have any adverse effects on the character or appearance of the original property, neighbouring properties or the area and should pay special attention to the roofscape of buildings, amongst other things. It would also comply with the aims of Policy DG3.1 of the Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale Neighbourhood Plan 2011 – 2026 (2014) which requires all new development to demonstrate good quality design and respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area, amongst other things.

Conditions

14. In addition to the standard time limit condition I have imposed a condition listing the approved plans as this provides certainty. A condition for the external materials to match the existing dwelling is necessary in the interests of the visual character of the site and surroundings. The Council have suggested no additional conditions and I consider none to be necessary.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

R Norman

INSPECTOR