



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 January 2020 by Ben Phillips Bsc Msc

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

An appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/D/19/3238006

26 Clayhill Road, Burghfield Common, Reading, RG7 3HE

- 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 D Holder against the decision of West Berkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01134/HOUSE, dated 25 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as a first and ground floor rear extension.
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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 appellant has submitted revised drawings within his statement and requested that they be considered. Although the Council was provided with the revised drawings, it is clear from the Officer report that they were considered 'as draft amendments for comment only', and that its decision was made on the plans originally submitted with the application. I have considered the appeal proposal on the same basis, as to do otherwise would deprive those who should have been consulted of the change in design that opportunity.
4. On my site visit I noted that the 'existing plans' submitted with the application are not representative of the property as now built on site. I have based my assessment of the proposal on what I observed on my visit and the proposed drawings considered by the Council.
5. The Council has referenced the Supplementary Planning Guidance Document Quality Design – West Berkshire in both of its refusal reasons. This document seems to relate to new dwellings and larger developments, and in the absence of not being directed to any specific part, I have not taken it into consideration in this case.

Main Issues

6. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposed extensions on:

- the character and appearance of the dwelling and surrounding area; and
- the living conditions of the occupiers of Nos 24 and 28 Clayhill Road, with particular regard to outlook and light.

Character and Appearance

7. Clayhill Road is a lengthy mostly residential thoroughfare, characterised by detached properties of varying scale and appearance.
8. The appeal property is a detached dwelling, which has been extended to the rear with a two storey and a single storey extension. The new extension would substantially increase the rearward projection of the property at first floor level and would, taken with the existing extension result in a disproportionately large addition to this property. This would overwhelm the original design and appearance of the property and would result in significant harm to its character and appearance.
9. Although sited to the rear of the property, the extension would be apparent from Clayhill Road within the vicinity of the site, where its rearward projection would be an obvious and uncharacteristic addition, at odds with nearby well-proportioned development. It would also be visible from neighbouring properties and gardens.
10. In light of the foregoing, I conclude that the proposed extension would be out of keeping with and harmful to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area. Accordingly, there is conflict with Policies CS 14 and CS 19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 Development Plan Document (CS), which advocate that new development should deliver high quality design that respects, enhances and is appropriate to the existing character and appearance of the area. These policies are consistent with paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework which requires, amongst other matters that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments add to the overall quality of the area, are sympathetic to local character and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture. There would also be conflict with the guidance within the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance document (SPG) House Extensions, which states that extensions should be subservient to and not dominate the original dwelling.

Living Conditions

11. The new extension would be set away from the party boundary with No 28. Although it would be visible from the rear of this property, including from the conservatory and rear garden, I consider that it would be located sufficiently far away to ensure that harm to the outlook of the occupiers of this property would not result. Moreover, given the orientation of the extension and the separation distance between, I am satisfied that light to the rear of this property and its garden would not be reduced to a degree that would be harmful to its occupiers' living conditions.

12. However, the new extension would be located close to the party boundary with No 24. Whilst it would not project significantly beyond the single storey extension at the rear of this property, and as such would not be harmful to the outlook from the windows in this part of the house or to light reaching them, it would project some distance beyond the rear first floor window closest to No 26. Because of its scale, close proximity and rearward projection, it would appear as an intrusive feature in the outlook from this window, and would be overbearing. It would also have an enclosing effect upon this window and would be likely to reduce light reaching this room, including sun light in the morning. The proposal would make this rear room of No 24 less pleasant to use as a result and it follows that the living conditions of the occupiers of this property would be harmed by the new extension.
13. I note that the appellant considers that the '45 degree rule' is complied with, but the drawing in this regard does not appear to reflect the proposed extension. Accordingly, this does not lead me to alter the conclusion that I have reached above.
14. Given my findings, I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the living conditions of nearby occupiers at No 24 Clayhill Road, in conflict with CS Policy CS 14 which requires, amongst other matters that new development makes a positive contribution to the quality of life in West Berkshire. There would also be conflict with the advice given in the SPG House Extensions in terms of the proposal's effect on neighbours.

Recommendation

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

B Phillips

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

16. 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