



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: 12th March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/D/19/3237818

1 Links Drive, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 4YT

- 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 Lika against the decision of Reading Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 190988, dated 20 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as a two storey side 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.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are:
 - the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the existing property and surrounding area; and
 - the effect of the proposed extension on the living conditions of the occupants of No 224a Norcot Road, with particular regard to outlook.

Character and Appearance

4. Links Drive is part of a wider residential area located west of the centre of Reading, within the suburb of Tilehurst. The wider residential area is mostly characterised by two storey semi-detached properties of various appearance and design, whilst Links Drive itself is a cul de sac consisting of properties of a traditional semi-detached appearance, set back from the highway with off road parking and a consistent gap and rhythm between properties. Given the siting of No 1, it is set above and prominent from Norcot Road to the north.
5. The proposed extension would be set off the boundary of the site and would be slightly set back at first floor level and set down from the ridge. In this regard, the proposal follows the guidance on side extensions set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'A Design Guide to House Extensions'.

6. However, the design of the extension with its uncharacteristic gable features and its width relative to the host property and its attached neighbour would have a significant unbalancing effect upon this pair of properties. Harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the semidetached pair of dwellings would result. The contribution that the dwellings make to the character and appearance of the area would be diminished as a result of the extension. As a consequence, and given the prominent location of the appeal property above Norcot Road, I find that harm to the character and appearance of the area would also result.
7. As such, it is concluded that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing property and the surrounding area. There would therefore be conflict with Policy CS7 of the Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2008 (CS) and Policy DM9 of the Reading Borough Local Development Framework Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (DPD) which collectively require that new development is of a high design quality which reinforces local character and distinctiveness, with house extensions respecting the character of the house and neighbouring properties. The proposal also conflicts with the character objectives of the SPG.

Living Conditions

8. The proposed extension would take the side wall of the host property closer to party boundary with No 224a Norcot Road. Within the side elevation of this property I observed a first-floor side elevation window, which is obscure glazed and two windows/door on the ground floor, which is submitted serve a kitchen. The new extension would be visible from these windows and door.
9. Given the angled location of the appeal property to No 224a and the gap that would remain between the side elevation of the extension and the side of this property, I consider that the extension would not be overbearing on the outlook from the windows and doors in the side of No 224a to the degree that it would make the rooms that these features serve less pleasant to use.
10. The extension would not extend significantly beyond the rear elevation of No 224a, beyond which is this property's private garden. The staggered design of the extension and its relationship to rear facing windows and the rear garden area of No 224a would ensure that it would not be overbearing or make the rear rooms or garden less pleasant to use.
11. Concern has been raised that the proposal would affect light reaching the bathroom and kitchen of No 224a. These windows are easterly facing and although the extension would be constructed on open space to the side of the host property, I have no substantive evidence before me to demonstrate that it would result in a loss of light to the rooms referred to above. This is not a determining factor in this appeal. It is noteworthy that the Council did not refer to loss of light to neighbouring occupiers in its decision notice.
12. It is understood that a previous application was also refused for a similar impact upon No 224a, however the details of this proposal is not before me and in any case, I have considered the proposal on the merits of the case.
13. In light of the forgoing, I conclude that the proposed extension would not be unneighbourly, and would not have a detrimental effect on the living conditions

of the occupants of No 224a Norcot Road. There is therefore no conflict with DPD Policy DM4 which seeks to safeguard amenity. Moreover, there would be no conflict with the SPG in this regard.

Recommendation

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

B Phillips

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. 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