
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 July 2020 by Emma Worby BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Andrew Owen BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/D/20/3247303

296 Desborough Avenue, High Wycombe HP11 2TJ

- 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 Stephanie and Katherine Sibley-Denne against the decision of Wycombe District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/07542/FUL, dated 18 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 15 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side extension and rear loft dormer conversion.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeals 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 the appeal are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area,
 - the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of the occupiers of No. 298 Desborough Avenue, in relation to outlook.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal property is a two-storey detached dwelling with a single-storey link attached garage to the side. It is located within a residential setting made up of detached and semi-detached properties that are set back from the road, on spacious plots and with varied appearances. The proposal includes a two-storey side extension to replace the existing garage and a loft conversion with alterations to the roof and a box dormer to the rear.
5. The proposed side extension would substantially occupy the current first floor gap between the appeal property and the neighbouring dwelling at No.298. This gap currently has a positive impact on the site and the surrounding area,

contributing to its open and spacious nature. Therefore, its loss would be harmful to the overall streetscene resulting in a more cramped appearance that would be out of keeping with the character of the area. It would be set back from the front elevation and occupy a similar ground floor area to the existing garage. However, its two-storey height would be much more dominant and therefore not a subservient addition to the original dwelling.

6. The proposed rear dormer would have limited visibility from the road and, although it is large in size, it has been set back from the eaves and the side elevations of the main dwelling so as to not appear as a full storey. The dormer would be in keeping with the surrounding area, as there are many other similar examples in close proximity to the site. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposed loft conversion and rear dormer would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or surrounding area.
7. Although it has been concluded that no harm would result from the proposed dormer and loft conversion, the proposed side extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area and therefore would be contrary to Policies DM35 and DM36 of the Wycombe District Local Plan (2019). These policies ensure that all new development improves and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area and existing property.

Living Conditions

8. The main dwelling at No.298 is separated from the shared boundary with the appeal site by approximately 2 metres. However, the proposed side extension would be directly adjacent to this joint boundary and therefore would still be in close proximity to the side elevation of No.298. Due to the use of a hipped roof on the proposed extension and the higher ground level of the dwelling at No.298, the outlook from the first and second floor windows on the side elevation of this neighbouring property would not be impinged by the proposed development. However, there are also three ground floor windows on the side elevation facing the appeal site. The significant increase in height and depth of the proposed side extension compared to the existing garage, along with its close proximity, would result in a significant sense of enclosure. This would give rise to a harmful impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of No.298 when using the rooms served by these ground floor windows.
9. The appellant has stated that the windows on the side elevation of No.298 do not serve habitable rooms, albeit no evidence has been provided to show this. Nevertheless, although the impact may be less significant on windows which do not serve habitable rooms, such as hallways, there would still be some impact upon the outlook from them.
10. Therefore, the proposed development would be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of No.298 Desborough Avenue and would be contrary to Policy DM36 of the Wycombe District Local Plan (2019), which requires extensions and alterations to existing dwellings to preserve the amenities of neighbouring properties.

Conclusions and Recommendation

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

Emma Worby

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR