



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 9 February 2021

by R E Jones BSc (Hons), DipTP, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/D/20/3263163

1087 Oxford Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG31 6YE

- 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 Stuart Brown against the decision of West Berkshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01263/HOUSE, dated 4 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 24 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing car port, second storey side and single storey front extensions and garage conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing car port, second storey side and single storey front extensions and garage conversion at 1087 Oxford Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG13 6YE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/0163/HOUSE, dated 4 June 2020, 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 drawings: Location Plan and Block Plan; 21719-04 Rev AB; 21719-05 Rev C and 21719-06 Rev C.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development shall be those specified in the application form.
 - 4) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the first floor windows in the east elevation of the side extension shall be fitted with obscured glazing and shall be top level opening only at 1.7m above the floor level of the room in which the window is installed. The windows shall be permanently retained in that condition thereafter.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of No 1085 Oxford Road (No 1085), with particular reference to outlook.

Reasons

3. The proposed first floor side extension (side extension) would face a flank wall window serving a first-floor bedroom at No 1085. This window is wide, yet squat, and existing views out of it are somewhat limited given its shape and

position just below the roof eaves. There is a larger and taller flank wall window serving this neighbouring bedroom which has oblique views towards the front forecourt area and the street beyond. This bedroom is considered to receive its primary outlook from the larger window, given its greater proportions and orientation towards the street.

4. The proposed side extension would maintain a distance of around 3.7m from the smaller bedroom window at No 1085. This is an acceptable gap that would allow for the continued if somewhat limited views from that smaller window towards the rear garden and the front forecourt area. Moreover, the physical scale of the proposed side extension would not appear excessive or domineering, when viewed from the smaller window, given its flat roof formation and the adequate separation distance it would maintain. In terms of the larger window serving the bedroom, this would not directly face the proposed side extension, whilst being positioned further forward. Therefore, the outlook from that window would be largely unaffected by the proposal. Accordingly, there would be no unacceptable effect upon the outlook of occupiers of the bedroom.
5. The Council refers to guidance in its Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document (2006) (SPD) where habitable room windows in dwellings are required to maintain a distance of 21m between one another. However, the SPD is specific in stating that this guidance relates to matters of privacy and daylight. Given that the main issue of the appeal relates to outlook, the desired separation distance set out in the guidance would not apply in this case.
6. Therefore, the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of No 1085 Oxford Road, with particular reference to outlook. It would therefore comply with Policy CS14 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026), which amongst other things, requires proposals to respect the surrounding area and uses. The proposal would also accord with the guidance in the SPD where it requires new developments to ensure neighbouring outlook is not unduly restricted. Lastly, the proposal would align with the provisions of paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework which, amongst other things, requires a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers.

Conditions

7. In addition to the standard time limit condition I have considered it necessary to include a schedule of plans that the development relates to, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of certainty. A condition relating to the construction of the extension in materials to match the existing dwelling is necessary to safeguard the character and appearance of the area. Finally, it is necessary in the interests of neighbouring privacy that obscure glazing at first floor flank wall windows in the east elevation of the proposal is installed.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

RE Jones

INSPECTOR