



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 December 2021

by Robin Buchanan BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/D/21/3275990

26 Hudson Road, Woodley, Wokingham RG5 4EW

- 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 J Littlewood against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 211199, dated 6 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is a first floor side/rear extension over existing ground floor side extension with pitched roof and four number rooflights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a first floor side/rear extension over existing ground floor side extension with pitched roof and four number rooflights at 26 Hudson Road, Woodley, Wokingham RG5 4EW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 211199, dated 6 April 2021, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr J Littlewood against Wokingham Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

4. The host property is a semi-detached, two-storey house on a corner plot at the junction of Millbank Crescent and Hudson Road. Its design is straightforward and typical of most houses in this residential estate which also have an 'open plan' front garden layout. The pairs of houses are arranged in generally well-spaced frontages, set back some distance from roads and, at junctions, further behind wide grass verges. Despite that a number of houses have been previously extended, including to the side at ground or also first floor level, there remains a broad homogeneity to the appearance and layout of these houses. There is also a tangible sense of spaciousness to this residential development. These characteristics are locally distinctive.
5. The first floor side extension would overlay an existing flat roofed ground floor side extension. The design and materials would reflect the original form of the house, including a front-to-back sloping gable end roof at the same pitch and

eaves level with a significantly lower ridge height. The front elevation would be deeply recessed behind the front of the house and it would not project beyond the rear elevation of the two-storey part of the house by an excessive distance. The width of the extension would be more than half that of the house, but significantly less than double and a smaller addition overall taking the semi-detached pair of houses together as a single block.

6. Consequently, the proposal would not itself be excessive in size or scale and massing or disproportionate in relation to the house. Furthermore, this subservient addition would therefore be readily assimilated as part of the house without fundamentally changing its inherent semblance.
7. Built form at first floor level and roof would be closer to the adjoining house at the rear and stepped further out at the side towards Millbank Crescent. However, there would remain a substantial gap to this house, though the proposal would accentuate the staggered alignment of adjoining houses on the south side approach to the junction. Nonetheless, this effect would not be manifestly out of keeping given the curved part of this frontage which arcs forward of the appeal site further along Millbank Crescent. Moreover, it would leave a significant gap to the appeal site boundary and to the facing houses on the opposite side of this road. It would also not intrude into any part of the wide grass verge at the junction.
8. Consequently, the proposal would not appear cramped in relation to existing development or unduly prominent and, as a result, would not significantly erode openness at this corner of the junction. Furthermore, it would obscure the somewhat utilitarian existing side extension and, in this respect, have a positive visual effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.
9. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposal would not be an incongruous or alien form of development. It would not cause harm to the character or appearance of the host property or the area, including as it would be observed in any of the short or longer public streetscene views from any direction. Accordingly, it would comply with the Council's Core Strategy¹ Policies CP1 and CP3. These policies include that development should maintain a high quality environment and be high quality in design. It should also be appropriate in scale, mass, layout, built-form, height and materials and in relation to the character of the area, including buildings and spaces. This would reflect section 4.11 and R23 of the Council's Borough Design Guide².
10. It would also be consistent with objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) to achieve well-designed places. It would add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment, and maintain a strong sense of place. This would be aligned with the first three 'characteristics' of well-designed places set out in the National Design Guide.

Other Matters

11. I have been referred to other residential extensions. Albeit located nearby, the circumstances of those sites and developments are not the same as in this appeal and some were considered in a different planning policy or guidance

¹ Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document, January 2010

² Wokingham Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, June 2012

context. They are not, therefore, comparable and I have, in any event, considered the proposal on its individual planning merits.

Conditions

12. The Council has suggested some conditions. I have considered these, and where necessary modified the wording in the interests of clarity, in light of the tests in Framework paragraph 56 and Planning Practice Guidance. In addition to the standard time limit condition, conditions are necessary to specify the approved plans, to ensure certainty, and so that the development is carried out with external materials that match those used in the host property. Both of these conditions are in the interests of the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above I conclude that, subject to conditions, the proposal is acceptable and therefore the appeal should succeed.

Robin Buchanan

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions (3)

- 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:
 - 2111 PL01 Location, block and site plan
 - Existing
 - 2111 PL02 Ground floor plan
 - 2111 PL03 First floor plan
 - 2111 PL04 Roof plan
 - 2111 PL05 East elevation - front
 - 2111 PL06 North elevation – rear
 - 2111 PL07 South elevation - neighbours
 - 2111 PL08 West elevation – side Millbank Cr
 - 2111 PL09 3d sketches
 - 2111 PL10 3d floor plans
 - Proposed
 - 2111 PL22 Ground floor plan
 - 2111 PL23 First floor plan
 - 2111 PL24 Roof plan
 - 2111 PL25 East elevation - front
 - 2111 PL26 North elevation – rear
 - 2111 PL27 South elevation - neighbours
 - 2111 PL28 West elevation – side Millbank Cr
 - 2111 PL29 3d sketches
 - 2111 PL30 3d floor plans
- 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.