



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 February 2022

by Oliver Marigold BSc DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th March 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/T0355/D/21/3280490

The Gables, 49 Whyteladyes Lane, Cookham, Maidenhead SL6 9LT

- 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 Simon Tong against the decision of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
 - The application Ref 21/01397, dated 5 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 6 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side and rear extension with associated internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. Since the Council's decision to refuse planning permission, on 8 February 2022 it adopted a new Development Plan, the Borough Local Plan 2013-2033. The two policies quoted in the Council's decision have been replaced by Policies QP1 and QP3. I have sought comments in respect of this change from both parties which I have taken into account in my decision.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached dwelling, and its design, form, detailing and materials give it a distinctive appearance in contrast to the more modern properties on Whyteladyes Road.
5. The proposed extension, to the side and rear of the property, would incorporate a gabled roof form, with a pitch and style intended to reflect that of the existing house. It would also use matching tiles and brickwork. While its appearance seeks to mimic the other side of the existing front elevation, their differing proportions and design limits the extent to which this is successful.
6. In particular, although the additional surface area of the front wall would be relatively small, the length and height of the extension would result in it having a significant bulk and mass. This would be exacerbated by the large gable forms on either side of the extension. Even with the presence of ornamental fixtures adding height and contrast, the proposal's slightly lower ridge height would do little to differentiate between old and new. The extension's overall

size means it would not be subordinate to its host, contrary to the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Wide Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2020 (the Borough Wide SPD).

7. The extension's position would be set well back from the front of the house, the aim of which is to balance the site and the original property, and to preserve its detailing. However, its siting means it would have relatively little overlap with the rest of the house, making it appear almost as a separate building when viewed from the front.
8. In addition, while a window from the existing modest catslide extension would be retained, the position and size of the proposed extension's front windows would have a largely blank, featureless appearance. Furthermore, to the rear of the building, the proposed roof would effectively 'cut off' part of the existing gable's roof, giving a visually jarring effect. Although the rear elevation is not prominent in public views, this would conflict with the requirement of the Cookham Village Design Statement SPD 2013 (the Cookham SPD) that proposals must sympathetically reflect the design of the original building.
9. Overall, the proposal would significantly harm the building's appearance, cohesiveness and legibility. I recognise that the property is screened to some extent by existing tall boundary treatments and by the car port and nearby dwellings. Nevertheless, from my visit I saw that the extension would be clearly visible from Whyteladyes Road, with glimpses of the side elevation also being available from Arthurs Close. As a result, the proposal would harm the area's character and appearance.
10. I have borne in mind that following adoption of the new Development Plan, two sites very close to the appeal property have been allocated for large-scale housing development. However, the potential change to the area's character in the future does not justify the harm I have identified.
11. The appellant also makes the point that a similar mass to the proposal could be achieved at first floor level using permitted development rights, and that such a scheme could be less cohesive and cover the attractive chimney elements and rear gable end. Even so, no specific alternative scheme has been provided to me and I am not convinced that such a proposal would cause greater harm than the appeal scheme.
12. I accept that the building would have sufficient garden space and separation distance from its neighbours, and that its footprint within its plot would not be excessive in comparison with others. I appreciate the need to adapt an older property to meet modern living demands and I have also considered the comments from third parties.
13. Nevertheless, I conclude that the proposed extension would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area. It would therefore fail to comply with Policies QP1 and QP3 of the Borough Local Plan 2013-2033, which require a high quality of design that makes a positive contribution to its location. For the reasons given above, it would also conflict with the Cookham SPD and the Borough Wide SPD, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework's emphasis on visually attractive, well-designed buildings.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, having considered the Development Plan as a whole and all material considerations, the appeal should be dismissed.

Oliver Marigold

INSPECTOR