



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 March 2022

by P D Sedgwick BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/21/3288548

29 Woodchester Park, Knotty Green, Beaconsfield, HP9 2TU

- 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 & Mrs Sergeant against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref PL/21/3075/FA, dated 2 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 29 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is Single storey side extension to include integral garage and living space in the loft, first floor front extension over existing bay window, single storey rear and side extension, changes to windows and doors, rear terrace and installation of entrance gates.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the single storey side extension to include integral garage and living space in the loft and the single storey side extension. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the first floor front extension over existing bay window, single storey rear extension, changes to windows and doors, rear terrace and installation of entrance gates and planning permission is granted for the first floor front extension over existing bay window, single storey rear extension, changes to windows and doors, rear terrace and installation of entrance gates at 29 Woodchester Park, Knotty Green, Beaconsfield, HP9 2TU, in accordance with the terms of the application, PL/21/3075/FA, dated 2 August 2021, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and 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 plans: Dwg Nos: 001 Rev A, 002 Rev A, 003 Rev A, 004 Rev A, 005 Rev A, 006 Rev A, 007 Rev A, 008 Rev A, 009 Rev A, 010 Rev A, 011 Rev A, 013 Rev A, 014 Rev A.
 - 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.

Preliminary Matter

2. In the interests of clarity, in the banner heading above I have referred to the description of the proposal given by the appellant on the appeal form as this gives a clear description of the type of development proposed which reflects that used by the Council in their decision notice.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the building and area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached house on a corner where the road bends and continues to a turning head. Consequently, this section of Woodchester Park has the appearance of a cul-de-sac. Houses are set back from the road behind front drives and lawned areas with low boundary features, such as the post and rail fences at the front of the appeal property and several other houses. This gives an open informal appearance to this part of the road, reflected in its character typology described as 'open plan suburban' in the Chiltern and South Bucks Townscape Character Study (2017). Typically houses have staggered building lines resulting from 2 storey front projecting bays, and side garages set back behind the main building line. Garage roofs tend to be dual pitched and angled to reflect that of the main house.
5. The sides of the appeal property are visible because of its prominent corner location. Photographs submitted by the appellant demonstrate that existing trees and hedges to some extent screen the side elevations outside of the winter months. However, at the time of my visit the garage side of the property was clearly visible, and part of the opposite side elevation was also visible.
6. The staggered building line is accentuated from side views of the property, looking from the turning head end of the road towards it. The 2 storey bay projects forward furthest, followed by the main part of the house and then the garage, reflecting the staggered line of other houses nearby, as noted above. Despite the garage being attached, most of the gable end of the house is exposed with finishes comprising hanging tiles from the roof down to brickwork at ground floor level. The existing garage materials, roof pitch, and design, reflects that of the house creating a pleasing uniformity, particularly at the gable ends, which contributes to the character and appearance of the building and street scene. That uniformity would be lost as the proposed garage would be almost double the depth of the existing garage, extending forward of the main house and covering most of its gable end. Its roof would be part flat and part pitched. It would result in a bulky and incongruous addition which would interrupt the existing staggered building line and introduce a different roof form to the dual pitched roofs on the existing garage and house and be at odds with the building lines and roofs of other houses and garages nearby. As such it would harm both the appearance of the building and the wider street scene.
7. The Council's Residential Extensions and Householder Development Supplementary Planning Document (September 2013) (SPD) states that the Council does not generally encourage flat roofs but that they may be acceptable on single storey rear extensions or in locations where it would not be prominent, for example where there are flat roofs within the surrounding area. The single storey rear extension would be visible from the street in glimpses side on, but from this angle would appear as a modest addition to the rear of the property with no harm to its appearance or that of the street scene. The side extension which attaches to it would present a longer expanse of flat roof when viewed from the side. I appreciate that most views of it would be partial because of existing boundary fences, hedges, and trees, and its set back position. Nonetheless, it would fail to harmonise with the design of the house

and thus would harm its appearance and that of the street scene, particularly during the winter months, or if existing vegetation was removed or cutback. Although the appellant has indicated a willingness to maintain existing hedges and trees, some that would contribute to screening the proposal are outside the appellants land and as such their retention cannot be guaranteed.

8. I therefore conclude that the proposed development in respect of the side extensions would conflict with Policies GC1, H13, H15 and H17 of the Chiltern District Local Plan - 1997 (including alterations Adopted 29 May 2001) (Consolidated September 2007 & November 2011), Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District (Adopted November 2011), the SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) which require development to be of a high quality design that is in keeping with the existing dwelling and other buildings in the area.

Other Matters

9. I have had regard to examples provided by the appellant of garages at 2, 9 and 11 Woodchester Park. No 2 appears to be part of the original house design and matches the design of the neighbouring property. As such, it does not appear out of place or incongruous. Nos 9 and 11 are described as new houses and are not within the cul-de-sac of which the appeal site is part, and within which it shares design characteristics with other houses. They are not, therefore, directly comparable with the appeal proposal. In any case, I have come to my own view rather than relying on the approach the Council may have taken elsewhere.
10. In addition to the rear extension that I have found would be acceptable, the proposal includes an extension to the front first floor bay bringing it in line with the ground floor bay, alterations to windows mainly on the rear elevation, a new gate at the front of the driveway and a rear terrace. These elements are relatively minor and would not harm the character or appearance of the building or area. I also note that the Council considered them to be acceptable in its Officer Report. Although the rear extension attaches to the side extension it is physically and functionally severable. I therefore consider a split decision would be appropriate to allow planning permission for these elements of the proposal.

Conclusion and Conditions

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should succeed in relation to the first floor front extension over existing bay window, single storey rear extension, changes to windows and doors, rear terrace, and installation of entrance gates. However, in relation to the single storey side extension to include integral garage and living space in the loft, and the single storey side extension, the appeal should be dismissed.
12. I have attached the standard time limit condition and a plans condition as this provides certainty. I have also added a condition concerning materials to ensure a satisfactory appearance.

P D Sedgwick

INSPECTOR