

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 October 2023

**by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 11 January 2024**

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## **Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/D/23/3328749**

### **4 Antrim Close, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG22 5BS**

- 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 Miss Jan Littlewood against the decision of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
  - The application, Ref. 23/01307/HSE, dated 22 May 2023 was refused by notice dated 18 July 2023.
  - The development proposed is a single storey rear extension.
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## **Decision**

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey rear extension at 4 Antrim Close, Basingstoke in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. Ref. 23/01307/HSE, dated 22 May 2023 and subject to the following conditions:
  - 1) The development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this Decision.
  - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
  - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: OS based Location Plan & Drawing No. 23/05-01A.

## **Main Issues**

2. The main issues are (i) the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings; (ii) the effect on the living conditions for adjoining occupiers as regards light and outlook, and (iii) whether the development would increase the risk of flooding.

## **Reasons**

3. I saw on my visit that the appeal dwelling is at the end of a terrace of four that forms part of a substantial development of a number of other terraces of the same design and external materials. The dwellings and their rear gardens are of a modest size and this, together with their terraced form and similar appearance, inevitably imposes constraints on the scope for acceptable
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alterations and additions if the distinctive character and appearance of the overall development is to be maintained.

4. On the first issue, the extension would be in a rear garden and at a lower level than Buckskin Lane. With its depth of 5m it would extend to within 2.8m of the plot's rear boundary and I can understand the Council's concern that this is disproportionately large in relation to the host dwelling.
5. However, the appellant has explained why an extension of this size and depth is needed and why the separate living area that it creates would be more useful than an extension across the full width of the dwelling. The latter would be an extension of a couple of metres less depth than the appeal scheme and can be seen on a number of other houses on the development, presumably having used their permitted development tolerances.
6. I am sympathetic to the appellant's requirements and in particular have taken into account that a single large new room is required for medical and care reasons associated with family members. Given the existing ground floor layout, this would be impractical with a wider and less deep extension. With that said, any development must also be acceptable in the public interest as this is at the heart of the planning process for the management of development.
7. In this regard, No. 4 is at the end of the terrace and any addition would be less visually disruptive than in a mid-terrace position with neighbouring houses to either side. Furthermore, the host dwelling's set-down position relative to the road combined with screening provided by the boundary fence, trees and bushes would have the effect of preventing the addition being easily noticeable and having a jarring effect on the street scene of Buckskin Lane.
8. In addition, the extension would have some design merit with a sloping tiled roof rather than a flat roof as often proposed for a rear addition. Bearing in mind also that an extension of a couple of metres lesser depth but of a full width across the house would have been possible as permitted development, I consider on the first issue that the extension would not be such as to result in an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings.
9. On the second issue, the officer's report explains that the proposed 5m depth extension would be intercepted by a notional 45-degree line taken from the centre point of the window to the ground floor living area of the adjoining property at No. 3. However, the extension would be well set back from the side boundary fence and the appeal scheme has been designed with the neighbours in mind as having a more favourable effect on their living conditions compared to a full width extension. The latter is considered to be more obstructive to the neighbour's light and outlook from their living room and the area of garden closest to the house. Although this forms part of the appellant's evidence, the absence of any objection from the occupiers of No. 3 would appear to confirm that the appeal proposal would not be perceived by them to have an adverse effect on their living conditions.
10. Turning to the third issue, the appeal application is technically deficient because of the absence of a Flood Risk Assessment ('FRA') required by Local Plan Policy EM7 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 ('the Framework') for a designated 'Critical Drainage Area'. Other than this designation I have no

information in this appeal on the cause of potential flooding and why in this case the proposed extension would increase the risk.

11. However, given that the appeal property is positioned within a large area of relatively high density housing I consider it unlikely that this increased risk (if it exists} would be a deciding factor, especially having regard to the permitted development fallback that has been taken advantage of by a number of occupiers of houses of the same design. I have also noted the appellant's comment that a proposed soakaway would be provided to assist with the increased rate of run off from the roof; that no change would be made to kitchen and sanitary facilities, and that the development would not increase the number of permanent occupiers.
12. Overall, although the decision in this case is finely balanced, I find that the proposed extension would not have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings and on the living conditions as regards outlook and light for the adjoining occupiers. Nor is there evidence from the Council that the proposal would actually increase flood risk, albeit I acknowledge that the onus was on the applicants to submit an FRA.
13. For these reasons I conclude that there would not be an unacceptable conflict with Policies EM7 & EM10 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011-2029 or with Government policies in the Framework taken as a whole. I shall therefore allow the appeal. A condition is needed to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. A condition stipulating matching external materials will secure a visually harmonious development.

*Martin Andrews*

INSPECTOR