
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 February 2024

by V Simpson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/D/23/3332928

8 Webbs Farm Close, Whitchurch, Hampshire, RG28 7RQ

- 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 NEON architecture against the decision of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 23/00738/HSE, dated 21 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 21 August 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as a single storey side extension and conversion of roof space above garage to provide work from home studies and replacement bedroom together with aesthetic improvements.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of two storey front and side extension over existing garage to provide work from home studies and replacement bedroom together with aesthetic improvements at 8 Webbs Farm Close, Whitchurch RG28 7RQ, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 23/00738/HSE, subject to the following conditions.
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 101 PL01, 112 PL02, 113 PL02, and 114 02.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 3) Except the cladding shown on the approved plans, the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted, shall be of matching appearance to those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development set out within the banner is taken from the application form. However, the appeal statement indicates that the development comprises the 'erection of two storey front and side extension over existing garage to provide work from home studies and replacement bedroom together with aesthetic improvements'. The Council dealt with the proposal on this basis. So shall I, because this description more accurately reflects the development indicated on the submitted plans than that stated on the application form. The description of the development set out within the formal decision reflects this.

3. Since the appeal was lodged, a revised National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) has been published. This has not raised any new matters which are determinative in this appeal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the living conditions available to the occupiers of number 6 Webbs Farm Close, with particular regard to outlook.

Reasons

5. The back of the house at number 6 Webbs Farm Close (number 6) faces a pitched roofed single-storey garage building and a 2-storey house on the appeal site. A side wall of this garage and tall close-boarded fencing to the front and rear of it, separate these 2 properties.
6. During my site visit, an area of planting adjacent to the garage was observed within the reasonably sized rear garden of number 6. Notwithstanding the degree of enclosure afforded by the garage and the fencing around other edges of this garden, occupiers of number 6 are nevertheless able to secure a decent outlook through windows in the rear of the house and within the rear garden.
7. The development, which would increase the scale and massing of the house on the appeal site, would be adjacent to part of the garden and relatively close to windows in the rear of the house at number 6. However, the depth of the side wall would be similar to that of the existing garage, and less than half the width of either the house or the rear garden at number 6. Furthermore, and although the extension would be taller than the existing garage, the roof would slope up away from number 6, and it would not overhang the rear garden of number 6 as much as the existing garage roof.
8. Therefore, and although much of the side and upper parts of the proposed development would be visible from within the house and garden of number 6, the development would not be oppressive in such views. Nor would it result in a harmful sense of enclosure either within the house or garden of number 6.
9. For the reasons given, the proposed development would not cause harm to the living conditions available to the occupiers of number 6 Webbs Farm Close, with particular regard to outlook. Consequently, and in this respect, it would comply with policy EM10 of the Basingstoke and Dean Local Plan (2011 to 2029) adopted May 2016. Amongst other things, this policy requires new development to provide a high quality of amenity for occupants of neighbouring properties.

Other Matters

10. The proposed extension would be stepped back from the front of the house and the street, and it would have lower eaves and ridge heights than the existing house. As such, it would not be prominent within the street scene, and it would not result in a harmful reduction in the outlook available to users of the street.

Conditions

11. The wording of the Council's suggested conditions has been amended where appropriate. This is for clarity and to meet the six tests outlined within paragraph 56 of the Framework.

12. The statutory condition which specifies the time-period for the implementation of the permission is imposed. A plans condition is also added, identifying the plans to which this permission relates.
13. Exterior cladding shown on the proposed plans, is not found on the host dwelling. The Council has found that such cladding would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, and I have no reason to conclude otherwise. Therefore, and with the exception of the cladding, a condition requiring the use of matching materials to those found in the existing dwelling is also imposed to protect the character and appearance of the area.
14. While the provision of a bat roost or bird nesting box on the extension could enhance the biodiversity value of the site, the need for such a condition has not been demonstrated.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above and having regard to the development plan as a whole, and any other relevant material considerations, I conclude that this appeal should be allowed.

V Simpson

INSPECTOR