



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 April 2024

by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07.05.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/T0355/D/23/3334970

11 Whyteladyes Lane, Cookham, Maidenhead SL6 9LZ

- 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 Alexis Austin against the decision of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
 - The application Ref 23/01884/FUL, dated 21 July 2023, was refused by notice dated 27 September 2023.
 - The development proposed is a first-floor side/rear extension and 1 no. rooflight.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene.

Reasons

3. Located on the southern side of Whyteladyes Lane, the appeal property is part of a row of semi-detached properties with garages to the side. This creates a wide separation and rhythm to the street scene.
4. The proposal would add a two-storey element to the side, flush with the front elevation and continuing the ridgeline. It would also project to the rear, across two-thirds of the elevation. This rear element is designed with a hipped roof form, but to maintain the height of the existing property has a flat roof section to the ridge.
5. The continuous design approach, and the scale of the proposed scheme fails to accord with principle 10.1 of the Borough Wide Design Guide (BWDG) which indicates that extensions will be expected to be subordinate and respond positively to the original building's form. Whilst the materials are to match and a gap of 1m is to be retained to the side, the bulk and form of the proposal would significantly disrupt the existing pattern of development. Currently, none of the semi-detached properties to this section of Whyteladyes Lane extend to the side at a first-floor level, and if the proposed form of extension were to be repeated on the neighbouring property there would be a loss of spaciousness and significant diminishment to the existing character of the area.

6. Planning permission has previously been granted for a similar form of extensions¹ to the appeal proposal, albeit designed in line with the approach set out in the BWDG to be set back and down. Whilst I understand the appellant's desire to align the frontage with the existing single-storey element, the extant scheme will have less presence in views along the street, thereby helping to maintain the visual gap and allowing the extension to be read as such.
7. There are some examples of similar extensions nearby, which the appellant has referred me to. Whilst the properties within Southwood Road are of a similar semi-detached form, the layout and juxtaposition between them are very different to the uniformity along Whyteladyes Lane. The alignment in Westwood Gardens is more akin, although the examples of extensions here are inset with a small single-storey element to the side. I do not find that these are directly comparable to the combined side and rear extension proposed, and in some cases the side extensions exemplify the harm to the character of the area through the loss of spaciousness. The Council also advise that many of the examples pre-date the BWDG (adopted June 2020) and while the design policies of the previous local plan may have been similar, I have to consider the scheme against the current development plan and the BWDG Supplementary Planning Document is a material consideration.
8. I acknowledge that the BWDG is guidance and that there are examples in the vicinity of non-subservient designs, nonetheless, each case is to be considered on its own merits. Overall, I find that the design, form and massing of the proposed development would dominate the host property to the detriment of its appearance and the prevailing character of the area.
9. Therefore, in conclusion, the proposed development is contrary to the guidance in the BWDG which in relation to extensions promotes subservience and Policy QP3 of the Borough Local Plan which requires high-quality design which respects and enhances the local environment. There would also be conflict with the design aspects of the National Planning Policy Framework (section 12).

Other Matters

10. The lack of objections and compliance with other aspects in terms of amenity and parking are neutral factors and do not outweigh the conflict with the development plan.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out, and having regard to all other matters raised the appeal is dismissed.

G Ellis

INSPECTOR

¹ Council reference 21/02167/FULL