



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 April 2025 by E Clifford BA (Hons) MA

Decision by Chris Forrett BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/X0415/D/25/3359159

5 Fernsleigh Close, Chalfont St. Peter, Buckinghamshire, SL9 0HR

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs A Roda against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council - East Area (Chiltern).
 - The application Ref is PL/24/2750/FA.
 - The development proposed is a part two storey / part single storey rear extension and new roof with increased ridge height and rear dormer window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a part two storey / part single storey rear extension and new roof with increased ridge height and rear dormer window at 5 Fernsleigh Close, Chalfont St. Peter, SL9 0HR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref PL/24/2750/FA, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - a) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - b) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos: 240819-01, 240819-02, 240819-03, and 240819-04.
 - c) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used on the existing dwelling.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. As part of the appeal submissions, a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment has been submitted and the Council have subsequently confirmed that this is acceptable, and I have no reason to disagree with that view. Consequently, my recommendation will concentrate on the remaining matters in dispute between the main parties.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area, and on the living conditions of 2-10 Wheeler's Orchard with particular regard to outlook.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance

5. The appeal property is set within an established close of detached properties of a similar age, and with broadly similar design features. The properties are set back from the road behind large, open gardens and the street has a quiet and residential character. The topography of the street slopes downwards from the entrance to the end of the close as well as from left to right, and this contributes to the open feel of the street scene, allowing views off to the west.
6. The proposed development would involve limited alterations to the street frontage of the property with the main visible change being the increase in ridge height of the resultant roof. Whilst it is accepted that this would alter the stepped roofscape of Fernsleigh Close, this feature is most pronounced on the opposite side of the road. In my view, the increase in ridge height and the altered roof shape, especially given its limited increase in pitch, would therefore not be visually obtrusive and would respect the massing of other properties along the street scene of Fernsleigh Close.
7. The main bulk of the proposal would be to the rear of the host dwelling and includes the alteration of the roof to form a crown roof and a substantial increase of the footprint and massing of the dwelling. That said, whilst the proposal would invariably increase the size, bulk and appearance of the dwelling, the roof form would not appear as an overly top-heavy structure, nor would the depth of the extension appear so excessive that it would unacceptably harm the overall character and appearance of the area. This is particularly the case given the size of the host dwelling, its plot, and its juxtaposition with the surrounding properties.
8. In coming to that view, I acknowledge that there are views of the appeal site from Rickmansworth Lane. However, the property is partially screened by the verdant nature of Rickmansworth Lane and the mature trees and hedges which line the property boundaries. Whilst the foliage is sparse in places, it nevertheless diffuses the view of the appeal site. These limited views mean that despite the proposed increase in size and massing of the dwelling, the impact on the character and appearance of the area would not be harmful.
9. Turning to the fenestration details, the rear elevation of the dwelling would have a significant increase in the amount of glazing when compared to the existing situation. However, in my view, the overall design concept and pattern of glazing is balanced and well-presented. In that sense it is entirely acceptable.
10. Consequently, I find that the proposed development would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the surrounding area, and would accord with Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy for the Chiltern District, the Chiltern Local Plan Policies GC1, H13 and H15, Policy H7 of the Chalfont St Peter Neighbourhood Plan, which amongst other matters seek to ensure that new development is of a high standard of design which respects the character of the surrounding area and that the character of appearance of the streetscene or locality would not be adversely affected. It would also accord with the Chiltern District 'Residential extension and householder development Supplementary Planning Document (HDSPD) and the overarching aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the National Design Guide.

Living Conditions

11. At my site visit I saw that the boundary of the appeal site to those properties located on Wheeler's Orchard is demarcated by mature shrubbery and trees. The view from the properties on Wheeler's Orchard is presently dominated by the verdant nature of this boundary, albeit that the roof of the appeal property is visible above the current landscaped boundary treatment.
12. The proposal would increase the roof height of the existing dwelling and would add a further visible element as a result of the two-storey rear extension meaning that there would be a change in the amount of built form visible from the rear of the properties on Wheeler's Orchard.
13. However, given the distance between the properties on Wheeler's Orchard and the appeal proposal itself, it would not be dominant or overbearing despite the land level changes between the respective dwellings when viewed from either the rear of these properties or their gardens. To that end, the proposal would not result in unacceptable living conditions for the occupiers of these properties.
14. Having regard to visual intrusion and potential privacy matters, there are no additional windows proposed on the southwestern elevation of the appeal property. However, there are two dormer windows proposed for the rear elevation. Whilst it is accepted that there is likely to be an increased degree of intervisibility between the appeal property and the neighbouring properties as a result of these dormer windows, the intervening angle and amount of greenery will sufficiently diffuse the sightline. Combined with the distance between the sites, I consider that there would not be an unacceptable increase in overlooking as a result of the proposed development.
15. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would not be harmful to the living conditions of the occupants of 2-10 Wheeler's Orchard. The proposal would accord with Policy H14 of the Chiltern Local Plan, which amongst other matters seeks to ensure that proposals do not have an overbearing appearance for neighbours or result in a significant reduction in privacy. It would also accord HDSPD, and the Framework.

Other Matters

16. I have also had regard to the other matters raised in the representations including the potential loss of privacy, loss of light and overshadowing, drainage matters, parking provision, birds and wildlife, and the impact on local facilities as a result of an increased population. However, none of these factors provide for a compelling reason why planning permission should be withheld.

Conditions

17. Other than the standard time limit condition, it is necessary to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans for the reason of certainty. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, a condition relating to matching materials is also necessary.
18. The Council have also requested conditions in relation to parking details and to restrict further windows to the south-west flank elevation. However, the existing driveway and garage are retained and whilst the increase in bedrooms may increase the demand for further parking, in my view, there is sufficient provision already at the appeal site.

19. In respect of potential new windows, any additional windows in the south-west elevation (above ground floor level) would require planning permission if they were not obscurely glazed and non-opening up to 1.7 metres above floor level. As such, I consider that any further restrictions on such windows are not necessary.

Conclusion and Recommendation

20. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed.

E Clifford

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

21. I have considered all the submitted evidence, and my representative's report, and on that basis the appeal is allowed.

Chris Forrett

INSPECTOR