
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 July 2025

by **O Marigold BSc DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/W/25/3364197

Wella House, Wella Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG22 4FQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr James Murphy of Knightspur Homes Ltd against Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
 - The application ref is 23/03132/FUL.
 - The development is proposed 4 storey extension to the north east elevation of Wella House for 9 flats (5 no. 1-bed and 4 no. 2-bed) with associated car parking, bin store and cycle parking, relocation of existing bin store and reconfiguration of part of existing car park.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for proposed 4 storey extension to the north east elevation of Wella House for 9 flats (5 no. 1-bed and 4 no. 2-bed) with associated car parking, bin store and cycle parking, relocation of existing bin store and reconfiguration of part of existing car park at Wella House, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG22 4FQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 23/03132/FUL, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by Knightspur Homes Ltd against Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters and Main Issues

3. The appeal results from the failure of the Council to determine the application within the prescribed period, and so there is no formal decision notice. The Council has confirmed that it would have granted planning permission had it been empowered to do so. Nevertheless, others have objected to the proposal for a range of reasons.
4. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on (1) the character and appearance of the area, and (2) the living conditions of existing occupiers, and whether it would provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers of the proposal.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

5. The site consists of a large former office block, now converted to residential use, surrounded by incidental grass landscaping. It is located at the edge of an employment area, with a range of building heights. There is other residential

development nearby, such as Park Heights, a block of flats behind the site. The proposal seeks to erect a four-storey extension to contain nine flats, on land used for landscaping and as a bin store. It would also include vehicle parking on the main frontage facing Wella Road.

6. The existing building retains a commercial appearance. Nevertheless, the extension would have a height, width and building lines that would reflect the existing building, without appearing excessively dominant. It would have a modern design, more akin to Park Heights, whilst not detracting from the current structure. The proposal would result in the loss of some of the existing grassed area around the building. However, it includes additional landscaping to help soften the effects of the new parking spaces. The changing of dark grey coloured windows to white, as referred to by the Council, could be secured by condition.
7. For the reasons given above, the proposal would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore accord with policy EM10 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (BDLP), adopted May 2016. This requires development to be informed by the local context in terms of siting and design.

Living Conditions

8. Wella House already contains a large number of residential units. The proposal would result in additional built form and windows being located broadly in front of Park View. Some opposing windows would have a large separation distance between them. Others would not directly face each other, but would have an angled position, limiting any overlooking effects. A degree of intervisibility is expected in built-up locations such as this. Consequently, I conclude that occupiers of existing and proposed flats would have adequate levels of light, outlook and privacy.
9. No additional outdoor recreation space is proposed for future occupiers. That said, the site is served by a park area close by, and Kingsmill Recreation Ground. There are other outside spaces at Glebe Gardens, Brookvale Park and The War Memorial Park. As one- and two-bedroom flats, they are unlikely to be occupied by large families, who are often most in need of such space.
10. The proposal would include some new units with balconies. However, these would only protrude on the ground floor, and so would not result in a loss of privacy to existing flats. Being for domestic use, they would be unlikely to result in pollution. The extension would have its own entrance providing direct access to some flats. Concerns have been raised about additional foot traffic through hallways, and from people using the shared access. Nevertheless, I have little reason to believe this would result in excessive noise or disturbance, and internal management is a matter for the appellant.
11. Bin storage would be provided within the existing parking area, together with an internal space in the proposed extension. I have little reason to believe that these areas would result in unacceptable levels of odour, noise or rats, or anti-social behaviour. A planning condition can ensure that the new bin stores are accessible to waste collectors. Conditions can control the effects of construction work, including noise and dust, and can ensure that future occupiers have acceptable living conditions, including in respect of noise. There is little to suggest that the proposal would adversely affect water pressure, although a planning condition can encourage sustainable water usage.

12. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would not unduly harm the living conditions of existing occupiers, and would provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers. As such, it would comply with the requirement of BDLP policy EM10 for a high quality of amenity for occupiers and neighbours of development.

Other Matters

13. The proposal would provide additional parking for its occupiers. This would be a shortfall compared to the Council's standard. However, the site has reasonably good access to services and facilities, including public transport. Cycle parking spaces would also be provided. No substantive evidence is before me to suggest that additional use of the accesses or roads would risk highway safety. I am mindful that the Highway Authority did not ultimately object to the scheme. Accordingly, the proposal would not adversely affect highway safety or the convenience of existing or future residents.
14. Concerns regarding fire safety, extraction vents, roof leaks, existing building management, and maintenance charges, are matters for the Building Regulations, or between the relevant parties, rather than being planning matters. Similarly, the effect on property values is not a planning consideration. Failure to accord with previously approved plans is something for the Council to pursue if justified. Any failure of notification is not a matter for me.

Conditions

15. The Council has provided a list of conditions, which I have assessed and where necessary amended, having regard to the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance. A condition requiring adherence to the approved plans is necessary for certainty. A Construction Environmental Management Plan and hours of work for construction are necessary in the interests of the living conditions of nearby properties. These must be pre-commencement conditions, because they will affect how works take place at an early stage of construction.
16. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, details and samples of external materials are necessary. For the same reason, a scheme of landscaping, and the replacement of trees and shrubs if required is needed. To ensure that occupiers have reasonable living conditions, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted Noise Impact Assessment, and a post-completion survey undertaken, with further measures if necessary.
17. Details of cycle storage are required to promote sustainable transport. To ensure highway safety, vehicular parking facilities shall be provided, including with appropriate drainage. The provision of refuse and recycling storage is necessary in the interests of the living conditions of occupiers and neighbours. To encourage sustainable water use, provision of measures to meet the water efficiency standard must be required by condition.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

O Marigold

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1100C, 1101E, 1210B, 1211A, 1212A, 1217, 1300A, 1310, 1510.
- 3) No development shall take place until a site-specific Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall include measures to reduce noise, vibration, dust and site lighting, consultation with the public, residents and the Council and ancillary operations, deliveries to and from the site, mitigation measures, and control measures for dust and other air-borne pollutants. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4) No work relating to the construction of the development hereby approved, including demolition or preparation, internal painting or fitting out, deliveries of construction materials or plant and machinery, or the removal of spoil from the site, shall take place other than between 0730 and 1800 on Mondays to Fridays, between 0800 and 1300 on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays or bank or public holidays.
- 5) Notwithstanding the approved plans, no development shall commence on site above slab level until a schedule of materials and finishes to be used, including samples, for the external walls, roofs, windows and doors of the proposed extension has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the details so approved.
- 6) No development shall take place on site above slab level until a scheme of hard and soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include specified species, planting sizes, spacing and numbers of trees/shrubs to be planted, and a maintenance programme. The works approved shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation of the extension hereby approved. Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.
- 7) All recommendations outlined in the Noise Assessment Technical Report: R10935-1 Rev 1 shall be implemented and shall be completed before the use hereby approved is first commenced. It shall be thereafter maintained in accordance with these recommendations.
- 8) No unit of accommodation hereby approved shall be occupied until a post-completion noise survey has been undertaken by a suitably qualified acoustic consultant, and a report submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The post completion testing shall assess performance of the measures against the internal noise criteria of Noise Assessment Technical Report: R10935-1 Rev 1.

The report shall set out the methodology, including that testing must be carried out prior to occupation of any unit. This shall include that the plots for testing are agreed in advance, that daytime construction noise shall be discounted from analysis, the location and position of testing in each room, the measuring equipment, instrumentation certification and calibration, the period of installation, and adjustment to reflect furnishing. All measurements shall be undertaken with windows closed and the Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery whole supply and extract system operating.

If the noise levels set out in s3.16 of the Noise Assessment Technical Report: R10935-1 Rev 1 are exceeded, additional noise mitigation measures, to ensure the appropriate noise levels can be met, shall be submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Authority, and implemented in full prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved.

- 9) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until provision is made for secure cycle parking facilities in accordance with the approved plans. The cycle storage shall thereafter be retained and maintained for that purpose in perpetuity.
- 10) The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until vehicle parking spaces have been constructed, surfaced and marked out in accordance with the approved plans. Prior to their first use, provision shall be made to direct run-off water to a permeable or porous area within the curtilage of the development, and thereafter maintained as such. The parking spaces shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than parking, loading or unloading of vehicles and be retained as such for the lifetime of the development.
- 11) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until provision has been made within the site for refuse and recycling storage prior to disposal, in accordance with the approved plans. The surface materials from the carriageway to the waste container collection point shall have level access and shall not hinder the collection of waste. The refuse and recycling areas shall be used only for the purposes of refuse and recycling storage or collection.
- 12) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a Construction Statement detailing how each proposed flat shall meet a water efficiency standard of 110 litres or less per person per day has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

End of Conditions