



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 July 2019 by Alex O'Doherty LLB(Hons) MSc

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DIPTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/D/19/3228362

30 Addison Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 8EN

- 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 Mrs Ringmaya Tamang against the decision of Reading Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 190062, dated 11 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 11 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear extension to create a new bathroom and WC at the rear of the existing building.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matters

3. A single storey side and rear extension, and a canopy, have already been built at the appeal property. This appeal does not include the canopy element, and therefore I have not taken the built canopy into account.
4. However, there are a number of material differences between the rear extension, as built, and the proposed development as shown on the plans. In particular, the plans show a clear gap between the highest point of the roof of the proposed extension and the windows in the original building above, but a large proportion of this gap has been filled in, due to the pitch of the roof, in the development as built. For the avoidance of doubt, this decision only relates to the proposed development as shown on the submitted plans.

Main Issues

5. The effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area, and on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 28 Addison Road, with particular reference to outlook.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and appearance

6. In common with the adjoining properties, and many other properties in the surrounding area, the appeal property shares a distinctive uniformity of design, in terms of its roof form and overall scale and mass. In this street, many properties are built as pairs, and contain important gaps which separate one pair from another. Although a number of dwellings in the terrace have been extended to the rear, this has been from the rear of the outrigger and not the side. The gaps between the respective outriggers is an important feature in defining the character and appearance of the terrace of which the appeal property forms part.
7. The proposal would extend to the rear and would also fill the important gap to the side of the property, at ground floor, resulting in an extension that would span the full width of the original property. Whilst the size of the extension would leave a good-sized garden area to the property, its design with a flat roof would not reflect the architectural characteristics of the host property. By filling in part of the gap between the host property and its neighbour, it would significantly erode the character and appearance of the property and the terrace of which it forms part.
8. My attention has been drawn to other extensions in the locality, including one at No 48 Addison Road. I was unable to observe this on my site visit, and in the absence of detailed drawings and information in respect of the circumstances of this case, I am unable to assess whether this development is directly comparable to the scheme before me. I did however observe other rear extensions in the locality, however these appeared to be projecting from the rear of the outrigger and not the side, thereby retaining the space between the respective properties, which the appeal proposal would not achieve. I also observed that the properties adjoining the appeal property had no rear extensions.
9. Given my findings above in respect of the harm that would be caused to the host property and terrace of which it forms part, it follows that the contribution these buildings make to the character and appearance of the area would be significantly diminished as a result of the extension. Although the extension would not be visible from the street, it would be from nearby properties and their gardens. Its incongruous design would be likely to reduce the appreciation nearby occupiers' place on the quality of the area within which they live. Harm to the character and appearance of the area would occur as a result of the proposal.
10. In light of the foregoing, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area, in conflict with Policy DM9 of the Reading Borough Local Development Framework: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (adopted October 2012 with alteration adopted 27 January 2015) (SDPD), which seeks to ensure that extensions to houses respect the character of the house, and the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and the street as a whole. Similarly, the proposal would conflict with Policy CS7 of the Reading Borough Local Development Framework: Core Strategy (adopted January 2008 with alteration adopted 27 January 2015) (CS), which seeks to promote development of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

The proposal would also conflict with the advice given in A Design Guide to House Extensions (Supplementary Planning Guidance) (dated May 2003) (SPG) which states that proposals for side extensions that results in the loss of a gap to the detriment of the local character will not normally be granted planning permission.

Living conditions

11. Given the orientation of No 28 to the appeal property, and given the height of the extension it would be unlikely that overshadowing of this property would occur.
12. I recognise that the proposal accords with the advice that rear extensions should not extend longer than 4 metres when measured from the back of the original house, as given the SPG. However, the extension as proposed also extends to the side of the existing outrigger and would be in close proximity to a number of windows in the side and in-set rear elevations of No 28.
13. Although these windows are currently close to the side elevation of No 30, the outlook from them is largely open because of the distance between the respective features. The new extension would be constructed on the party boundary and although being single storey, it would result in a tall blank wall in close proximity to these windows. The extension would be a prominent, dominant feature which would have a substantial enclosing effect and would be harmful to the outlook from these windows. The new extension would be likely to make the rooms that these windows serve less pleasant to use as a result. Additionally, the reduction in the width of the gap between Nos 28 and 30 would make the space immediately in front of these windows much less pleasant to use, due to the side wall of the extension's overbearing impact.
14. Given my findings above, I conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptably harmful impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 28 Addison Road, in conflict with Policy DM4 of the SDPD which seeks to ensure that development does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing residential properties. The proposal would also conflict with the advice given in the SPG which states that extensions should not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties.

Other Matters

15. The appellant has referred to a potential fall-back, in relation to permitted development rights under Class A of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO). However, whether or not a similar proposal could be constructed under permitted development rights is not a matter to be determined in the context of a section 78 appeal. Additionally, I have not been provided with sufficient evidence to demonstrate that a similar development would comply with the GPDO's requirements for both side and rear extensions, and as such I am not persuaded that there is a greater than a theoretical possibility that permitted development rights would be exercised. Limited weight is therefore given to this matter.

Conclusion and Recommendation

16. Based on the above, and having regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Alex O'Doherty

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

17. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

R C Kirby

INSPECTOR