

4/02311/12/FHA - PART TWO STOREY AND PART SINGLE STOREY SIDE AND REAR EXTENSIONS TO INCLUDE GLAZED LINK TO GARAGE. ALTERATIONS TO FRONT ELEVATIONS TO INCLUDE REPLACEMENT OF FRONT DOOR AND WINDOW WITH LARGER WINDOW AND ADDITIONAL DORMER TO GARAGE ROOF. ADDITION OF ROOF LIGHT TO REAR AND LANDSCAPING OF REAR GARDEN..

45 KINGS ROAD, BERKHAMSTED, HP4 3BJ.

APPLICANT: MR & MRS VAUGHAN.

[Case Officer - Philip Stanley]

[Grid Ref - SP 98530 07368]

Summary

The application is recommended for approval.

The proposed extensions, glazed link and other works to the property have all been attractively designed, both as individual elements and in terms of a cohesive whole. As such the proposed development would not harm the appearance of the house or the character of the street scene. It is also considered that the proposals would not cause any harm to the residential amenities of adjacent properties. The swimming pool and surrounding re-grading of the rear garden have been withdrawn from this application and therefore the proposals would not have an adverse impact on important trees and hedging along the boundaries of the site. The proposed development would comply with Policy 11 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan.

Site Description

The application site comprises a substantially extended attractive Arts and Crafts style dwelling situated on the north-west side of Kings Road (opposite junction with Ashlyns Road) in the residential area of Shootersway, contained within the Berkhamsted urban area. The land slopes uphill from east to west, as well as uphill from the front to the rear of the site. The surrounding area is entirely residential in nature and characterised by detached dwellings, though there are some semi-detached houses on the opposite side of Kings Road.

The property is set well back into the plot and screened by existing mature landscaping and the front close-boarded fencing. A driveway on the left-hand side leads to a detached double garage with two front dormers above. The rear garden is large and continues the uphill slope to the rear and left-hand side. Due to the steepness of the slope the upper floor of the garage is set at rear garden level, while the rear patio is set well below the garden level, which is retained by a 1.8 metre wall with iron railings above. The rear garden boundary consists of various hedging and there is also a line of mature TPO trees along the rear boundary.

Proposal

It is proposed to construct various extensions and alterations to the property.

The main extension would be a two-storey rear and side extension that wraps around the left-hand side of the house (when viewed from the front). This extension would match the height of the house and the degree of pitch to the front roof slope, but would be set back 3.6 metres from the front elevation when measured from ground floor level and 4.4 metres from their respective ridgelines. A flat roof dormer would be placed on the extended front roof slope. Where this extension returns along the rear elevation it

would form a part two-storey and part single storey extension. This has been achieved by a new rear gable end on the right-hand side and an extension to the existing roof slope together with a new dormer on the left-hand side.

It is then proposed to connect this new extension to the existing double garage by way of a glazed link, with a height below the ridge of the double garage. This would form a lobby between the house and the double garage.

The other works can be summarised as follows:

- The door to the living room and small window (located centrally within the front elevation) would be replaced by a triple light window.
- A third dormer would be placed on the front roof slope of the double garage, to match the size and design of the other two dormers.
- The rear chimney would be removed.
- An additional roof light would be inserted into the existing rear roof slope.
- The existing steps at the rear leading from the gym (at the rear of the double garage) down to the patio area would be replaced by terraced planting.
- The existing patio (which is half being built on by the proposed extensions) would be taken further out into the rear garden and would be straightened so that it runs parallel to the house. Beyond the new patio the rear garden would be graded back in the form of terraced planting.
- A new set of steps would lead up from the extended patio area to the new swimming pool patio area.

Originally, it was also proposed to construct a swimming pool within the rear garden just beyond the gym, 3.4 metres from the side boundary. This development would have necessitated a re-grading of the garden area around the pool and a small patio area would have been formed on the north-eastern side of the pool. However, concerns were raised by both Berkhamsted Town Council and the Trees & Woodlands Officer regarding these proposals. As a result this part of the development has been withdrawn so that a full arboricultural report can be prepared.

Referral to Committee

The application is referred to the Development Control Committee due to the contrary views of Berkhamsted Town Council.

Planning History

4/01358/02/FUL: New detached house and garage - Granted 13/09/02. This application involved a new dwelling between No.45 and No.47 and substantial earthworks for a rear patio. This permission was not implemented.

4/00344/05/FHA: Rear extension and internal alterations - Granted 13/04/05. This permission granted a two-storey rear extension that projected a small distance beyond the left-hand side of the house when viewed from the front.

4/00289/05/FHA: Conversion of existing garage to hobbies room and extension to rear to form double garage with gym above - Granted 13/04/05. This permission allowed a double garage to the rear of the existing garage, i.e. to the side of the house. Due to

the slope in the land the gym above is at the level of the garden.

4/01548/08/FHA: Single storey extension - Granted 09/09/08. This application related to a garden room located at the rear of the right-hand side of the house, when viewed from the front.

Policies

National Policy Guidance

PPS1
Circular 11/95

Dacorum Borough Local Plan

Policies 1, 2, 9, 10, 11, 13, 58 and 99
Appendices 5 and 7

Pre-Submission Core Strategy (incorporating the Main and Minor Modifications: January 2013)

Policies CS4, CS11 and CS12

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Environmental Guidelines
Residential Character Area BCA 12: Shootersway
Accessibility Zones for the Application of Parking Standards

Representations

Berkhamsted Town Council

Object.

There is insufficient information in the plans on the proposed swimming pool in the garden and its impact on surrounding trees and hedges.

There is a concern about the detrimental impact the proposed infill will have on the character of the property and the street scene.

Trees and Woodlands

The current situation is that a group of mature trees are positioned to the NW of the application site in gardens of properties in Graemesdyke Road. The two species are sycamore and Douglas fir, they are all contained within an area of trees covered by a tree preservation order.

They may be described as mature while not being especially large for their species. The sycamores have slowed considerably in the last few years, in other words their annual growth and vigour has become reduced, one tree may even be described as

becoming moribund. It is not immediately clear why this decline has occurred however quite modest changes in soil levels of the sort that can occur at the bottom of gardens, can have this impact on sycamore and it can last for many years. Most broadleaf trees can tolerate a period (20 years +) of slow growth and once functional root volume has been restored, the tree can then continue with normal growth rates.

The trees in question are all 'up the slope' and overhanging the applicant's garden. This makes the trees far more overbearing than they would on a flat site.

The proposal has the potential to cause damage to the trees / hedge and perhaps more likely, damage during the construction period.

The beech hedge to the SW of the garden is in excellent health and of value as a screen to both 45 and 47, should the pool be build, the hedge will be even more important as a screen and sound deflector. The physical presence of the pool should not have an adverse impact on the hedge but clumsiness during the construction period could damage it.

Again the physical presence of the pool is (as an visual estimate) far enough away from the root protection area (RPA) to cause no problems. However its not clear whether the dotted line round each tree is the RPA or a rough estimate of the crown spread nor is it certain that the new level will be achievable by the creation of such a short steep bank or that the grading will need to go further back. Either way some encroachment into the RPA looks possible. Could this be avoided by a retaining wall which would maintain the full RPA and help maintain soil moisture levels ?

If we assume the dotted lines are in fact the extent of the RPAs and place a fence where those dotted lines show, how does the digger get round to the top side of the pool area without causing damage to the RPA ?

Perhaps as important as all the construction thoughts, how will the pool and its users relate to the trees?

The tree crowns appear to be closer than shown on the drawing and either overhang the pool area or very close. There will be a steady stream starting in Spring with bud cases followed by, spent flowers, honeydew, winged seeds and finally leaves that will land in the pool. In addition, sycamore are not lightly leaved trees and will block out a large amount of sky light. This is likely to put pressure on the tree leading to application for tree work.

If the pool part of this application is going to proceed and its position is not ideal, then its needs some arboricultural input to demonstrate that a) the physical presence of the pool is not going to harm surrounding vegetation b) that the construction process is possible without harming surrounding vegetation.

Response to Neighbour Notification / Site Notice / Newspaper Advertisement

None received.

Considerations

Policy and Principle

The application site is located within the urban area of Berkhamsted where there is no objection in principle to the proposed extension according to Policy 2 of the DBLP and Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy. Policy 11 of the DBLP seeks high quality development that is sympathetic to the original house, in keeping with the street scene, avoids harm to neighbouring residential amenities and does not adversely affect important trees.

The site is located within the residential character of Shootersway, which is described as "*A large, mainly very low density residential area on the southern side of town featuring a variety of mainly detached houses in a spacious semi-rural setting, dominated by informal heavy landscaping*". In this area there are no special requirements in terms of the scale of or detail to extensions. Private landscaping is strongly encouraged throughout.

Effects on appearance of building

The existing building, although attractive, has a 'bitty' appearance by virtue of the various extensions that have been constructed over the years. In particular the extension granted under 4/00344/05/FHA created a two-storey bulk that can be awkwardly glimpsed from the front and is of uninspiring design from the rear.

In this context it is considered that the proposed extensions would improve the appearance of the existing house. It would create an extension that is more in keeping with the original house and, through the introduction of the rear gable and extended rear roof slope, of more visual interest. It is important to note that these extensions would be set a considerable distance back from the front of the house. The ridge of the proposed extension is set back 8.3 metres from the front of the house and 4.4 metres from the main ridge line. This would ensure that the new extension would be clearly subservient to the main house. Overall, it is considered that this extension has achieved the appropriate balance of retaining the prominence of the main part of the house and ensuring that the extension assimilates well with the original house.

It is also considered that the use of a glazed link is appropriate. This link will provide a covered lobby between the house and the double garage / link that is safer than the existing exterior steps. In addition the use of glazing would ensure that there remains a clear separation between these parts of the dwelling.

The other works proposed are also considered sympathetic to the original house. In particular it is noted that the new ground floor window and the two new dormer windows along the front of the property match the sizes and styles of existing windows. They are also sufficiently spaced, both from the flanks and in relation to other dormer windows, to ensure they do not appear cramped along the roof slope. For example, the dormer to the front of the extension is set in 1.1 metres from the flank, while the new dormer above the double garage is set in 0.65 metres from the flank, matching the distance the right-hand side dormer is set in from that flank. The new dormer to the garage would also provide some balance to this roof slope as presently the two dormers are offset.

Impact on Street Scene

As the house is set well back from the road and due to the screening along the site frontage (mature trees and close-boarded fencing) there would be only limited views of the proposed extension and glazed link from up Kings Road and also from Ashlyns Road. It is appreciated that there are clear views of the site when looking down Kings Road, however it is exactly from this perspective where it would be seen that the proposed extension is considerably set back from the front of the property.

Berkhamsted Town Council have raised a concern that the infill extension would have a detrimental impact on the character of the area, however it is unclear in what way the proposal is considered detrimental. Certainly, the proposal would not be built in a gap between the applicant's property and a neighbouring house. Therefore the spacing between houses would remain unchanged. It is appreciated that the proposed extensions would result in an extremely large property that spans the majority of the width of its plot. However, it is important to emphasize that the main central part of the house is set further forward than the extensions that widen the dwelling on either side. This significantly reduces the impact of the overall built form in the context of the street scene. It is also noted that the area is characterised by very large detached dwellings, of various designs (reflected in BCA12 where there is no special requirements in terms of the design of extensions), several of which also span the majority of their plots.

Impact on Trees and Landscaping

Berkhamsted Town Council have objected to the application on the grounds that there is insufficient information regarding the impact the swimming pool would have on surrounding trees and hedges. This was backed up by the Trees & Woodlands Officer who raised concerns about the construction of the swimming pool and the land re-grading on the adjacent beech hedge and protected rear trees (TPO 055).

As a result these concerns this part of the development has been withdrawn so that a full arboricultural report can be prepared.

It is still proposed to complete some landscaping works in the rear garden within the extended patio area, however these works would take place at least 13 metres from the nearest tree. Consequently, it is considered that the proposed works would not cause any harm to the surrounding trees and hedging.

Impact on Neighbours

There would be no adverse effects on the residential amenities of surrounding dwellings arising from this application. The two-storey side / rear extension would be located between the house and the double garage and as such is a considerable distance from both adjacent neighbours.

No.43 Kings Road is lower than the site, but would be screened from the development by the applicant's existing house. The impact on No.47 Kings Road would be greater, however any harm caused would be very minimal due to the distance between the proposed development and the neighbour (who also has its garage next to the shared boundary) and the fact that No.47 Kings Road is set higher than the site. Finally, there would be no impact on the residential amenities of the neighbours to the north (along Graemesdyke Road) because these properties are set considerably higher and a

considerable distance from the location of the proposed works.

Other Material Planning Considerations

Parking

The proposal would not see any increase in the number of bedrooms (the scheme would create larger bedrooms as well as additional en-suite facilities). Furthermore, the scheme would not result in the loss of the off-street spaces presently available in the double garage and on the driveway. Therefore, there are no parking implications arising from this application.

Conclusions

The proposed extension, glazed link, new fenestration and re-landscaping of the rear garden have all been attractively designed, both as individual elements and in terms of a cohesive whole. As such the proposed development would not harm the appearance of the house or the character of the street scene. It is also considered that the proposals would not cause any harm to the residential amenities of adjacent properties or important trees and hedging along the boundaries of the site. Therefore, the proposed development would comply with Policy 11 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan.

RECOMMENDATION – That planning permission be **GRANTED** for the reasons referred to above and subject to the following conditions:

RECOMMENDATION - That planning permission be **GRANTED** for the reasons referred to above and subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.**

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match in size, colour and texture those used on the existing building.**

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with Policy 11 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan.

- 3 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:**

**Location Plan 1:1250
2084-S20**

2084-P20
2084-P21
2084-P22
2084-P23A.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

NOTE 1:

This decision to grant planning permission has been taken for the following reason and having regard to the policies and proposals in the development plan set out below and to all other material planning considerations, including relevant supplementary planning guidance.

The site is located in an area where domestic extensions are acceptable in principle in accordance with Policy 2 of the Borough Plan. There would be no adverse effects on the appearance of the building or the appearance of the street scene. The amenity of adjoining neighbours would not be adversely affected. Car parking within the site is adequate. The proposals therefore accord with Policy 11 of the Borough Plan and Policy CS12 of the Pre-Submission Core Strategy (incorporating the Main and Minor Modifications: January 2013).

NOTE 2:

The following policies of the development plan are relevant to this decision:

Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991 - 2011

Policies 2, 9, 10, 11, 13, 58 and 99
Appendices 5 and 7

Pre-Submission Core Strategy (incorporating the Main and Minor Modifications: January 2013)

Policies CS4, CS11, CS12

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Development in Residential Areas

NOTE 3:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant allowed the only area of concern (the swimming pool and surrounding land re-grading) to be withdrawn from this application. Furthermore, discussions to seek an acceptable design to the extensions was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2012.

