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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 October 2018

**by Penelope Metcalfe BA(Hons) MSc DipUP DipDBE MRTPI IHBC**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/D/18/3209672**

**Cherry Hinton, Newbury Hill, Hampstead Norreys, Thatcham, Berks, RG18 0TR**

- 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 Lee Clark against the decision of West Berkshire Council.
  - The application Ref 18/00861/HOUSE, dated 20 March 2018, was refused by notice dated 27 June 2018.
  - The development proposed is single storey extension at rear and two storey extension at side.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring residents.

### Reasons

3. Cherry Hinton is a modern two storey detached house with an attached flat roofed garage and utility room. It is in the village of Hampstead Norreys, in the Conservation Area, an area characterised by traditional red brick buildings.
4. Relevant policies in this case include CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, adopted 2012 (the Core Strategy). These require new development to be of a high quality of design which, among other things, makes a positive contribution to the quality of life and is appropriate in terms of location and scale in the context of the existing settlement form.
5. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance *House Extensions* 2004 (the SPG) offers advice on the effect of extensions on neighbours in terms of sunlight, overshadowing and outlook in the context of site characteristics such as variance in ground levels.
6. These policies are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, updated in July 2018, (the Framework) insofar as it encourages well designed and healthy places.
7. At the time of my visit, building works were in progress and the main external structure of the single storey rear extension appeared to be substantially complete. I consider that this is acceptable in that it is relatively modest and has no adverse impact on the living conditions of neighbouring residents.

8. The proposed side extension would involve the replacement of the existing garage with a two storey element with a pitched roof and small rear gabled dormer window. It would project forward of the front elevation with a front gable reflecting that of a similar gable at the west end of the house and be set slightly back from the main rear elevation. The proposal would be sympathetic in design and materials to those of the existing house and appropriate in the conservation area and, in this respect, would be acceptable.
9. I consider that the size and location of the side extension would have an adverse impact on the outlook from 1 Church Street to the east. The only private amenity space of the latter is a small rear courtyard garden. This is separated from Cherry Hinton by a high brick boundary wall. The relationship between the two is such that the solid brick and render flank wall and gable of the new structure would be very close to the common boundary and would appear overbearing in the outlook from Cherry Hinton. It would reduce some of the afternoon sunlight reaching both the courtyard and the house itself. The impact would be exacerbated by the difference in ground levels between the two, since No. 1 is at a noticeably lower level than Cherry Hinton.
10. There would be a more limited effect on the outlook from 2 Church Street. This is further from Cherry Hinton and has a larger rear garden, separated from No. 1 and Cherry Hinton by a high brick wall. The side extension would appear as a dominant feature in views from the garden, resulting in some increase in a sense of enclosure compared to the open sky view between Cherry Hinton and Flint House to the north. It would not be readily visible from the house itself, other than at an oblique angle from a first floor window and due to its location to the southeast of Cherry Hinton, there would be no loss of sunlight.
11. I consider that the impact on the living conditions of the occupant of No.2 would not be sufficient, on its own, to warrant dismissing the appeal, though it adds weight to my finding regarding the impact on No. 1.
12. I do not consider that there would be any significant loss of privacy for the occupants of either 1 or 2 Church Street. They are already overlooked by large first floor windows in Cherry Hinton. If the proposal were acceptable in other respects, the proposed small dormer window serving the en suite could be permanently glazed in obscure glass and fixed shut, by means of an appropriate condition attached to a planning permission.
13. Cherry Hinton is relatively modest in size and I appreciate the appellants' wish to improve the family accommodation. However, while it may be possible to extend the property to meet their requirements, I am not persuaded that this proposal is the solution to the particular limitations arising from the close proximity of the extension to the boundary with 1 Church Street and the lower ground level and small size of the latter and its rear courtyard.
14. I conclude that the proposal would result in an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, contrary to Core Strategy policies CS14 and CS19 and the SPG.
15. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

*PAG Metcalfe*

INSPECTOR