

Design and Access Statement

20 Burfield Road, Old Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 2RD



APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to a two-storey semi-detached dwellinghouse at 20 Burfield Road with a gable roof. The surrounding area is residential comprising houses of different types and forms. The dwelling has a simple dual-pitched roof design with a side gable over the main and a flat roof over a single-storey side extension roof. To the front of the dwelling, there is a front driveway with a low fence wall to the front and side boundary. There is a garden to the rear which can be accessed from the front of the property. The street has a considerable variation in plot sizes.

THE PROPOSAL

Proposed First-floor side extension over existing single-storey side extension with rear Juliette balcony and side opaque windows to the ground floor and first. The proposal would accommodate a fourth bedroom much needed for the growing family.

Key Issues:

- Impact on visual amenity
- Impact on residential amenity
- Design and Appearance
- Flood Risk Impact
- Appropriate Development in Green Belt and acceptable impact on Green Belt
- Car parking and Highways Safety
- Community Infrastructure Levy

Design and Appearance

The proposed first-floor side extension would be set back from the established front building line by 1m and set down from the ridge of the main roof by approx. 0.3m, creating a subordinate effect. The roof form would be gabled, with the materials and fenestration matching that of the existing two-storey dwelling. The addition would be less than half the width of the main dwelling. This would make the addition proportionate and reflective of the current dwelling – from the front and side. Whilst the property forms a pair of semi-detached dwelling houses, of which no. 18 does not have a similar first-floor extension, a comparable development between nos. 83 and 81 Ashbrook Rd or 45 & 43 Walpole Rd has established a precedent in the neighbourhood.

On this basis, an extension of this type and relationship with its attached neighbour would not be an incongruous addition within the prevailing character of the street scene and the appearance of the dwelling house. As such, the proposed first side extension would not harm the design and appearance of the building and the visual amenity of the street scene. It is considered that the proposal would comply with the NPPF Policies.

Impact on residential amenity

New developments should respect the residential amenity of neighbouring occupants. Extensions should sit comfortably within 45-degree lines taken from neighbouring residential properties to protect the outlook. The proposed extension would not breach a 45-degree line taken from the nearest neighbouring property. As such, there would be no adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity in terms of outlook.

The proposed windows and doors are considered to offer views typical for this residential setting. The side windows at ground floor level match similar in style and setting to the one present at 28b Burfield Rd. Furthermore, we do not consider that the proposed fenestration would result in increased overlooking.

Furthermore, the proposed extension would not cause any overshadowing to the front amenity area of no. 28b Burfield Rd due to the orientation of the sun, and there would be no overlooking as there would only be opaque windows inserted in the flank elevation. These windows can be removed if the case officer deems it necessary. As such, it is considered that the proposal would comply with the NPPF policies.

The proposal would be visible from the public realm, it is considered that it would be in keeping and would not harm the existing street scene. The proposal is considered to respect the appearance and design of the host dwelling and the appearance and character of the street scene would not be harmed.

There are 2 small windows to No. 28b North East elevation that could be further impacted following the works. However, No.28b kitchen would not be classed as a habitable room as the room has a footprint of less than 13 sq. m and the window that serves the kitchen is a secondary window due to the existence of a rooflight. The window on the North East elevation that serves the study is a secondary window as the room is also served by a rear window and a rooflight. Additionally, both windows are small, and they are obscurely glazed. The proposal will match these windows. It is considered that there would be no significant harm caused to the immediate neighbouring properties in terms of loss of privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight or otherwise.

Appropriate Development in Green Belt and Acceptable Impact on Green Belt

Principle of Development – Green Belt and Design Impact

Paragraph 142 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that ‘the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.’

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states ‘A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt.’

Exceptions to this are:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry.
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.**
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.
- e) limited infilling in villages.
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

Policy QP5 of the Borough Local Plan - BLP (2022) refers to the green belt impact and consideration of proposals against the NPPF. However, it does not directly discuss the extent of an extension being disproportionate or not. The previous (now superseded) Local Plan (2017) under Policy GB4 related to residential extensions in the Green Belt and this policy stated floor space calculations will be a guiding factor in assessing whether a proposal is disproportionate. However, it should be made very clear that the new Local Plan (2022) does not include the requirement to provide calculations in determining whether an extension is disproportionate or not.

The host site was granted planning permission (18/00644/FULL) on 30/04/2018 which has been implemented in full. At the time of the assessment, under paragraph 4.3 of the delegated report, officers stated (in deciding to approve) that:

'Extensions which increase the floor space by more than 50% over the original dwelling are generally deemed disproportionate. The approximate floor space of the original dwelling is 96 sq. m. The proposal in combination with previous extensions would result in an increase of 48 sq. m in floor space.

The overall increase would result in a 50% increase in floor space. The proposal is considered to be a proportionate addition to the host dwelling, would not harm openness and would not be inappropriate development with the Green Belt, as such, the proposed works comply with Policies GB1, GB2 and GB4 of the Council's Local Plan.'

However, as mentioned above, the '50% increase' would not necessarily apply based on the new local plan. We must now consider, which in most cases is subjectively and in line (assessment) with the Borough Wide Design Guide SPD - BWDG (2020) whether the proposal would be disproportionate or not over and above the original dwelling.

Paragraph 10.8 of the BWDG states that 'design solutions to achieve subordination and consistency in extensions include:

1. Using lower ridge heights, setbacks and extensions widths no more than half the width of the existing dwelling;
2. Using the existing building as the main reference point for appearance, materials and details such as ridge, eave finishes, head and cills, rainwater goods, brick coursing, dressing and quoin work;

The proposed first-floor side extension would be set back from the established front building line by 1m and set down from the ridge of the main roof by approx. 0.3m. The roof form would be gabled with the materiality and fenestration matching that of the existing two-storey dwelling. The addition would be less than half the width of the main dwelling. This would make the addition proportionate and reflective of the current dwelling – from the front and side.

Paragraph 10.14 of the BWDG states that 'In many areas of the Royal Borough gaps between buildings are important components of street scenes and the character of the area. Locality-specific design documents for the borough should also be consulted when designing side extensions as they will often identify and detail the nature of important gaps in residential areas. Gaps between buildings are also important for amenity reasons. Typically, a gap of 1m from a building site to the boundary is needed to allow for adequate light, servicing and rear access.'

The current permitted and implemented ground floor side extension runs along the common boundary and whilst we considered a 1m set in from the common boundary in line with the SPD, it would make it pointless to construct this element as the internal width would be far too small and wasteful to accommodate the much-needed family accommodation for the growing family. The plot does slightly angle towards the rear so if we were to set the extension in by 1m, this would result in an internal width of approx. 1.5m which would not be sufficient, useable or practicable.

Whilst appreciating the principle assessment for this proposal is to do with green belt and design, a balance must be struck on reasonable living requirements. Not every scheme can comply with the SPD and there are many examples of deviation from SPD across the borough. In any case, the only deviation here would be the set-in from the common boundary. Given the setbacks from the front and roof level alongside matching form and materiality, the proposed extension would be considered proportionate and subordinate to the main dwelling. It would not negatively impact the relation with the attached pair of no.18 and the wider immediate character and appearance of the area.

The side element would also form part of a first-floor rear extension – as it would project over the approved and implemented element. This rear element would have a dual-pitched roof form which would project approx. 2.5m beyond the main first-floor rear wall. We considered omitting this element but if we were to set in the side element by 1m alongside removing this rear element, we would be left with a pointless area of expansion of which the build cost of 80k would be wasteful on constructing a

small first-floor side extension. We have not wrapped around the extension and we consider this would be overly bulky, domineering and incongruous if we did. We have proposed a proportionate and subordinate extension to allow for the family's needs.

In terms of retaining gaps between built forms to respect the rural and open setting of the green belt, we appreciate that the first floor would enclose the current gap. However, the adjacent dwelling of no.28 has a large ground floor side extension with a 1.5 - 2m separation to the common boundary at ground level which is the access for the rear dwellings (see below figure). So there is already a natural and existing break up in built form which we consider would help justify the proposed extension sitting on the common boundary. The introduction of the proposed extension would still allow views to and from the site and therefore would keep the open nature of the built form. The spacing would remain sufficient.



Now going back to green belt impact, the total new area would equate to a further 24sqm of which we consider not to be excessive or substantial to result in the extension being disproportionate over and above the size of the original dwelling. The total area is very small and a refusal on green belt grounds cannot be justified.

Whilst not along the subject road, we have observed many examples of similar first-floor side extensions at 45 Walpole Road, 90 St Luke's Road and 83 and 85 Ashbrook Road. As such, in the context of the wider Old Windsor Ward, it is clear that the proposed extension would not be out of character.

No.18 does not have a form of first-floor side extension but this does not automatically rule out the host dwelling having one. We have proportionately, in line with the SPD, designed this to ensure that the relationship is not severely unbalanced. The form and proportion including appearance would ensure that the addition is not detrimental to the amenities of the street scene.

As such, it is considered that the proposed extension would not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the original dwelling. The massing, proportion and appearance (apart from the 1m set

in from the common boundary) is considered to respect the form, proportion and appearance of the dwelling. It would not negatively unbalance the relationship with no.18, character and appearance of the area or visual amenities of the street scene.

Impact on visual amenities

There is a 1m recess from the front elevation so that the extension is within keeping the subordinate character.

The extension will not extend beyond the adjacent neighbour and there is only one habitable side primary window which will be fully opaque to the request of the case office. Otherwise, can be removed from the proposal.

With regards to no.18, the rear element would extend 2.8m beyond the main rear wall to match the single-storey extension but there would be a 6m separation to the common boundary which would reduce impact – also it complies with the 45-degree rule as drawn both horizontally and vertically from the nearest habitable windows.

The separation gap between the proposed development and the rear neighbours at No 22 is about 13 metres and this will reduce any impact that it might have.

It is therefore considered that the first-floor extension would not be out of character in the area, and its set-down and set-in would reduce its visual prominence within the street scene to an acceptable level. On balance, extension should be considered acceptable within its context.

The proposal is considered to result in minor visual harm that would not raise significant concern. The rear elevation would not be visible from the street scene so this would on balance result in an acceptable level of visual harm.

Taking all these factors into account we believe that the proposal should be considered to be acceptable in terms of design and visual impact, and compliant with the relevant policies

Car Parking Provision and Highways Safety

The proposed works would result in one additional bedroom totalling 4 bedrooms, however, sufficient space would remain on the site to accommodate the car parking for the resulting dwelling in compliance with the adopted parking standards in Appendix 7 of the Local Plan as amended by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Parking Strategy, May 2004.

Flood Risk Impact

The front of the site – touching the pavement and some areas of the driveway falls within Flood Zone 2/3. Whilst a Flood Risk Assessment may be required, we consider on this occasion that it would not be needed given that the extension would sit on top of an existing permitted and implemented side/rear extension which did not require a form of assessment previously – as part of approval.

It would be excessive and unreasonable to refuse the application on a lack of assessment. We are happy with any associated information or compliance conditions relating to water butts.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The application is not subject to CIL, as the gross additional floor space proposed is less than 100 square metres and no new residential units are being created.

CONCLUSION

Overall, it is considered that the proposed first-floor side extension over existing single-storey side extension with rear Juliette balcony and side opaque windows to the ground floor and first are of reasonable scale and sympathetic in design to the host dwelling. The proposal would be in keeping with the grain of development of the surrounding area. It is also considered that the proposed development would not result in any detrimental harm to the character and appearance of the host properties and the street scene.

The proposed extension would not harm the design and appearance of the building and the visual amenity of the street scene, nor would it adversely impact the residential amenity of neighbouring occupants. Accordingly, planning permission should be granted subject to conditions.

Appendix 1- Street Scene examples

45 Walpole Rd



90 St Luke's Rd



85 Ashbrook Rd



83 Ashbrook Rd

