

Contact: Jackie Sabatini DDI No. 01494 421915  
App No : 18/06437/FUL App Type: Full Application  
Application for : Householder application for construction of raised decking and steps to rear (part retrospective)  
At 1 Wordsworth Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 2UT  
Date Received : 23/05/18 Applicant : Mr Sultan Ansari  
Target date for Decision 18/07/18

## 1. **Summary**

- 1.1. Full planning permission is sought for the retention of a raised decking area and steps to the rear of the site (Retrospective).
- 1.2. Subject to 1.8m high privacy screening being erected along the entirety of the decking area the development is considered to accord with Development Plan policy and is recommended for approval subject to appropriate conditions.
- 1.3. The development includes a rear decking area with privacy screening and steps. No other changes are proposed from that already granted planning permission.

## 2. **The Application**

- 2.1. Full planning permission is sought for the retention of a raised decking area and steps to the rear of the dwelling (part retrospective).
- 2.2. Due to local topography the ground to the rear of this part of Wordsworth Road slopes significantly downwards, from north to south, and this slope allows for an almost, two and a half storey appearance to the north east side of the dwelling.
- 2.3. The application site comprises a detached dwelling located off Wordsworth Close where the surrounding properties are semi-detached properties of various sizes and designs; the area is characterised by varying ground levels creating a more varied street scene.

## 3. **Working with the applicant/agent**

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF2 Wycombe District Council (WDC) approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way taking a proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions and work proactively with applicants to secure developments. WDC work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by offering a pre-application advice service, and as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

- offering a pre-application advice service,
- as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions, and,
- by adhering to the requirements of the Planning & Sustainability Customer Charter

In this instance the applicant was provided with advice after the initial site visit that additional privacy screening would be required above the decking area to avoid overlooking issues to neighbouring properties situated to the rear of the site. The applicant responded by submitting amended plans showing privacy screening, the amendments to the proposal where found to be acceptable and the application was approved.

## 4. **Relevant Planning History**

- 4.1. 14/05459/FUL - Householder application for construction of two storey side extension

with side and rear steps and single storey side extension incorporating and including conversion of existing detached garage into habitable space.- Permitted

- 4.2. 14/07150/FUL - Householder application for construction of single storey front extension. Two storey side extension with balcony and side and rear steps. Single storey rear extension. Part two storey part first floor side extension over existing detached garage to link to main dwelling and conversion of garage to habitable room. Loft conversion with rear dormer window. (amendment to planning permission 14/05459/FUL) – Refused.

Reason 1: The proposed extensions, by reason of their scale, siting and design would take up the majority of the width of the plot resulting in incongruous and in-harmonious additions that would have an unacceptable level of impact on the character and appearance of the application dwelling and the street scene and would be detrimental to the residential character and appearance of the surrounding area. In addition, the extensions are considered to be disproportionate to the scale of the parent dwelling and would be tantamount to the creation of a new dwelling which would be unacceptable in this location.

Reason 2: The rear dormer window would result in an unacceptable level of overlooking to the neighbouring dwellings to the rear of the site, namely 1 and 2 Tennyson Road.

- 4.3. 14/08302/FUL - Householder application for erection of single storey front extension, two storey side extension with balcony and side and rear steps. Single storey rear extension & single storey side infill extension, including garage conversion to habitable room. Loft conversion with rear dormer window and roof lights (alternative scheme to that permitted under 14/05459/FUL) –Refused

Reason 1: The proposed extensions and patio, by reason of their scale, siting and design would take up the majority of the width of the plot resulting in incongruous and in-harmonious additions that would have an unacceptable level of impact on the character and appearance of the application dwelling and the street scene and would be detrimental to the residential character and appearance of the surrounding area. In addition, the extensions are considered to be disproportionate to the scale of the parent dwelling and would be tantamount to the creation of a new dwelling which would be unacceptable in this location.

Reason 2: The rear extension would result in an unacceptable level of overlooking to the neighbouring dwelling to the rear of the site, 2 Tennyson Road.

- 4.4. 15/08527/CLP - Certificate of lawfulness for proposed construction of 1 x rear dormer window and 1 x side roof light to existing house in connection with loft conversion – Granted
- 4.5. 17/06637/MINAMD - Proposed non-material amendment to permission for construction of two storey side extension with side and rear steps and single storey side extension incorporating and including conversion of existing detached garage into habitable space granted under householder planning ref: 14/05459/FUL - Permitted

## **5. Issues and Policy considerations**

### **Principle and Location of Development**

ALP: G3 (General design policy), G7 (Development in relation to topography), G8 (Detailed Design Guidance and Local Amenity), H17 (Extensions and Other Development within Residential Curtilages)

CSDPD: CS19 (Raising the quality of place shaping and design)

New Local Plan (Submission Version): CP1 (Sustainable Development), DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality) and DM36 (Extensions and Alterations to Existing Dwellings)

Since 28 March 2018 the emerging policies of the Wycombe District Local Plan submission version - March 2018 are also material. The weight given to individual policies is assessed in accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF.

- 5.1. The application site currently comprises a detached dwelling located off Wordsworth Close where the surrounding area is characterised by varying ground levels. Wordsworth Road is set on an elevated position over Tennyson Close which sits adjacent to Marlow Hill. The surrounding properties are predominately detached properties of various size, design and markedly different characteristics, creating a more varied street scene.
- 5.2. The raised decking area and steps to the rear of the site are considered acceptable in principle, subject to other material considerations, detailed further below.

**The impact of the development on the residential amenities of neighbouring buildings**

ALP: G3 (General design policy), G7 (Development in relation to topography), G8 (Detailed Design Guidance and Local Amenity)

CSDPD: CS19 (Raising the quality of place shaping and design)

New Local Plan (Submission Version): DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality)

- 5.3. It is acknowledged that objection has been raised by neighbouring properties Nos 1 & 2 Tennyson Close with regard to this development and overlooking issues, however it should be noted that due to local topography Wordsworth Road is sited on an elevated position over Tennyson Close sloping steeply from north to south and some level of mutual overlooking between properties is unavoidable and already exists.
- 5.4. Mutual overlooking of gardens is typical in such urban environments. However the decking to the rear of 1 Wordsworth Road is problematic as it protrudes outwards towards the shared boundary with No 1 Tennyson Close and as such any previous overlooking issues are intensified.
- 5.5. The increased level of overlooking adversely impacts upon the privacy of the rear amenity space of neighbouring properties No 1 and No 2 Tennyson Close, the dwelling most affected by this development is No 1. Tennyson Road. There are habitable room windows within the first floor rear elevation of No 1 Tennyson Road and these windows experience a degree of overlooking that is unacceptable due to the decking area to the rear of No 1 Wordsworth Road.
- 5.6. Overlooking issues could be overcome by attaching a condition to any permission granted that 1.8m high privacy screening must be erected along the entirety of the decking area at No 1 Wordsworth Close to avoid overlooking issues.
- 5.7. In addition, due to the close proximity of the privacy screening and the rear elevation of No 1 Tennyson Close the materials used for the screen should allow some light to penetrate and this would help to reduce any loss of light due to the screening to both No 1 Tennyson Close as well as the host dwelling.
- 5.8. The condition for screening must be retained in perpetuity.
- 5.9. When taking account of the above it is considered that the decking area subject to condition would not cause any significant overlooking, loss of light or overbearing issues that would justify refusing planning permission.

**Impact of the development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.**

Adopted Local Plan (ALP): G3; G8;

Core Strategy Development Planning Document (CSDPD): CS19;

Developer Contribution Supplementary Planning Document (DCSPD)

New Local Plan Submission Version: DM35 (Placemaking and Design Quality).

- 5.10. The rear decking area is set at ground level on the southwest side graduating up to a maximum 1.2m to the northeast and this follows the existing form of the dwelling. As mentioned the development is sited to the rear of the dwelling and, as such, not

readily visible from the street scene or wider public domain and this set back helps to minimise any potential impact of the development on the street scene.

- 5.11. The decking area is constructed in timber with close board fencing and obscure carbonate screening panels are to be erected above. These materials are considered acceptable. No harmful impact to the host dwelling or the surrounding area is considered to occur as a result of this application that would justify refusing planning permission.

### **Weighing and balancing of issues – overall assessment**

- 5.12. This section brings together the assessment that has so far been set out in order to weigh and balance relevant planning considerations in order to reach a conclusion on the application.
- 5.13. In determining the planning application, section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In addition, Section 143 of the Localism Act amends Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act relating to the determination of planning applications and states that in dealing with planning applications, the authority shall have regard to:
- a) Provision of the development plan insofar as they are material
  - b) Any local finance considerations, so far as they are material to the application (in this case, CIL)
  - c) Any other material considerations
- 5.14. As set out above it is considered that the proposed development would accord with the development policies and is recommended for approval subject to condition that privacy screening is erected in accordance with the details within the approved application and drawing numbered 17/09/02 Rev A. The screens shall thereafter be retained in perpetuity in order to protect the residential amenities of the neighbouring occupiers.

## **Recommendation: Application Permitted**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be built in accordance with the details contained in the planning application hereby approved and plan numbers 17/09/02 Rev A; unless the Local Planning Authority otherwise first agrees in writing.  
Reason: In the interest of proper planning and to ensure a satisfactory development of the site.
- 2 The rear decking area shall be removed from the site, in its entirety, unless within two months from the date of this permission the privacy screening has been erected in accordance with the details within the approved application and drawing number 17/09/02 Rev A . The screens shall thereafter be retained in perpetuity.  
Reason: In order to protect the residential amenities of the neighbouring occupiers.

### **INFORMATIVE(S)**

- 1 In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF2 Wycombe District Council (WDC) approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way taking a proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions and work proactively with applicants to secure developments. WDC work with the applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by offering a pre-application advice service, and as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

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