



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 May 2026

by **G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision Date: 29 June 2026

Appeal Ref: 6008702

26 Lockhart Drive, Wokingham, RG40 5BG

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Calum & Gemma Millar against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref. is 260264.
 - The development proposed is the installation of two front roof lights and erection of a rear dormer to facilitate a loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the installation of two front roof lights and erection of a rear dormer to facilitate a loft conversion in accordance with application Ref. 260264, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site and Location Plan –
LR_26_26LOCKHARTDRIVE_00, LR_26_26LOCKHARTDRIVE_01,
LR_26_26LOCKHARTDRIVE_02, LR_26_26LOCKHARTDRIVE_03,
LR_26_26LOCKHARTDRIVE_04, LR_26_26LOCKHARTDRIVE_05,
LR_26_26LOCKHARTDRIVE_06, LR_26_26LOCKHARTDRIVE_07 and
LR_26_26LOCKHARTDRIVE_08.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the dormer hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties (Nos. 30 and 32 Readwin Crescent) with particular regard to privacy and overbearing impact.

Reasons

3. 26 Lockhart Drive is located within a modern housing estate. The two-storey, semi-detached property is part of a row of similar properties, which back onto properties in Readwin Crescent. The houses in Readwin Crescent are of a different design, with gable-end projections at each end of the semi-detached pair.
4. There is a back-to-back separation of approximately 22m which aligns with the minimum distance as set out in the Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning

Document (June 2012) (SPD). The SPD explains that the distance is a generally accepted guideline for there to be no overlooking or material loss of privacy between the rear of two buildings that directly face one another. A distance of 26m for buildings over two storeys is indicated in an included extract from an earlier SPD, although it also notes that the height is measured to the eaves (Figure 4.25).

5. The proposed roof alterations, comprising front roof lights and a rear dormer, would not increase the eaves height and the dwelling would remain two storeys. The dormer would have a flat-roofed, box-style form and would sit within the existing roof, set back from the eaves, ridge and sides. Although the two windows would provide a more elevated outlook, they would be smaller than the existing first-floor window. There is already a degree of mutual overlooking between the properties, and from the first-floor window I observed that the appeal property looks across its garden towards the rear of Nos. 30 and 32 Readwin Crescent.
6. The Council did not directly object to the design of the dormer; rather, it was concerned that it would be overbearing to neighbouring occupiers. The dormer would be a noticeable addition, as it would interrupt the currently plain roofscape of the row of semi-detached properties. In contrast, the properties in Readwin Crescent have gable projections up to the ridgeline, and, from my observations, these house types are taller and sited on slightly higher ground than the appeal property. The proposed addition would be constructed in matching materials, and dormer windows are found on other properties in the locality. As such, I do not find that the dormer would be overly dominating or visually intrusive to the neighbours.
7. The appellant has also drawn my attention to a number of recent planning permissions for roof additions. These are not directly comparable to the proposal before me, and each case is to be considered on its own merits. They nonetheless indicate support for the incorporation of such features within this housing estate environment, including in more prominent locations, and, in the case of 3 Francis Drive, the separation distance was less.
8. In considering all these factors, I conclude that the proposed development would not result in an undue loss of privacy or be overbearing, resulting in harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of Nos. 30 and 32 Readwin Crescent. The proposal would thereby accord with policies CP1 and CP3 of the Wokingham Core Strategy Development Plan (Adopted January 2010), which require high-quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining occupiers. It would also accord with the general objectives of the SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conditions and Conclusion

9. In addition to the standard timescale condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant plans for certainty. I have also included a condition requiring the materials to match in the interest of the appearance of the property.
10. For the reasons set out and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

G Ellis

INSPECTOR