

PLANNING REF : 243055
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 28 Repton Road
: Reading, Berks
: RG67LJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr James D Turner
DATE SUBMITTED : 22/12/2024

COMMENTS:

Objection to Planning Application 243055, 26 Repton Road RG6 7LJ
by James Turner, at No 28.

Sadly, this proposal is so inappropriate, shoddy and graceless, that it's hard to know where to begin. However, I'll start with the drawings, which include various errors, such as roof lights positioned so haphazardly that the images don't even match up.

In addition, the rear elevation shows the roof overhanging the upper floor to excess, while the roof lanterns on the ground floor appear to be lower in profile than they're shown in the side elevations.

These details merely indicate carelessness though, and are easily amended. In stark contrast, the horizontal valley in the roof to the rear, represents extremely poor practice. Any competent architect should know to avoid such features at almost any cost, as rainwater ingress is just about inevitable. In this instance, there's a straightforward alternative too, in the form of a flat-roof with an EPDM rubber membrane. Not only would this be far simpler, it would somewhat match the large dormer of the neighbouring property on Kenton Road. This suggests that the architect either failed to visit the site, or he/she omitted to photograph the surrounding properties when they did.

This is further evidenced by the fact that the ground floor ceiling has been raised approximately 18 inches. This means that UNLIKE EVERY OTHER PROPERTY ON THE ROAD, the windows will no longer reach the eaves. It also means that the vestigial lower roof, will not align with the properties either side.

Overall, this is no ordinary application, as it represents the conversion of a bungalow - THE MIDDLE OF THREE - into a two storey dwelling with more than double the living area. It will therefore look unsightly even if the roofline is corrected. Indeed, if the intention were to demolish the existing property, and replace it with a regular two-storey residence, conforming perfectly to the style of the area, the result would still be inappropriate, albeit less so.

This is the crux of the matter, as the proposed structure is the worst possible option; an architectural carbuncle in otherwise agreeable surroundings. Over the years, most of the properties on Repton road have been sympathetically extended, with all but two completed impeccably. The first that wasn't (No. 44) has black windows rather than white and incongruous rooftiles, despite the fact that matching ones are still made (by Marley). Arguably, the enclosed porch oversteps the building line as well.

The second (No. 24) has all of the above, plus rooftiles that are grey rather than red, and an entrance canopy sitting upon Greco-Roman

columns. Granted, No. 44 may have set precedents, however, both the canopy and the columns are wholly out of place, and should not have been allowed. It's also worth saying that public consultations somehow concluded WITHOUT notifying the neighbours. Considering the scale of the extension at the rear, and the disruption caused by building work, this error was most unfortunate.

In conclusion, bungalows are a scarce resource, prized by the elderly and disabled alike. If the new owner of No. 26 wished to live in a two-storey dwelling, that's what he should have bought. Converting the middle bungalow of three would never be right, but this proposal gets absolutely everything wrong. It's devoid of style, symmetry and taste, and would look out of place almost anywhere. The left-hand dormer doesn't even sit squarely over the bay. All things considered, the plans are a substandard mess, while the general ambition is impertinent in the extreme.

If this application is approved, Wokingham Council may as well replace the planning department with a rubber stamp, as it will demonstrate that anything goes. Perhaps I'll sell my house to a developer intent on building a bed and breakfast, or a block of flats!