
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 February 2017

by B Bowker Mplan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 20 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/U3935/W/16/3164168

Brooklyn Lodge, Broad Bush, Blunsdon, Swindon SN26 7DH

- 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 N Ball against the decision of Swindon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref S/16/1676/JROD, dated 28 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is retention and extension of existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The appellant contends that the lawful use of the building is a dwelling. However, a certificate of lawfulness is not before me to demonstrate that this is the case. Therefore, the description used above is taken from the decision notice and appeal form which more accurately reflects the permission sought.
3. This aside, planning permission¹ has been granted for alterations, a two storey extension and the continued use of the appeal building as a dwelling. This is an extant permission with a recently approved condition. Consequently, I afford it significant weight in my determination of the appeal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises a pitched roof single storey detached building located to the rear of Brooklyn. Brooklyn is a two storey detached pitched roof dwelling that, along with similar detached dwellings, runs alongside Broad Bush. The appeal building is set in an open area away from the linear layout of dwellings along Broad Bush and those to the north east. The site slopes down in a south east direction towards the wider open countryside.
6. With reference to the appellant's overlay drawing, the proposal would retain the same footprint and siting as the previously approved permission. Accordingly, and taking into account the Council's reason for refusal, the

¹ Council ref S/15/1919, granted planning permission April 2016.

material difference between the proposed roof forms is the main focus of my assessment.

7. The parties agree that dwellings to the north vary in character and appearance and that the proposal would not be seen from Broad Bush. In comparison to the previous proposal, the height of the building would be slightly lower and it is put to me that the proposal is contemporary in design. However, the proposal would result in the introduction of a two storey height mono pitched roof form to the area. The relatively low angle of the mono pitch and the expanse of the roof, including its large overhang, would result in the roof being a visually dominate feature of the dwelling. Conditions requiring agreement of construction materials would fail to remove or reduce the dominance and incongruous design of the roof form proposed.
8. I agree with the Council's that the roof design has the character of an incongruous institutional building rather than that of a dwelling. Although noted as being previously part of Brooklyn's garden area, as the appeal building has a relatively open rural setting compared to dwellings along Broad Bush, the dominance and incongruous appearance of the roof design would be particularly stark when viewed from adjoining garden areas. I have taken into account the previously approved curved barn roof design in the context of the appellant's comments regarding there being an absence of agricultural buildings in the surrounding area. However, based on the relative rural setting of the building, the Council had a reasonable basis to accept a roof design that is more typically associated with the countryside. Nevertheless, I have judged the proposed roof design before me on its own individual merits.
9. Paragraph 59 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription and detail and that architectural styles or tastes should not be imposed. Nonetheless, paragraphs 56, 60 and 64 highlight; the importance of good design; that it is proper to seek to promote local distinctiveness; and that permission should be refused for poorly designed development that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area. Based on my reasoning above, the proposal would be deficient in this respect.
10. Therefore I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Consequently, the proposal would not meet the requirements of Policy DE1 of the Local Plan which requires development to be of a high quality design.
11. The Council do not refer to a specific section of its Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). However, based on my reasoning above, the proposal would be contrary to the general purpose of the SPD which seeks to achieve sustainable development through high standards of design.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and having taken all matters raised into account, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

B Bowker

INSPECTOR