

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 March 2017

by K E Down MA (Oxon) MSc MRTPI MRSB

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

Decision date: 22nd March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D3125/D/17/3166877

Bournmead, Clanfield Road, Weald, Bampton, OX18 2HJ

- 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 Robert Golder against the decision of West Oxfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/03717/HHD, dated 2 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of garage and log store.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of garage and log store at Bournmead, Clanfield Road, Weald, Bampton, OX18 2HJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/03717/HHD, dated 2 November 2016, 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: Plans ref. 16074.1, 16074.2, 16074.3 and 16074.4.
 - 3) Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details and samples of the proposed walling and roofing materials and details of the proposed garage doors, including materials and finishes, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Procedural matter

2. The site name, "Bournmead" is spelled in a number of different ways in the evidence. I have used the spelling as it appears on the original application form.

Main Issue

3. There is one main issue which is the effect of the proposed garage and log store on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding rural area.
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Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a large plot on which currently stands a dilapidated bungalow. Planning permission has been granted for a much larger three storey replacement dwelling which would occupy most of the width of the plot. The replacement dwelling has no garage and the current appeal seeks permission for a detached garage and log store to the front of the plot. There is a neighbouring dwelling, Danford Lodge, which is a large house of recent construction, set on a plot noticeably wider than that at Bournmead. The surrounding area comprises flat, open countryside, characterised by relatively small fields separated by hedges and trees. The church and other buildings in the nearby settlement of Bampton can be seen some distance away.
5. The proposed garage building would have an appearance that was traditional and rural in character, consistent with its countryside location. It would be modest in scale, having a depth of about 5.3m and width of some 7m. The open sided log store would add about 1.2m to the width. The garage would have eaves of some 2.4m and a pitched roof with a ridge height of about 5m. It would stand in front of the approved dwelling but closer to the side boundary of the plot. Although within about 3m of the front boundary of the plot it would be further separated from the well used A4095 by a wide verge.
6. The proposed building would be clearly visible from the public highway. However, it would be well screened from the open countryside to the north by the approved dwelling and from the south, beyond the road, by intervening hedges. The Council suggests that the highly visible position of the building, on the open frontage, forward of the dwellings, would result in an incongruous addition. However, the plans submitted in evidence show the replacement dwelling at Bournmead noticeably forward of Danford Lodge. These are the only dwellings in the immediate vicinity, resulting in there being no clearly defined pattern of development or building line. Although the garage and log store would occupy some of the space on the frontage, the appearance would not be cramped and the building would be clearly subservient to the main dwelling.
7. Moreover, I saw in the surrounding area other frontage outbuildings, both old and new. In general these did not appear intrusive or out of place. The proposed building would thus be consistent with a pattern of development seen elsewhere in the local area.
8. The Council suggests that a garage to the rear of the dwelling would have less impact on the surrounding area and notes that Danford Lodge has a garage to the rear. However, the appellant points out that to access the rear at Bournmead it would be necessary to install a long driveway alongside the dwelling. Whilst the driveway and garage at Danford Lodge are close to the shared boundary with Bournmead, it is likely that at Bournmead, owing to the proximity to the shared boundary of the approved footprint of the replacement dwelling, the driveway would need to be adjacent to the open rural area.
9. Owing to the limited width available it would be likely, in this location, to be clearly visible from the rural area and may also reduce opportunities for landscaping on the boundary. Any garage to the rear of the dwelling would also be visible from the rural area to the north, including potentially from a public footpath. On balance, I am not therefore persuaded that a garage to the rear

would have a materially lesser effect on the character or appearance of the surrounding rural area than the appeal proposal, although clearly it would be less visible from the A4095.

10. It is concluded on the main issue that the proposed garage and log store would have no materially detrimental effect on the open rural character or appearance of the site or the surrounding area. In consequence there would be no conflict with Policies BE2, H2 or NE1 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011, adopted 2006, which, taken together expect new development to respect the character and quality of its surroundings, including that of existing buildings, such that they do not erode the character or appearance of the surrounding area. In the countryside they should maintain or enhance the value of the countryside for its own sake by being easily assimilated into the landscape and where possible sited close to existing buildings.
11. Neither would the proposed development conflict with emerging policies in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, which have a similar thrust to the approved policies, or with the National Planning Policy Framework.
12. The Council suggests two conditions in addition to the statutory commencement condition. Firstly, I agree that a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is necessary to provide certainty. Secondly, the Council suggests that prior to the commencement of development details of external materials should be submitted to and agreed in writing. I agree that this is necessary in order to protect the character and appearance of the area. It would also allow the Council the opportunity to take account of the objection from Bampton Parish Council to the proposed use of reconstructed stone and the suggestion that natural stone should be used.
13. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

KE Down
INSPECTOR