



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 May 2017

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

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

Decision date: 24 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3115/D/17/3171947

18 Courtfield Road, Stanton St John, OXFORD, OX33 1HA.

- 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 Dr Jeremy Naydler against the decision of South Oxfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref P16/S3289/HH, dated 30 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as part first floor front elevation extension under hipped dormer roof. Replace extg. 225 mm brick wall at porch with 300mm cavity wall.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The site is located in the Oxford Green Belt but within the built up limits of Stanton St John. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises at paragraph 89 that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt. However, one of the six exceptions given to this is the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
3. There is no dispute between the parties that the proposal is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. From what I have seen and read I would not form a contrary view. Further, the impact on openness is implicitly taken into account in the exceptions set out in paragraph 89 of the Framework and therefore I find no reason to question the Council's finding that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
4. Accordingly I therefore consider the main issue, in this case, to be the effect of the proposed development on the architectural integrity of the host building and the semi-detached properties in Courtfield Road.

Reasons

5. The property the subject of this appeal, 18 Courtfield Road, is a semi-detached two-storey house. It has a large front garden that means it is set well back from the street. This dwelling, like its attached neighbour, incorporates a cat-slide roof over the sitting room and front porch. The appeal property is located on an established residential estate where a number of the properties are of a similar style and design.

6. The appellant proposes a new dormer set into the cat-slide roof of sufficient size to allow for the creation of a new study at first floor level overlooking the front garden. It would be constructed using matching materials.
7. I agree with the Council that the introduction of a dormer window, dependant on size and design, set in the cat-slide roof would not necessarily cause harm to the architectural integrity of the host property, its semi-detached neighbour or thereby the defining character of the other semi-detached properties.
8. However, as a result of the appellant's desire to incorporate a study, the proposed dormer is necessarily large. Due therefore to its width and height, the hip of the roof of the main house would need to be truncated to allow for the roof of the dormer and the formation of a valley gutter. This would be detrimental to the symmetry of the roof form of the semi-detached pair and would result in an uncomfortable and jarring relationship between these two prominent elements.
9. Further, because of its width there would be no gap between the return wall of the house at first floor level and the adjacent dormer cheek. The outer cheek would also be very close to the verge line of the cat-slide roof. Accordingly, in my judgement, the new dormer would appear severely cramped in relation to the existing roof and thereby harmful to the appearance and character of the host property as well as the semi-detached pair of which it is part.
10. I therefore conclude, in respect of the main issue, that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the architectural integrity of the host building and the semi-detached properties in Courtfield Road. It would therefore be contrary to Policy CSQ3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027 (Adopted 2012), Policies G2, D1 and H13 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (Adopted January 2006) and advice within Loft conversions and roof extensions of the Technical Document 5: Householder Extensions, which is a supplementary document to the South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016, as they relate to the quality of development and as they seek to protect the character of the site and its surroundings.

Other matters

11. As I observed a number of the dwellings in this development have been the subject of alteration and extension over time and this has added variety to the street scene. I have also been referred to a similar dormer roof extension in Wheatley granted planning permission by the Council (Ref: P14/S0055/HH). However, I do not consider, given the harm that I have identified in this case, that these considerations are sufficient reason to allow the proposed dormer window extension as designed.

Conclusions

12. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR