

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 June 2017

by Rory Cridland LLB (Hons), Solicitor

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

Decision date: 4 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C3105/D/17/3173064

51 Wise Avenue, Kidlington, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX5 2AT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant [outline] planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr C Slatter against the decision of Cherwell District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01274/F, dated 24 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 31 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing porch and construction of replacement single storey front extension to form entrance lobby and cloakroom.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the impact of the proposed development on the street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located in a residential street characterised by a mixture of two storey terraced houses and a smaller number of semi-detached bungalows set back from the street to varying degrees. A number of the properties have porches which extend out from the front elevation with doors which face towards the street.
5. The appeal property itself currently benefits from a modest porch to the front which forms part of a linked structure shared with neighbouring No 53. It is positioned centrally along the frontage of No's 51 & 53 and separated by an internal wall providing two separate entrances which face out towards the highway. It appears subservient to the host dwelling and integrates well with both its surroundings and the host property itself.
6. Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 requires proposals for new development to, amongst other things, achieve high design standards which contribute positively to an area's character and identity. Furthermore, Saved Policies C28 & C30 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 seek to ensure that the design

and external appearance of extensions are compatible with the scale of the existing dwelling and the street scene. Although these policies are now of some age, they nevertheless reflect the general guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework which recognises that planning should always seek to secure high quality design.

7. The proposal would involve the demolition of the existing structure and its replacement with a single storey front extension, which would provide two separate porches for Nos 51 & 53. Although front porches are a regular feature within the surrounding area, they are generally modest and subservient additions to their host dwelling.
8. Being considerably larger than the structure it replaces, the proposed addition would appear at odds with others nearby. Its increased height and depth would make it appear overly large and prominent and would fail to reflect the proportion and scale of the existing building. Moreover, the positioning of the front doors in the side elevation would be out of character with the prevailing design of porches within Wise Avenue. This would exacerbate its impact resulting in a structure which would be visually harmful to the existing street scene. As such, it would not assimilate well into the existing street scene and would be contrary to Policies C28 and C30 as well as the guidance set out in section 8 of the Council's Home Extensions & Alterations Design Guide (2007).
9. While I accept that there may be other examples of porches with doors positioned on their side elevations within in the wider area, these are not characteristic of porches within Wise Avenue. Furthermore, those referred to in the appellant's evidence are generally smaller in both height and bulk to that which is currently proposed. As such, I do not consider they act as a justifiable precedent.
10. Consequently, I find that the proposal would fail to achieve a high standard of design and would be visually harmful to the street scene. As such, it would be contrary to Policies C28 and C30 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996, Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 and the guidance set out in section 8 of the Cherwell District Council Home Extensions and Alterations Design Guide (2007).

Other matters

11. In reaching my decision, I have taken into account the personal circumstances of the appellant and the benefits that additional ground floor accommodation would provide. However, I have seen nothing which would indicate that it is not possible to amend the scheme to one which would accommodate those needs without having a detrimental impact on the character of the surrounding area. As such, I do not consider those circumstances provide sufficient justification to overcome the policy objections identified above.
12. I also note that the proposal has not generated any objections locally. However, a lack of objection does not overcome the harm identified above

Conclusion

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

Rory Cridland

INSPECTOR