
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 July 2017

by Robert Fallon B.Sc. (Hons) PGDipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 7th August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D3125/D/17/3172458
175 Moorland Road, Witney, Oxon OX28 6LH

- 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 Simon Woodcock against the decision of West Oxfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/04007/HHD, dated 19 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 16 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is a rear single storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The estate is strongly characterised by its 'Radburn' layout, where the rear elevations and back gardens of houses face the vehicular highway/parking areas and the front elevations look towards communal areas, with open plan front gardens. In particular, the three terraced blocks at Nos 169-175 (which include the appeal site), 183-193 and 203-213 are characterised by their long straight building lines which face into and help enclose a central rectangular area of public open green space.
4. The proposed extension would project beyond the established building line and in doing so, would result in a dwelling that appears very much at odds with the prevailing pattern of development. As a consequence, it would be an unduly dominant feature in the streetscene and would erode the overall integrity of the relationship between these dwellings and the public open space. The views of the proposal and its relationship with the neighbouring dwellings and public open space would be clearly visible when approaching from the south and west, which would intensify this harmful impact.
5. Although there would be a benefit to the appellant of having a larger dwelling given the high cost of housing in the area, this would not outweigh the harm I have identified. I also note the appellant's response to the pre-application discussions, but these have little bearing on the planning merits of the scheme before me. Similarly, the lack of objections does not in itself demonstrate a lack of harm.

6. In view of the above, I conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policies BE2 and H2 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011, which seek, amongst other things, to ensure that new development respects the existing scale, pattern, building traditions and character of the surrounding area, and does not erode its character or appearance.
7. The proposal would also conflict with the objectives of the West Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 which seeks to ensure that extensions to dwellings do not detract from development layouts which help define the character of an area.
8. The evidence submitted by the Council does not clarify the current stage of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (Submission Draft including proposed modifications, November 2016). I have therefore given this limited weight in my assessment.

Conclusion

9. The appeal proposal would conflict with the development plan when taken as a whole and I conclude, having had regard to all other matters raised, that the appeal should be dismissed.

Robert Fallon

INSPECTOR