



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 August 2017

by H Butcher BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 11 September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/D/17/3179311

Church View Farm, Bath Road, Midgham, Reading, Berkshire, RG7 5XB

- 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 Onn Yan Lai against the decision of West Berkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00798/HOUSE, dated 14 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 1 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey extension at Church View Farm, Bath Road, Midgham, Reading, Berkshire RG7 5XB in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 17/00798/HOUSE, dated 14 March 2017, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Existing and Proposed Elevations, Existing and Proposed Side Elevations, Existing and Proposed First Floor Plan, Existing and Proposed Ground Floor Plan, Location Plan, Block Plan.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the extension on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding countryside.

Reasons

3. Church View Farm is a detached chalet style bungalow with a low main roof. It sits in a large plot at the end of a long driveway leading from the A4 to the south. It occupies a slightly elevated position as the land rises steadily from the A4 and beyond the appeal property to the north. The surrounding area to the appeal site is open countryside but is interspersed by dwellings and various small businesses.
4. The proposal is described as a two storey extension. Essentially it seeks to add to an existing single storey rear extension and to then tie this into the existing main roof of the property. It is not dissimilar to application 12/00143/HOUSE

which was granted planning permission but has now lapsed without being implemented. This would result in the main roof of the property increasing in height by approximately 1.5m giving a ridge height of some 7.2m.

5. The character and appearance of the building would, in spite of the proposed changes, very clearly remain as that of a chalet bungalow having a low eaves and the first floor contained within the pitched roof. As the existing ridge height is very low the proposed ridge height would not appear uncharacteristically high for a dwelling of this type. Nor would the resulting dwelling appear overly large or bulky given the size of the plot and the fact that there are large two storey dwellings to the east of the appeal site.
6. Taking the above points together I find no harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding countryside. The proposal would therefore not conflict with the relevant provisions of Policies CS14 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) (adopted July 2012) or C3 and C6 of the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted May 2017) which, broadly speaking, require high quality design which respects the landscape character of the District. Policy C6 in particular requires extensions to existing dwellings within the countryside to be in character with the original dwelling and to have no adverse impact on local rural character.
7. The planning history before me shows that the existing dwelling has been subject to a number of extensions which include a front extension (ref 07/02665/HOUSE). The Council have highlighted the cumulative increase in floor space at the property as a result, but as I have found the proposal to be acceptable I find no harm in this regard. Any extension to the existing outbuilding at the appeal site is not a matter before me.

Other matters

8. The Council state that a bat survey is required but have provided no evidence to support this statement. Similarly no arguments regarding the historic interest of the original building have been advanced.

Conditions and Conclusion

9. In addition to the standard time limit condition I have specified the approved plans as this provides certainty. To ensure a satisfactory appearance I have also included a condition requiring the use of matching materials. Given the scale and nature of the proposed works it is not necessary to include conditions relating to working hours or drainage.
10. Subject to the above conditions, and having had regard to all matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

Hayley Butcher

INSPECTOR