
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 September 2017

by J Wilde C Eng MICE

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

Decision date: 10 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/D/17/3180855

Vale Cottage, 138 Top Lane, Whitley SN12 8QZ

- 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 Woods against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref 17/01973/FUL, dated 28 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 31 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is one half of a pair of semi-detached houses, whose main elevations and doorways are at right angles to the road. The houses are made of stone, dated 1881 and are architecturally very attractive. The appeal property has a central porch with windows either side and three first floor windows arranged symmetrically above. There is then a secondary section to the south with a further doorway leading to a kitchen.
4. To the west of the appeal property and its attached dwelling are two similar semi-detached properties. These can be seen from the public realm, from various angles, in conjunction with the appeal property. Overall, whilst there is a mix of ages and types of dwellings in the immediate area, these four properties form a coherent and attractive grouping.
5. The Council consider the appeal property and the adjacent properties, by virtue of their age, design and placement, to be historically interesting and have therefore denoted them as non-designated heritage assets. I concur with that view.
6. I note that the Planning Practice Guidance encourages locally published criteria for determining what is or is not a non-designated heritage asset and that the Council do not have a published list of such assets. However, as the appellant accepts, there is no absolute requirement for this and in this particular case the

Council's evidence and my own observations have lead me to agree with the Council regarding the status of the appeal property.

7. Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that *in weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*
8. The proposed extension would change the front elevation of the appeal property out of all recognition, effectively replacing the well-proportioned existing frontage with two blank gable ends. This would fundamentally harm the character and appearance of the property, thereby undermining its significance.
9. The proposed works would also result in the principle elevation of the appeal property becoming that which faced the road. These changes would be readily noticeable from the public realm and as well as harming the significance of the appeal property would also have a detrimental impact on the significance of the group of similar dwellings as a whole.
10. In arriving at this conclusion I have noted that two of the four semi-detached properties have been extended. However, these extensions have not harmed the principal elevations of those properties as would be the case in the current appeal.
11. There would therefore be conflict with policies 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015). The former of these requires, amongst other things, that development should create a strong sense of place and be complimentary to the locality as well as being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings. The latter seeks to ensure, amongst other things, that development conserves non-designated heritage assets where they contribute to a sense of local character and identity.

Conclusion

12. In light of my above findings and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

John Wilde

INSPECTOR