
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2019

by S Shapland BSc (Hons) MSc CMILT

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3115/D/19/3237078

7 Park Corner, Nettlebed, Henley-on-Thames RG9 6DT

- 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 Ms V Hoare against the decision of South Oxfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref P19/S1419/HH, dated 30 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 3 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of rear extension at 7 Park Corner, Nettlebed, Henley-on-Thames RG9 6DT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P19/S1419/HH, dated 30 April 2019, subject to the conditions set out in the appended schedule.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance on the host dwelling; and
 - The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers with particular regard to privacy and outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is a semi-detached Swedish pre-fabricated chalet bungalow which dates from the post-war. The appeal site is set within a large plot, set back from the edge of the highway by a large driveway. The host dwelling has a tiled roof, and is finished with painted timber clad walls. The site is within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
4. The appeal proposal is for a rear extension which would provide an additional master bedroom on the first floor facing to the rear. The appeal site benefits from a ground floor side element which would also be extended as part of the appeal proposals. This would alter the ground floor layout to provide improved accommodation to the lounge and kitchen areas. In addition, new dormer windows would be provided within the roof at the front of the property. The materials used in the proposal would match the existing.

5. The Council have raised concerns that the proposed dormers on the front elevation would not match the existing fenestrations and would create a top-heavy appearance. The appeal site has a relatively large gable roof, and as such the proposed dormer windows would not dominate the front elevation of the property. The use of a flat roof for these dormers would complement the existing fenestrations and I do not find that it would give the property an overly top-heavy appearance.
6. The proposed rear extension would include a rear gable roof which extends to the rear with the same ridge height as existing. Whilst this is a sizeable addition to the property, the design of this rear elevation is sympathetic to the host dwelling and would not appear as an incongruous addition. Furthermore, the proposed first floor extension to the existing side element of the host dwelling would have a lower ridge height than the main roof. This means that when viewed from the public realm the extension would appear subservient to the host dwelling. I therefore find that the proposed extension would be a sympathetic design which complements the host dwelling and would not appear as incongruous or intrusive additions.
7. I note that the Council considers that the appeal site merits consideration as a non-designated heritage asset. Paragraph 040¹ of the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) states that local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets as part of the decision-making process on planning applications. It further states it is important that the decision to identify them as non-designated heritage assets are based on sound evidence. The Council has included details of other examples of Swedish pre-fabricated chalet bungalows in Doncaster which are Grade II listed buildings. It is the Council's view that the appeal site is identical to these buildings and thus the appeal site merits consideration as a non-designated heritage asset. Whilst the Council have made reference to consultation with the Council's Conservation Team, this has not been submitted as part of the appeal.
8. Paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale and harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. The appeal site does not appear to be included on any local list, and I have been presented with no cogent evidence from the Council that the site should be considered as a non-designated heritage asset. Therefore paragraph 197 of the Framework does not apply in this instance.
9. Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires that I have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONB's. Furthermore, Paragraph 172 of the Framework specifies that great weight must be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of these areas. In this instance, I have identified that the proposal would be in keeping with the host dwelling and not harm its character and appearance. I am satisfied that given the proposals limited visibility from the public realm that it would not harm the AONB.

¹ Reference ID 18a-040-20190723 Revision date 23 07 2019

10. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling. As such there would be no conflict with policies D1, G2 and H13 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (LP), and policy CSQ3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (CS). These policies seek, amongst other things, that development is of a high-quality design which is in keeping with the character of the host dwelling. There would be no conflict with the South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 which seeks, amongst other things, that new development is of a high quality design. The Council has made reference to policy CSEN3 of the CS, and paragraph 197 of the Framework, however I do not find that these are relevant as they relate to the conservation and enhancement of the historical environment.

Living Conditions

11. The rear extension of the proposal would extend along the boundary with the neighbouring property of No.8 Park Corner. The Council has raised concerns that the proposal by virtue of its scale and mass would have an overbearing impact on this property. The appeal proposal would be set back from the neighbouring property by approximately 1.25 metres, and as such would maintain a good degree of separation between the two dwellings.
12. Both dwellings benefit from rear gardens which are south facing, and are of a good size. As such the scale and mass of the proposal is unlikely to create a feeling of enclosure within the property or the rear garden of the neighbouring property, and would not have an overbearing impact. I therefore consider that the proposal would not harm the outlook for this neighbouring property.
13. The proposed front dormer windows would partly overlook the neighbouring gardens of No.6. However, based on the plans provided it is clear that only a small portion of this garden would be overlooked, and would therefore not impact the privacy of this garden. I also note that there have been no objections raised from the occupiers of No.6. The Council have suggested that a condition requiring the glazing at the front of the property to be obscured would overcome this concern, however I do not find that this condition is necessary given the scale of harm identified.
14. Consequently, I find that the proposal would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupants. As such there would be no conflict with policy H13 of the LP. This policy seeks, amongst other things, that extensions to dwellings do not harm the amenity of occupants of nearby properties.

Conditions

15. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. This is in the interest of certainty. A condition relating to materials is necessary to ensure that the appearance of the proposal would be satisfactory and not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

Conclusions

16. For the above reasons the appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted.

S Shapland

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS – APP/Q3115/D/19/3237078

- 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: Drawing 0.10 Location plan dated May 2019, Drawing 0.20 revision B Block plan dated October 2018, Drawing 0.30 Site plan as existing dated February 2019, Drawing 0.40 Ground floor plan as existing dated February 2019, Drawing 0.41 First floor plan as existing dated February 2019, Drawing 0.50 Elevations as existing dated February 2019, Drawing 1.30 revision B Site plan as proposed dated February 2019, Drawing 1.40 revision C Ground floor plan as proposed dated February 2019, Drawing 1.41 revision A First floor plan as proposed dated February 2019 and Drawing 1.50 revision B Elevations as proposed dated February 2019.
- 3) The materials to be used in the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.