
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2020

by L Page BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/D3125/D/20/3245300

21 Insall Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire OX7 5LF

- 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 and Mrs Parker against the decision of West Oxfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01888/FUL, dated 23 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey modern detached dwelling within an established residential area. The properties are largely uniform in appearance with similar use of materials such as stone construction with timber detailing and tiled roofs, exhibiting only modest variation in scale and layout. There is a consistent and distinctive quality of place indicative of its location within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
4. Section 14 of the West Oxfordshire Design Guide (2016) acknowledges that lean-to extensions are some of the most common in the area. Indeed, such structures are readily apparent features of some properties in the immediate vicinity of the site. However, there is no clear evidence establishing that they are extensions to what was originally built. In any event, they are subservient in scale and sympathetically designed to respect the property's main built form.
5. The appeal property is at an oblique angle relative to Insall Road. Consequently, the side of the property where the extension is proposed is in relatively close proximity to the boundary with the footway along Insall Road. It is therefore in a highly prominent position in clear public view when entering this part of the estate. The proposal would extend front to back along almost the entire length of the property and would be a dominant addition lacking subservience to the main built form, exacerbating its visual impact from an already prominent position.

6. The metal roof is required intrinsically by design and is incongruous compared with the prevailing local context, where properties have an overriding consistency in character and appearance that creates harmony in design. Introducing an isolated example of what the appellants refer to as contemporary design would be harmful. Whilst there is potential to condition the type of material used for walls, windows and rainwater goods to ensure accordance with Section 4 of the West Oxfordshire Design Guide (2016), this would not overcome the harm arising from the proposed roof design.
7. When viewed from the front and rear, the proposal would be more subservient to the host property. The lean-to pitched roof falls away from the host property to the extent that I would have little concern about its overbearing effect on users of the adjacent footway. Subsequently and in principle, the proposal's use of the gravel area to the side of the property would not be harmful to the use of the footway. However, this does not override the harm found in relation to the proposal's lack of subservience from the side and its inappropriate use of materials for the roof.
8. I note the correspondence between main parties regarding the design and evolution of the scheme throughout the determination period of the planning application. However, it does not change my findings on the proposal submitted under this appeal.
9. Subsequently, I have found the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. It conflicts with Policies OS2, OS4 and H6 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan (2018), and Section 14 of the West Oxfordshire Design Guide (2016), which require extensions to respect the local character and appearance whilst also being subservient to the main built form.

Other Matters

10. The appellants mention that the proposal would help improve personal circumstances at the property. Whilst I have given this careful attention, I am mindful of the advice contained in Planning Practice Guidance¹ that in general, planning is concerned with land use in the public interest. It is also probable that the proposal would remain long after the current personal circumstances cease to be relevant. Accordingly, I have ascribed limited weight to this in my decision.
11. The absence of objections does not in itself mean the proposal is acceptable. The appeal has been determined based on the development plan, material considerations and the evidence presented.
12. The proposal's lack of effect on private views of adjacent occupiers has been raised by the appellants, but as this is not disputed by the Council, it is a neutral matter in the determination of this appeal.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

Liam Page

INSPECTOR

¹ Paragraph 008 Reference ID 21b-008-20140306 – 'What is a material planning consideration?'