
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 August 2020

by J Gibson BUEP MP

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/D/20/3253914
Longcroft, Marten, Marlborough SN8 3SJ

- 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 & Mrs Airey against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00157/FUL, dated 20 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is first floor extension to single storey bungalow.
-

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 dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within a small hamlet comprising of traditionally built detached dwellings of varying styles and designs, as well as some large agricultural barns. Framing this pocket of development are open fields typical of such a countryside location, which offer long views of the undulating characteristics of the surrounding landscape. The appeal site specifically comprises of a single storey bungalow with a pitched roof design visible from both the street scene and from other public vantage points throughout the surrounding landscape.
4. The appeal proposal comprises a first floor extension to the existing bungalow dwelling, with a flat roof design which would exceed the ridge height of the host dwelling and breach the existing front and rear elevations to create an awkward overhang. Consequently, the proposed extension would appear overly bulky within the roofscape of the host dwelling and would fail to respect the proportions and traditional character of the host dwelling. Modern design elements incorporated within the proposed extension, such as the proposed windows, form and scale, would also fail to appropriately harmonise or successfully contrast with such details on the host dwelling further contributing to the incongruous appearance of the proposal. As such, the proposal would visually harm the host dwelling, the street scene and surrounding area.
5. The appeal property falls within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act and Paragraph 172 of the Framework requires that great weight be given to

conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB. The appeal site is visible from several public vantage points throughout the surrounding landscape which I confirmed during my site visit, including from a public right of way adjoining the open fields to the rear of the appeal site to the south. As such, the proposed first floor extension by virtue of its dominant design and appearance within the roofscape of the existing bungalow would appear prominent within the surrounding landscape to the detriment of the landscape character of the area as well. While there are larger agricultural buildings nearby, they appear consistent within the countryside setting and built form character of the area and do not in themselves detract from or justify such an incongruous addition to the host dwelling as proposed.

6. The appellants describe the appeal proposal as being an improvement upon the extant planning permission for a similar first floor extension over the appeal site¹. However, limited details of this permission and the form of the development previously permitted have been provided for consideration. Based on the information provided it would appear the extant permission better respects the proportions and design of the existing bungalow than is proposed under this appeal. I note also that the appellants describe the appeal proposal as an evolution from a more recent scheme refused by the Council². However, the suggested improvements in quality of building materials, functional internal layout, energy efficiency and modern design of the proposal do not overcome the overall harmful proportions and appearance of the proposed extension within the otherwise traditional roofscape of the bungalow and the surrounding landscape context. Nevertheless, I have considered the appeal before me based on its own merits.
7. The examples of modern extensions or conversions of dwellings in similar rural locations presented by the appellants are not considered to be comparable to the appeal proposal. These examples maintain an overall unified design and appearance throughout the host dwelling, and where of a modern design successfully juxtapose with the surrounding built form and landscape character. The appeal proposal is poorly proportioned, overwhelms the existing traditional bungalow design and lacks any unifying design features which would be considered complimentary to the surrounding built form and landscape character.
8. Accordingly, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, in particular the North Wessex AONB. It conflicts with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015). This policy seeks, amongst other things, to ensure development achieves a high standard of design which respond positively to surrounding townscape and landscape features to compliment the locality and its setting.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Gibson
INSPECTOR

¹ LPA Reference: 18/00522/FUL

² LPA Reference: 19/07919/FUL