
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 April 2021 by A J Sutton BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

by L McKay MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/V3120/D/21/3268156
170 Wootton Road, Abingdon, OX14 1JZ

- 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 Matthew Viner against the decision of Vale of White Horse District Council.
 - The application Ref P20/V3256/HH, dated 7 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 1 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as 'loft conversion, new staircase, partial raised ridgeline.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for Recommendation

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached, gable ended property in a prominent location near the junction of Wootton Road and Evelin Road. It is within a residential street characterised by pairs of dwellings. Whilst there is some variation in roof design in the area, there is a general uniformity in terms of roof heights with matching straight ridgelines, and where extended the ridges are lower than the main property. This provides a coherent feature in the street scene which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area. Many properties have altered roofs, however I have not been directed to any examples of rear dormers which protrude above the front ridgeline in the vicinity of the appeal site, nor did I see any at my site visit.
5. Although the appeal property has been extended to the side, it retains the gable form with a ridgeline matching that of No 170, and in this respect the properties contribute to the coherency of the built form in the area.

6. The proposed addition to the rear of the property would cover the majority of the roof space and its bulky form would be clearly visible from the front, side and rear. From the side it would sit well above the gable end and would create an ungainly profile. Moreover, a substantial section of the development would protrude a significant height above the main ridge, which would be a noticeable change. The stepped-in design would create an awkwardly shaped, incongruous roof form when viewed from the front. The design, in terms of details, height and massing would fail to harmonise with the appeal property, its paired dwelling and the wider area. As such, the development would appear a discordant feature in a prominent location, and, would not respond positively to the site or its surroundings.
7. Therefore, the proposed development would be of a poor design which would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with Policy CP37 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1 2016 which requires new development to be of a high-quality design. It would also be inconsistent with advice set out in the Vale of White Horse Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2015 which states development should respond to local character and in respect to roof extensions dormer windows should sit well below ridge lines and should not significantly alter the roof profile.
8. It would also be contrary with policies of the National Planning Policy Framework which seek well design places and state that permission should be refused for development of a poor design.

Other Matters

9. The Council has indicated that permitted development rights could provide a dormer in a different form to the proposal before me. Whilst details have not been submitted this indicates that there may be options to increased living space in the roof without the harm identified above or increasing the footprint of the dwelling. The appellant suggests that no further extensions would be required, however I cannot be certain that they or any future owner would not seek additional accommodation in future, therefore this would not justify the harm identified.

Conclusion and Recommendation

10. There are no material considerations, including the Framework, that indicate the proposal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above, I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

A J Sutton

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

11. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and agree with the recommendation, and, shall dismiss the appeal.

L McKay

INSPECTOR