



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 June 2021

by Elaine Benson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 October 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3115/D/21/3268406

5 Lydalls Close, Didcot, OX11 7LD

- 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 Gemma Willis against the decision of South Oxfordshire District Council.
- The application Ref P20/S4376/HH, dated 17 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 25 January 2021.
- The development proposed is single and two storey extensions to existing bungalow.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and whether there is sufficient information to demonstrate that its carbon and energy impact would be minimised.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal bungalow stands within an area of mixed character at the corner of Lydalls Close and Britwell Road. The bungalow is at the end of a row of two-storey houses and to the west and south are large residential homes. Within this context there is no dispute that alterations to the bungalow could be acceptable, subject to details.
4. The two-storey extension would be constructed on cleared land to the side of the bungalow which formerly contained outbuildings. It would be taller than the bungalow in order to incorporate accommodation in the roof. When considered together with the roof planes of the existing bungalow, the overall design would result in a somewhat confused and overly complicated roof form due to the number and variety of roof pitches. This would harm the appearance of the bungalow and would be at odds with the prevailing cohesive character of buildings in the surrounding area.
5. The proposal would significantly increase the bulk of the dwelling and the extension would appear dominant and discordant with the design and character of the existing bungalow. This would conflict with the Council's Supplementary Technical Document 5, which is part of the South Oxfordshire Design Guide 2016 (STD), in respect of its guidance for householder extensions. Specifically, it requires extensions to be subordinate to the principal dwelling. Furthermore,

the awkward design of the rear elevation of the resulting dwelling would be easily visible from Britwell Road which rises from Lydalls Crescent, thereby further highlighting its poor-quality design.

6. References to the height and scale of the former timber barn are noted. However, when compared to the proposed extension, the barn was a separate outbuilding with an entirely different relationship to the bungalow, design and character. This argument is unconvincing.
7. I conclude that the proposed development would be out of keeping with the character of the existing bungalow and its incongruous appearance would detract from the street scene and the wider visual amenities of the locality. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies DES2 and H20 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (SOLP) which, in summary and of relevance to this appeal, require extensions to dwellings to be of high-quality design. I have already identified above that there is also conflict with the STD.

Carbon and energy impact

8. Insufficient information is provided to demonstrate how the development would minimise any carbon and energy impacts resulting from its design and construction. The requirement of Policy DES8 of the SOLP is not therefore satisfied. Nonetheless, as the Council indicates in the officer report, the deficiency could be addressed by the submission of an energy statement. This could have been required by condition, had the proposal been otherwise acceptable.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons set out above, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the existing bungalow and the surrounding area. Accordingly, the appeal should be dismissed.

Elaine Benson

INSPECTOR