



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 March 2022

by Helen Davies MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th March 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/V3120/W/21/3283468

Land to rear of 8 Stonhouse Crescent, Radley, Abingdon OX14 3AG

- 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 A Cartlidge against the decision of Vale of White Horse District Council.
 - The application Ref P21/V0861/FUL, dated 19 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 5 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a 1 bedroom detached dwelling.
-

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 area, including in respect of trees.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within the rear garden of 8 Stonhouse Crescent, in a predominantly residential area. The corner location means the plot widens to the rear of the dwelling. It adjoins a shared driveway leading to garages.
4. Although some of the dwellings along Stonhouse Crescent have been altered or extended, they generally have a relatively strong degree of uniformity in their massing, form and appearance, with a strong building line. The dwellings are two storey and typically have front gardens as well as long rear gardens which provide for a spacious setting which contributes to the overall character and appearance of the area.
5. The proposal would result in a single storey dwelling being located behind the prevailing building line, with no direct road frontage, yet due to its location it would be visible from the road. It would also result in both the proposed dwelling and the host dwelling being set within modest plots, rather than the generous gardens which are typical of Stonhouse Crescent. The proposed dwelling would be single storey, at a relatively high density, and would have a cramped and hemmed in appearance due to its proximity to the boundaries. As a result, the proposal would not respond positively to the site and its surroundings and fails to integrate with the prevailing form, grain and spatial arrangement of Stonhouse Crescent. As such it would have a detrimental effect on the uniformity and spacious quality which is characteristic of the area.

6. My attention has been drawn to two dwellings which have been granted permission at land around 1 Stonhouse Crescent. Full details of these are not before me, but I have considered the information provided and viewed the location during my site visit. Permission was granted on appeal¹ for a two storey extension to the side of No 1 to create a two bedroom dwelling. Permission was later granted by the Council² for a detached dwelling on land to the rear of No 1. Both dwellings have since been substantially completed.
7. No 1 is on a corner where Stonhouse Crescent joins Foxborough Road. The new dwelling attached to the original No 1 generally reads as an extension and has an elevation directly onto Foxborough Road. The detached dwelling to the rear of No 1 fronts onto Foxborough Road. Therefore, both developments are viewed in the context of Foxborough Road, where the scale, form and appearance of the dwellings is varied, with fairly diverse plot sizes. By contrast, the proposed dwelling at No 8 would be read within the context of Stonhouse Crescent with its more consistent design and plot layout and would not have direct road frontage.
8. During my site visit I viewed the development of a small number of dwellings located behind the prevailing building line in the opposite corner of Stonhouse Crescent. These are accessed via a similar driveway to the appeal site but are located further back, beyond the long gardens of Stonhouse Crescent, and are set within a significantly larger area of land than the appeal site.
9. Consequently, these other developments are significantly different to this appeal in terms of layout, location and scale, and they are not read in the same context as the proposal before me. In any event, each case must be considered on its own merits and impacts and direct parallels are not easily drawn.
10. Policy CP44 of the Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan Part 1 Strategic Sites and Policies (LP) sets out that key features that contribute to the nature and quality of the areas landscape, including trees, will be protected from harmful development and where possible enhanced. No arboricultural details have been provided with the appeal and I have not been informed that trees in the immediate area of the site are protected. From my site visit it was evident that any trees which could potentially be impacted by the development are of a modest size and on the site perimeter. Therefore, I conclude that trees could be adequately protected and any impact on them mitigated, via the imposition of planning conditions, if the proposal was otherwise considered to be acceptable.

I conclude that the proposed dwelling would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the development would not comply with Policy CP37 of the LP and the Vale of White Horse District Council Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, which together, amongst other things, seek to ensure that new development is of a high quality design that responds positively to the site and its surroundings, reinforces local identity, and visually and physically integrates with its surroundings. Furthermore, it would not accord with Section 12 of the Framework which seeks to secure well designed places. However, I find no direct conflict with Policy CP44 of the LP.

¹ APP/V3120/W/19/3223387 dated 23rd September 2019

² Application reference P20/V0427/FUL

Other Matters

11. Outbuildings of various sizes are evident in the area, and reference has been made to permitted development rights and a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development for a proposed incidental building of similar proportions and siting to the appeal development. This is not for consideration under a section 78 appeal. Nonetheless, an incidental outbuilding would have a significantly different character and visual impact to a dwelling which would be accompanied by plot sub-division and the associated domestic activities and paraphernalia.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above and taking into account the development plan as a whole and all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Helen Davies

INSPECTOR