The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 December 2022

by C Butcher BSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C1760/D/22/3303828
Willowbrook, Knockwood Lane, Nether Wallop SO20 8EF

- 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 P Allen against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
- The application Ref 21/03467/FULLN, dated 25 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 16 May 2022.
- The development proposed is a detached ancillary garden building to form garage/workshop at ground level with home office/gym to attic space.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a detached ancillary garden building to form garage/workshop at ground level with home office/gym to attic space at Willowbrook, Knockwood Lane, Nether Wallop SO20 8EF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/03467/FULLN, dated 25 November 2021, subject to the following conditions:

    1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

    2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: 904/25 - Proposed Garage: Floor Plans, Elevations, Site Layouts.

    3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located just outside of the main built-up area of the historic village of Nether Wallop. The immediate area is characterised by a number of large, detached houses which have been built in a linear fashion along Farley Street. Generally, there is significant space between properties and there are an abundance of mature trees and hedgerows which adds to the rural character of the area. Several properties in the surrounding area have outbuildings of various sizes.

4. While Willowbrook house itself was constructed relatively recently, the materials used, and its general appearance, allows it to successfully integrate into the surrounding area. The proposed outbuilding would be built from materials that would sensitively match those of the main dwelling, thereby ensuring that its appearance would also integrate with the character of the area.

5. Given the height of the proposed outbuilding, and the fact that it would be set forward from the main dwelling, closer to the road, it would be visible when approaching the site from the west along Knockwood Lane. However, the presence of mature trees along the boundary of the site provides sufficient screening to ensure the view of the outbuilding would be partially obscured. It would therefore not be overly prominent or detract from the rural character of the area. The existing screening would also ensure that the feeling of spaciousness between Willowbrook and the surrounding properties, particularly Knockwood House opposite, would not be harmed. The appellant has recently planted additional trees that would add further to this screening, one the trees have fully established in future years.

6. The proposed outbuilding would be fairly significant in size due to its height and would appear higher than other outbuildings within the vicinity of the appeal site. However, given the existing size of the main dwelling house, it would still clearly appear subservient to it and would not dominate. Moreover, the proposed outbuilding would be built into a significant slope which would also reduce its visual impact by providing a perception of the building fading into the existing vegetation beyond. It would therefore not appear incongruous or out of keeping with the character and appearance of other dwellings and their outbuildings nearby.

7. Overall, I conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such, it is in conformity with Policies E1 and E2 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan DPD (January 2016), which taken together, permit development of a high-quality design that preserves character and appearance.

Conditions

8. The Council has indicated the conditions that it considers would be appropriate. I have considered these in light of the Planning Practice Guidance.

9. A condition specifying the time limit and approved plans is necessary as this provides certainty. I have imposed a condition specifying that materials are to match the existing building in order to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

10. I have not imposed the Council's suggested conditions to require the submission of a landscaping scheme, or a scheme for the protection of trees. This would be unreasonable and not necessary as the existing landscaping and planting would be sufficient. Furthermore, the Council's Arboricultural Officer had no concerns that trees along the boundary would be impacted by the proposals.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, having regard to the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

C Butcher

INSPECTOR