
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2023

by David M H Rose BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 February 2023

Appeal Reference: APP/C3105/D/22/3301968
2A Strawberry Hill, Bloxham, Oxon, OX15 4NW

- 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 Lee Maskery against the decision of Cherwell District Council.
 - The application Reference 22/01088/F, dated 8 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 15 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is a single storey front porch extension and incorporation of garage to provide a utility room and study.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey front porch extension and incorporation of garage to provide a utility room and study at 2A Strawberry Hill, Bloxham, Oxon, OX15 4NW in accordance with the terms of the application, Reference 22/01088/F, dated 8 April 2022, 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 plans: Job No 42:18 – 090 Existing Elevations); 091 (Existing Floor Plan); 100 (Site Location Plan); 101 (Block Plan); 110 (Proposed Floor Plan); and 120 (Proposed Elevations and materials of construction).

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the street scene.

Reasons

3. Strawberry Hill forms part of a homogenous residential estate with a mix of detached and semi-detached houses. Although retaining general commonality in form, a number of dwellings have been extended or subject to alteration. Nonetheless, the overall character of the area has not been compromised.
4. No. 2A is the middle of three detached houses at the entrance to Strawberry Hill. Its neighbour, no. 2, has frontage to Brickle Lane and has been extended along its Strawberry Hill elevation. In turn, no. 4, broadly comparable in appearance, is positioned noticeably forward of the appeal dwelling.

5. The proposal seeks to extend the existing projecting porch and integral garage further forward under a new pitched roof. To my mind, although adding change, the proportions of the proposed extension would neither dominate the front elevation nor disguise the origins of the dwelling to a material degree.
6. Further, given its relationship with no. 4, it would not appear unduly prominent. In this regard, when viewed from the entrance to Strawberry Hill it would have the backdrop of the neighbouring house and, from the opposite direction, no. 4 would mask a significant part of the proposed extension.
7. Looking directly at the appeal dwelling from Colegrave Road, I consider that the proposed addition would be neither obtrusive nor incongruous and it would fit comfortably in its setting.
8. I have had regard to the Council's Home Extensions & Alterations Design Guide (2007). In particular, this acknowledges that extensions to the front of houses can disrupt the pattern of the buildings in the street and obscure the original elevation and so they are generally discouraged. However, from my considerations above I find no material conflict with this guidance.
9. The Cherwell Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2018) is principally aimed at master-planning, albeit it contains advice on porches. Although the Council focus on the scale of the proposed porch, as being 'unusually large', the porch is but one element of the existing forward projection and a similar component of the proposed extension.
10. In terms of the development plan, I consider that the proposal would be consistent with the design objectives of saved Policies C28 and C30 of the Cherwell Local Plan (1996) and also with Policy ESD 15 of The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 (2015). Similarly, I find no conflict with Policy BL11 of the Bloxham Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031 (made 2016). It follows that the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the street scene and it would be in accordance with the development plan when read as a whole.
11. A copy of the Bloxham Conservation Area plan accompanies the Council's questionnaire without commentary or reference in the officer report (other than the site is not within a designated Conservation Area) or reason for refusal. I note that Strawberry Hill borders the designated area and, having regard to the overall context of the proposal, I am satisfied that the character and appearance of the Bloxham Conservation Area would be preserved.
12. In light of my conclusions, I shall allow the appeal subject to conditions relating to the standard time period in which the development is to be commenced and compliance with the approved plans for certainty. The additional condition sought by the Parish Council, to secure an EV electric charging point, whilst well intended, would not be relevant to the nature of the development permitted.

David MH Rose

Inspector