
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 July 2023

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 22 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3115/W/23/3318678

4 Barncroft, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OW10 8HN

- 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 Dr Sue Roberts against the decision of South Oxfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref P22/S2552/FUL, dated 8 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 25 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is a change of use of existing 6 person House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) to a 7 person HMO.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a change of use of an existing 6 person House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) to a 7 person HMO at 4 Barncroft, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OW10 8HN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P22/S2552/FUL, dated 8 July 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: Block Plan – drawing no. BLO-001; Location Plan – drawing no. 104; Site Plan – drawing no. SIP-001; Existing Elevations – Drawing No. EE-001; Existing Elevations – Drawing No. EE-002; First Floor Plans Existing and Proposed – Drawing NO. COM-002; Ground Floor Plans Existing and Proposed – Drawing NO. COM-001.

Preliminary Matter

2. The appeal submissions indicate that the development which is the subject of the appeal has already taken place and the property is used as a 7 person HMO.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effects of the proposal on parking in the locality.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to this detached house which is set within a residential cul-de-sac. The wider area contains mainly housing and a school is located nearby. The property has a front drive which can accommodate 2 vehicles.
5. The appeal property has previously been used as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) for 6 people without needing planning permission and with appropriate licensing from the local authority. Recently, the number of occupants has risen to 7 which means that planning permission is required for a change of use, although the appropriate license has been obtained from the local authority; the licensing is a separate matter to planning permission.
6. The Council is concerned that the increase in the number of residents will generate additional on-street parking that will disrupt the safe and convenient use of the highway in the area. The Council indicates that it relies on the recently published parking standards from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). These require 0.5 parking spaces per bedroom and so the development overall would require 3.5 spaces, according to the Council.
7. In my view, it must be acknowledged that the existing use of the property would require 3 parking spaces, if the standards are employed. However, it provides 2 parking spaces and I consider that it is not appropriate for the planning application to increase the number of residents by 1 to be used to make up for any existing shortfall. Therefore, using the parking standards, the current proposal for 1 additional resident would give a requirement for 0.5 additional parking spaces.
8. The cul-de-sac of Barncroft contains a number of detached properties, all having provision for off-street parking, some with 2 or 3 spaces. I did not observe any on-street parking, although there are numerous parts of the cul-de-sac where this could take place. In addition, on St Georges Road nearby, most houses have off-street parking and there did not appear to be pressure for on-street spaces. I noted the proximity of the nearby school and the associated highway restrictions.
9. The additional single resident would be likely to increase demand for parking only marginally, according to the parking standards. If this resident possessed a vehicle and needed to park on the road, it seems likely to me that they could safely and conveniently do so close to the property without unduly affecting other residents or highway users. Therefore, I consider that the proposal would be very unlikely to have any prejudicial effect on the use of the adjacent highways and would cause no conflict in relation to Policies H17 and TRANS5 of the Local Plan.
10. A number of representations have been received which are critical of the effects of the proposal on neighbours and the area generally. I agree with the Council's conclusions that any such effects would be very minor and not sufficient to dismiss the appeal.
11. In relation to conditions, the Council has suggested that the standard time limit condition is included along with a condition which requires implementation in accordance with the approved plans. Both conditions are necessary to ensure timely implementation and implementation in accordance with the planning permission. The Council has also suggested a condition requiring the provision

of cycle parking facilities. In my judgement, for a proposal which only involves the increase in the number of residents by 1, this would be a disproportionate requirement and so I shall not include such a condition.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out, the appeal is allowed.

T Wood

INSPECTOR