



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 September 2023

by Sarah Colebourne MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28th September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/F4410/D/23/3324405

Walkers Nurseries, Mosham Road, Blaxton, Doncaster, DN9 3BA

- 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 and Mrs Bodle against the decision of City of Doncaster Council.
 - The application Ref 23/00069/FUL, dated 6 January 2023, was refused by notice dated 3 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Extensions and alterations to existing residential bungalow'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a roof extension to add 2 bedrooms with ensembles with 3 dormer windows to rear and 4 roof lights to front of dwelling and interior alterations at Walkers Nurseries, Mosham Road, Blaxton, Doncaster, DN9 3BA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 23/00069/FUL, dated 6 January 2023, subject to the following conditions:-
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: 22017-003 Rev A.
 - 3) No development shall commence until details, including the colour, of the roofing materials to be used in the construction of the roof of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Procedural matter

2. The Council described the proposal in its decision as 'Erection of a roof extension to add 2 bedrooms with ensembles with 3 dormer windows to rear and 4 roof lights to front of dwelling and interior alterations' and as this describes the proposal in more detail, I have used this in the formal decision above.

Reasons

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the countryside. The development plan includes policy 25 in the Doncaster Local Plan (2021) (LP) which seeks to limit

residential extensions in the countryside and sets out that increases in volume should not exceed 40% above that of the original, existing building.

4. The appeal site lies within a semi-rural area close to the former Doncaster airport, on the busy B1396 between the villages of Blaxton and Auckley. The dwelling, a bungalow that has been previously extended, is set back from the road behind a hedge and mature trees on a wide plot that sits in front of, and adjacent to, the large garden centre site that is owned and managed by the appellants.
5. The appellants say that the existing dwelling has a volume of 895m³ and the proposal would result in an overall volume of 1237m³, an increase of 342m³ and below the 40% allowance of 1253m³. However, the Council says that the original bungalow (not including the granny annex) comprises a much smaller footprint in what appears now to be the north-eastern section of the current dwelling and that the pre-1996 dwelling should be taken as the 'original existing dwelling'. On the basis of what I saw at my site visit, the plans and the Council's planning history, it seems that the bungalow has been significantly extended from its original form with a conservatory, adjoining granny annex and further extensions including a bedroom within the roof space. Although the Council acknowledges that a precise calculation for the volume of the original bungalow is not available, it says that the footprint appears to comprise approximately 114 sqm with no first floor accommodation, which is significantly smaller than the current dwelling (300.42 sqm). The appellants have not provided any compelling evidence to the contrary and I accept, therefore, the Council's figures which indicate that the proposal would exceed the 40% volume criterion. It would, therefore, be contrary to LP policy 25.
6. The proposed development would alter the existing hipped roof to form a gabled roof with an increased ridge height of 100mm (according to the Council) from its highest point and would infill an existing inner garden courtyard area. On the rear elevation an existing hipped roof single storey projection would be altered to form a one and a half storey element with a gabled roof that would be set below that of the main ridge. There would be three dormers and three very small rooflights on the rear elevation with four rooflights on the front elevation.
7. On both the front and rear elevations, the existing dwelling has a somewhat incongruous appearance with a variety of ridge heights present. The proposal would result in one continuous ridge and better balanced, more proportionate elevations. The Council accepts that the roof extension would be largely in keeping with the character of the property and I would agree with that. However, it seems that the Council has exaggerated the impact of the western gable end adjacent to the drive to the garden centre and as the increase to the ridge height would not be significant and the dwelling would remain a building of one and a half storeys, its bulk and massing would be acceptable.
8. In the approach along Mosham Road from the west, the dwelling can be clearly seen through the wide access shared with the garden centre against the backdrop of the many commercial buildings there. From the drive to the side and rear that leads to the garden centre it is partially screened by tall trees within the large rear garden. In this context and given the small increase in height and the absence of any increase in the building's footprint, the proposal

would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the countryside, despite the conflict with the 40% volume requirement in policy 25.

9. The dwelling provides accommodation for the owners of the garden centre and a family member who works there. The appellant has stated that the site requires his 24-hour supervision and that the proposal would provide additional accommodation for his growing family. It is clear that the nursery business has expanded over the last ten years and at the time of my visit was very busy. The appellant says that it makes a significant contribution to the economy of the area and I have no reason to doubt that. These are important considerations which the Council failed to take account of in its consideration of the proposal.
10. Together with the absence of any harm that would be caused in terms of the effect on the character and appearance of the countryside, those considerations outweigh the development plan conflict with the 40% volume threshold in policy 25 of the LP.
11. In addition to the standard commencement condition, a condition is necessary requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, in order to provide certainty. The Council has not objected to the proposed materials of coursed stone and off-white render to match the existing walls of the building and natural slate roof tiles and as there is a mix of roofing materials in the wider area and at the garden centre site, those would be acceptable although a condition requiring further details is necessary given the lack of detail in the application.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that despite the conflict with the development plan, the material considerations referred to above indicate that the appeal should be allowed.

Sarah Colebourne

Inspector