
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 May 2024 by S Indermaur MRTPI

Decision by L McKay MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/D/23/3329691

Woodlee, Underhill, East Knoyle, Wiltshire SP3 6BS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Chris Kitisakkul against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref is PL/2023/02802.
 - The development proposed is the extension and refurbishment of an existing bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the extension and refurbishment of an existing bungalow at Woodlee, Underhill, East Knoyle, Wiltshire SP3 6BS. In accordance with the terms of application PL/2023/02802 subject to the following conditions:
 - The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos: 22-09-101, 22-09-102, 22-09-103, 22-09-121, 22-09-122, 22-09-123, 22-09-124, 22-09-141, 22-09-142, 22-09-150.
 - No development shall take place until details and samples of the external surfacing materials shown on plan no 22-09-150 have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
 - The roof lights hereby approved shall be installed with blinds or other coverings designed to limit light spill, in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The blinds or coverings shall thereafter be retained.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) was published in December 2023. Whilst I have had regard to the revised national policy as a material consideration, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the issues most relevant to the appeal remain unaffected by the revisions to the Framework. I am therefore satisfied that

there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action.

4. On 22 November 2023, all designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in England and Wales became “National Landscapes” (NLs). I have therefore made reference to NLs in my recommendation and specifically referred to the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB as the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs National Landscape (NL).

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal property is a 1970s modest bungalow that is situated in the middle of a large steeply sloping plot within the countryside. The dwelling is in an elevated position that overlooks open fields of the NL. The host dwelling is surrounded by a small group of properties of various styles and materials.
7. The design of the proposed extensions would be unashamedly modern and the overall appearance of the dwelling would be significantly altered. However, the appeal property and its neighbour ‘Lime Tree Cottage’ are not representative of the more traditional designs and materials displayed in the area. Their simple design and non-traditional materials mean that they do not make any particular contribution to the village townscape.
8. The dwelling would be extended to the front, side and rear and the roof form would significantly change, along with the elevational design. Overall, therefore, the changes would not appear subservient to the existing dwelling. The scale of the dwelling would however remain modest and it would still be significantly smaller than neighbouring two-storey properties. Given its siting within a large plot, it would not appear unduly prominent in the street scene. Consequently, in this varied context the fact that the proposal would not match the design and character of the existing dwelling would not in itself be harmful.
9. The contemporary approach proposed would incorporate matching roof materials and the timber cladding proposed would cover the existing reconstituted stone, which the East Knoyle Village Design Statement (VDS) highlights as an undesirable material. Use of timber would be sympathetic to the rural landscape setting and the woodland behind the house. With appropriate treatment, the proposed materials would create a high-quality appearance and be sympathetic to and blend into the local environment. Therefore, the proposed materials are considered to be appropriate.
10. The majority of the proposed roof would match the existing roof pitch. There would be sections of flat roof but these would be small and, due to the topography of the site, not be overly visible from the road. Furthermore, the lower strip of narrow flat roof would relate well to the horizontal emphasis of the original dwelling. Part of the roof would be mono pitched, but this would be less than half of the width of the host dwelling and would break up the mass of the roof and add visual interest.
11. The proposed chimney would be quite bulky and clearly visible in the streetscene. It would however have significant areas of roof slope visible

around it on all sides so would not dominate the property. It would be consistent with the overall contemporary design approach proposed, and would add some interest to the roofscape. Chimneys are a feature of the area as identified in the VDS and there are many different designs nearby, including some substantial structures. Consequently, the proposed chimney would not be incongruous or visually harmful in this context.

12. While the Council would prefer to see a more traditional extension design, I consider that the proposal would provide contrast and interest, contributing to the variety and individuality of housing in the village. With appropriate materials the proposal would relate positively to its setting and reflect local distinctiveness.
13. Overall, therefore, while the proposal represents a significant change to the existing dwelling, it would have limited wider impact and would not change the landscape character of the area. Therefore, it would not harm the landscape and scenic beauty of the NL.
14. Accordingly, the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the surrounding area. It would comply with Policies 51 and 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015), which together require development to have a high standard of design.
15. The proposal would also meet the aims of the guidance in the Creating Places Design Guide (2004), Wiltshire Design Guide (2024) and the VDS, which all seek high quality design that respects the local area, but allow for modern, contemporary design where it blends in with its surroundings. Furthermore, there would be no conflict with the Framework, which seeks development that is of high-quality, good design and is sympathetic to the local character.

Conditions

16. In addition to the standard time period for commencement of the development, I recommend a condition requiring the development accord with the approved plans, as this provides certainty and precision. The Council has suggested that external materials of the extension should match those of the existing dwelling, however this would be unreasonable as this is not what is proposed. As I have limited details about the colour and finish of the timber and brick, I recommend a materials condition to have these approved by the Council in the interest of the character and appearance of the area.
17. In order safeguard the NL against light spill from the rooflights, blinds or other coverings are necessary.
18. The existing access is already consolidated and it is proposed to remain as tarmac, therefore the surfacing condition suggested is not required. Gates are shown on the site plan set back into the site; however, they are likely to need to open outwards due to the slope of the land. There is no substantive evidence before me that this is a busy road, and visibility is reasonably good. Therefore, it has not been demonstrated that a car waiting briefly on the highway while the gates were opened would result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety. Accordingly, it is not necessary or reasonable for me to impose a condition relating to the gates.

Conclusion and Recommendation

19. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed subject to the conditions listed above.

S Indermaur

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

20. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and I agree with the reasoning and recommendation set out above. On that basis the appeal is allowed subject to the conditions listed above.

L McKay

INSPECTOR