



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 May 2025

by **D J Barnes MBA BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/V3120/W/24/3357543

39A Steventon Road, Drayton, Abington, Oxfordshire OX14 4JX

- 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 Ian Buckland against the decision of Vale of White Horse District Council.
 - The application Ref is P24/V1658/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the erection of an extension to an existing dwelling and one additional dwelling.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Although the appeal application was refused because of insufficient details concerning the effect of the proposed development on bats, the council is now satisfied with the assessment provided by the appellant and is no longer defending this reason for refusal. There are no reasons to adopt a different approach in the determination of this appeal.

Main Issues

3. It is considered that the main issues are the effects of the proposed development on (a) the character and appearance of the surrounding area and (b) the living conditions of the occupiers of 39 Steventon Road by reason of overlooking and loss of privacy.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal site comprises the curtilage of a bungalow situated on a corner plot at the junction of Steventon Road and East Way. On the opposite side of East Way is 41 Steventon Road which is a 2-storey dwelling situated within a spacious plot. The area around the junction has a spacious character because of the siting of the bungalow away from its shared boundary with Steventon Road and the size of the plot associated with No. 41.
5. Along Steventon Road, the mainly 2-storey detached dwellings are set back from the footways to the rear of landscaped front gardens which are also used for parking. By reason of the front gardens, the trees, other vegetation and grass verge along the road the streetscene has a spacious and verdant character and

appearance. Along East Way, there are bungalows with variations in the distance they are set back from the carriageway. The character of the streetscene is less spacious and verdant when compared to Steventon Road.

6. The proposed development includes alterations to the bungalow to provide accommodation within the roofslope and the erection of a 2-storey dwelling within the front garden. Reference has been made to a number of schemes whereby housing was allowed on corner plots within Drayton and these were visited during the site visit. However, these schemes can be distinguished from the proposed development, including by sites being previously developed land and also not at junctions. Accordingly, this appeal scheme has been assessed on its own planning circumstances.
7. By reason of its siting, a flank wall of the proposed dwelling would be sited a similar distance away from the footway along Steventon Road as the front elevation of No. 39 which is an extended 2-storey residential property. The proposed front elevation would be sited no further forward towards East Way when compared to the host bungalow. Two car parking spaces are proposed within the front garden and this layout would reflect the parking arrangement of 3 East Way.
8. By reason of its siting and height, the proposed dwelling would be visually prominent from both roads because of being erected on a corner plot. There would be a reduction in the spacious character of the area around the junction but this would not alone be a reason for this appeal to fail. However, because of the close proximity of the proposed dwelling to the reconfigured bungalow, and also the side elevation of No. 39, the appeal scheme would have a cramped appearance. This cramped appearance and the change to the spacious character around the junction would cumulatively cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, in particular the streetscene along Steventon Road. The ability to vary the proposed boundary treatment by the imposition of a suitable condition does not alter this judgement.
9. On this issue, it is concluded that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and, as such, it would conflict with Core Policy 37 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and Policies P-LF3 and P-LF6 of the Drayton Neighbourhood Development Plan (NP). Amongst other matters, these policies require development to be of high design that responds positively to the site and its surroundings and to be in keeping with the distinctive and rural character of Drayton.

Living Conditions

10. By reason of being within a residential area, some degree of overlooking between dwellings can be expected to occur. Indeed, as the appellant has noted, the occupiers of No. 39 can overlook the rear garden of the existing bungalow, including from first floor habitable room windows and a roof terrace above a ground floor single storey addition. However, this is an existing situation rather than one being introduced by a new proposal.
11. The reconfiguration of the bungalow would introduce a bedroom window at first floor level within the elevation facing towards the rear garden. The Council claim that this opening would be sited about 2 metres away from the shared boundary

with No. 39. The appellant identifies the opening would be circa 6.3 metres from the boundary based upon drawing a 45° line drawn from the window.

12. However expressed, the proposed opening would enable the future occupiers of the reconfigured bungalow to directly overlook the garden of No. 39 with an associated unacceptable loss of privacy for the occupiers of this neighbouring property. This degree of loss of privacy would be above that which might normally be associated with proposals within an urban area. For this reason, it is concluded that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of 39 Steventon Road and, as such, it would conflict with Development Policy 23 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2. This policy requires proposals not to result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses, including by reason of loss of privacy.
13. Accordingly, it is concluded that this appeal should be dismissed.

D J Barnes

INSPECTOR