



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 January 2026

by N Robinson BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/G3110/W/25/3374673

19 Blandford Avenue, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX2 8EA

- 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 R Aronwitz-Mercer against the decision of Oxford City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/01660/FUL.
 - The development proposed is change of use of rear annexe (Use Class C3) to short term let (Sui Generis).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would be a suitable location for tourist accommodation, having regard to the strategy of the development plan;
 - the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of 19 Blandford Avenue; and
 - the effect of the proposal on the operation of the highway network.

Reasons

Siting of new tourist accommodation

3. The site comprises 19 Blandford Avenue, a large semi-detached dwelling with a detached split-level annexe located in a large rear garden. The site is situated on Blandford Avenue in a residential area on the outskirts of Oxford. The proposal seeks to change the use of the annexe to a short term let.
4. Oxford Local Plan (2020) (LP) policy V5 states that planning permission will only be granted for the development of new sites for holiday and other short stay accommodation in specified locations, including on main arterial roads where there is frequent and direct public transport to the city centre. The supporting text to policy V5 notes the impact of tourist accommodation, including pressure on the highway network, congestion and the land required for parking.
5. Woodstock Road, which it is stated is within 150m of the appeal site, and which has public transport options that visitors of the holiday let could utilise, is one of the main arterial roads specified in policy V5. Nonetheless, Blandford Avenue, on which the site is located, is not one of the roads or locations specified, and, whilst the site is reasonably close to this main arterial route, policy V5 is clear that it is

only sites on these routes and other specified locations which will be supported, not those close to them. The site is some distance from the city centre and the bus and train stations, and thus differs from the referenced decision at 67 Mill Street¹ in which the Inspector found that, given its siting close to the city centre, railway and bus stations, the development would not undermine the vitality and viability of the City Centre and thus accorded with the wider objectives of policy V5.

6. Drawing on the above, the proposal would fail to meet the policy's locational requirements of providing accessible tourist accommodation in sustainable locations where it will boost the economy and support the economic objectives of the LP. Therefore, the site is not an appropriate location for tourist accommodation and is contrary to those aims of policy V5 of the LP set out above.
7. Decisions relating to proposals in different authorities² to which my attention has been drawn differ in their policy context and thus do not alter my above conclusions regarding the development's conflict with the strategy of the development plan.

Living conditions

8. No plans are before me setting out if or how the rear garden would be subdivided to facilitate the proposal. Nonetheless, even if some of the rear garden was lost to provide amenity space for the holiday let, given the garden's size I am satisfied that the host dwelling would retain a garden of sufficient size to meet the requirements of a family dwelling house. Given the separation of the building from the host property, there is no evidence that the use of the building as a holiday let would give rise to noise and disturbance to the occupiers of no 19 Blandford Avenue that would be noticeably more intensive than that reasonably expected to be associated with a residential annexe, in particular given the limited scale of occupation. The provisions of the Short-Term Holiday Let Management Plan would further contribute to limiting noise and disturbance generated by the development.
9. However, the access to the building is via a path within the garden to No 19 which is not physically separated from the remainder of the garden area. Visitors accessing the let would pass through the private garden, and, in the absence of any screening, this would result in opportunities for overlooking of the garden, resulting in a harmful loss of privacy for the occupiers of this property. There is no indication that such harm would arise from the use of the annexe by occupiers forming part of the same household.
10. There are no proposals before me for boundary treatment to separate the garden and the holiday let's access. Thus, the proposal does not appear to be comparable to an appeal decision at land to west of Griffin Gate³ to which my attention has been drawn in which the Inspector found that intervening hedging/high fencing at the boundary would restrict direct intervisibility between a dwelling/ holiday let and a neighbouring dwelling. I am also directed to an appeal decision for a visitor let at Cape Cornwall Street⁴, however, there is no suggestion that the access arrangements for this visitor let resulted in visitors passing through the amenity space of a dwelling. I therefore afford these decisions limited weight.

¹ APP/G3110/W/23/3317443

² APP/N4720/W/25/3368474, APP/D0840/W/24/3343662, APP/A1530/W/25/3360676, APP/D0840/W/24/3349253, APP/D3505/W/24/3357719, APP/Q3115/W/25/3358976 and APP/C3105/W/24/3348177

³ APP/C3105/W/24/3348177

⁴ APP/D0840/W/24/3343662

11. There is no indication that the host dwelling would not retain adequate amenity space or that the proposal would give rise to unacceptable noise and disturbance impacts. I therefore find that there would be no conflict to those aims of LP policies H16, RE2 and RE8. However, the proposal would result in harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of 19 Blandford Avenue through loss of privacy. Conflict therefore arises with those aims of LP policies H14 and RE7 which seek to ensure that new development provides reasonable privacy for occupants of existing homes and that the amenity of neighbours is protected.

Highway network

12. The site is located in a Controlled Parking Zone. The existing dwelling has 2 offroad car parking spaces to the front and it is stated that the property also qualifies for a residents' on-street parking permit. Given its modest size and limited scale of occupation the holiday let is unlikely to generate significant additional vehicle movements or parking demand. There is no indication that the parking requirements of the holiday let and the existing dwelling cannot be met through the existing provision. Given this, I am satisfied that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the operation of the highway network. I therefore find no conflict with those aims of LP policies M1 and M3 which seek to reduce car use, minimise the need to travel and ensure that additional parking pressures arising from development don't compromise highway safety or restrict the ability of existing residents to park.

Other Matters

13. The Council raised no objections to the proposal on grounds of its effect on the character and appearance of the area. Nonetheless, compliance with the relevant development plan policies on this matter would be required in any case. Therefore, this is not a matter which weighs in favour of the proposal.
14. It is stated that the proposal would generate a similar level of activity to other short term lets. However, there is no indication if these benefit from planning permission or if they were the subject of the same circumstances and planning policy considerations as the appeal proposal. Given this, this is not a matter which weighs in favour of the proposal.
15. The development would re-use an existing building and there would be some economic benefits from the associated spending of its occupiers. However, such benefits would be small given the scale of the scheme and would fail to outweigh the identified harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 19 and the conflict with the development plan strategy for the location of tourist accommodation.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above and taking into account the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Robinson

INSPECTOR