

## **LRE/4783/5 – Mr & Mrs M Samuel**

### **Extension & alterations to existing garage. Erection of a domestic garage. Antwicks Stud, Main Street, Letcombe Regis**

#### **1.0 The Proposal**

- 1.1 Situated to the north of the village of Letcombe Regis within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Antwicks Stud is currently served by a modest three bedroom bungalow measuring 17.1 metres long, by 7.3 metres wide, with an eaves height of 2.5 metres and a ridge height of 5 metres. The site plan and existing plans of the bungalow are at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 The current application seeks planning permission to extend the existing dwelling in a southerly and westerly direction, together with the construction of a four-bay garage to the south-west of the property attached to the dwelling by a single storey extension. The proposed extension would extend approximately 5 metres in a southerly direction and 5 metres in a westerly direction, creating a dwelling 22 metres long by 12.5 metres wide, with an eaves height of 2.5 metres and a ridge height of 7.9 metres. The proposed garage measures 12 metres by 6 metres, with an eaves height of approximately 2.7 metres and a ridge height of approximately 6 metres. The link extension between the proposed garage and dwelling is approximately the same height as the garage, and measures 8 metres by 4.1 metres. It is also proposed to add a modest conservatory on the rear (north) elevation. The proposed block plan and application drawings are at **Appendix 2**.
- 1.3 The application comes to Committee due to an objection from Letcombe Regis Parish Council.

#### **2.0 Planning History**

- 2.1 Outline planning permission (LRE/4783-X) was granted in February 1980 for the 'Erection of a bungalow (as owners residence)', followed by the reserved matters approval in September 1980 (LRE/4783/1-D). This bungalow was justified on the basis that it was required for the supervision and security of the stud, and was the subject of a legal agreement preventing the disposal of any of the land within the site.
- 2.2 Planning permission was granted in 1981 for a 'Single storey extension to rear [of bungalow] to provide additional living accommodation together with internal alterations'.
- 2.3 Planning permission was granted for ten stables and a tack room with an all weather gallop in 1997.
- 2.4 Application LRE/4783/4 for the 'Conversion of stables to form three dwellings' was withdrawn in September 2005.

#### **3.0 Planning Policies**

- 3.1 Policy DC1 of the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan refers to the design of new development, and seeks to ensure development is of a high quality and takes into account local distinctiveness and character.
- 3.2 Policy DC9 refers to the impact of new development on the amenities of neighbouring properties and the wider environment in terms of, among other things, loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight, and dominance or visual intrusion.
- 3.3 Policy H24 allows for extensions to existing dwellings provided various criteria are satisfactory,

including; i) the impact on the character and appearance of the area as a whole, ii) the impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties in terms of privacy, overlooking and overshadowing, and iii) whether adequate off-street parking, turning space and garden space remain.

3.4 Policy NE6 relates to development in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and seeks to ensure development conserves or enhances the natural beauty of the landscape.

#### 4.0 **Consultations**

4.1 Letcombe Regis Parish Council objects to the proposal on the following grounds;:

- 1) The substantial increase in size – we are surprised that the application can be considered as an ‘extension’.
- 2) The visibility of the house from the surrounding area, both because of its size and because of the increased height of the building (an additional 2.9 metres).
- 3) The house is outside the built envelope of the village.

A full copy of the Parish Council’s response is at **Appendix 3**.

4.2 Six letters of objection have been received, which include the following points:

- Visually sensitive site, and a two storey house would be totally inappropriate.
- Letcombe Regis is already being overwhelmed by development.
- Application is for an extension but is in fact a rebuild.
- When permission was granted for bungalow, a development such as this was never envisaged.
- Height of the proposed house would obscure views of open countryside for several houses in the village.
- Proposed house would dominate other buildings on the site, and would become a central feature in a Conservation Area [the site lies adjacent to a Conservation Area, not within it] and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Development lies outside the village boundaries, if allowed there will be a considerable threat of other applications on similar sites.
- Large number of additional rooms alters completely the character of the dwelling.
- Four garages is out of proportion.
- Addition of first floor is out of keeping with the landscape.
- Proposed urban style alters the nature and rural ambience of the area.
- Encroachment on the beautiful scenery of the area.
- Any extension will make applications to “in fill” towards Mill Cottage more frequent and harder for the Council to refuse.
- Proposed development lies outside the main built up area of the village, thus contravenes Structure Plan Policy EN4, Local Plan Policy C2 and Local Plan Policy H5.
- Scale and mass of the proposal is excessive and contravenes Policy H24.
- Elevated from the rest of the village, it will have a materially greater impact on the surroundings than the current building.
- Size and scale of the proposed new development cannot be justified on similar grounds to the 1980 application.

4.3 Twenty letters of support have been received, which include the following points;

- Proposal is appropriate to, and in-keeping with, surroundings.
- Extension will add character and make the property a proper family house.
- Present bungalow is not suitable for a family with two children.
- Children feel insecure sleeping on the ground floor in the current bungalow.
- Would not be a problem for anyone, as neighbours a long way away.
- Bungalow is not of a standard that would be expected for an equestrian establishment of

this size.

- Encouragement should be given to retaining small traditional businesses within the village which can provide opportunities for local employment.
- Roof line has been kept as low as possible.
- Stud needs a more substantial house if it is to continue in its present use.
- Attractive design.
- External finish should be carefully chosen so that the house blends with the local scene; this would help to prevent it being unduly visible from local footpaths and from the few properties whose occupants may be able to see the enlarged house.

4.4 A consultation response has been received from the Planning Advisor to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, stating, among other things that ‘... the proposal, which would transform this modest dwelling into a substantial house with quadruple garage, would result in significant harm to the AONB ...’. A full copy of the comments is at **Appendix 4**.

## 5.0 **Officer Comments**

5.1 The main issues in determining this application are the type of development proposed, the impact on neighbouring properties, and the impact on the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

5.2 It is your Officer’s opinion that the proposed development, which is described as ‘extension and alterations’, does not constitute a complete rebuild. It is proposed to maintain the existing north and east walls of the property and extend out from these. The proposal should therefore be considered against the Local Plan policies set out in section 3 of this report.

5.3 Given that the proposed extended dwelling would be at least 170 metres from the nearest neighbouring property, the proposal would not result in any loss of amenity for these properties in respect to overlooking, overshadowing or over dominance.

5.4 The principal issue, therefore, relating to this proposal is the impact on the AONB within which the application site lies. It is your Officer’s opinion that the proposal would not cause demonstrable harm to the AONB. The proposed development would make the property more prominent within its existing setting, however, it is felt that the design of the extension ensures that the natural beauty of the landscape is conserved. It will obviously be important that the materials to be used complement the area, and for this reason it is recommended that samples of all materials to be used externally in the development are submitted prior to the commencement of any development (see Condition 2 below).

5.5 It is acknowledged that the extended dwelling would be visible from several vantage points, however, the fact that something is visible should not in itself mean that it is harmful. Although the existing bungalow is set down relatively low and is less visible within the landscape, the design of this property is utilitarian in form, and in your Officers opinion does not add to the natural beauty of the landscape. The proposed extension to this dwelling would add character to the existing dwelling and to the area as a whole.

## 6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 *That planning permission be granted, subject to the following conditions:-*

1. *TL1 Time Limit – Full Application*
2. *MC2 Submission of Materials (Samples)*