
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2016

by J E Tempest BA(Hons) MA PGDip PGCertHE MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 12 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/U3935/D/16/3158334

21 Dorney Road, Redhouse, Swindon SN25 2AD

- 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 R Beck against the decision of Swindon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref S/16/1138/BLOWC, dated 27 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 16 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as "Retrospective single storey side/rear extension and conservatory."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. These are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the local area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is sited at the north eastern end of Dorney Road. Dorney Road is linked to Fawley Close by a pedestrian/cycle route which is adjacent to the appeal site. The appeal property is two storeys in height facing Dorney Road but has accommodation within the roof space including dormers on the rear of the house. The property is attached at its western end to a short terrace of properties which are a full three storeys in height. Dorney Close is part of a considerably larger and recent area of planned residential development. The area includes a variety of building designs, sizes and materials which complement one another.
4. It was clear from my site visit that both the extensions for which permission is sought have been largely constructed although are not finished in every respect. The Council's notice of refusal refers only to the single storey side extension and the Council's evidence confirms they do not have objections to the proposed conservatory. My decision therefore focuses on the side extension.
5. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) relating to residential extensions¹ indicates that side extensions should not extend an existing dwelling by more than half the width of the principal elevation and the Council draw attention to the property having already been extended on the side.

¹ Swindon Borough Council : Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document October 2011

6. The planning history shows that in 2007 the existing dwelling included a two storey element comprising a garage with accommodation over with a ridge line stepped down from the ridge line of the main roof. The side extension for which permission is now sought is single storey and extends the length of the front elevation by some 6.9 metres. The extension is set back from the front of the property by some 2.5 metres and this, together with the difference in scale from other elements of the existing buildings is sufficient for the extension to appear as a subsidiary element when seen from the front. Consequently, the extension does not result in a visual imbalance of the front elevation and does not unacceptably harm the appearance of the front of the dwelling.
7. Although the appeal property is at the end of a cul de sac, the non-vehicular routes through to Fawley Close and the footpath to the east which runs alongside an extensive hedgerow mean that the site is visible from public vantage points. The extension has been designed to utilise most of the north eastern corner of the garden such that it extends almost to the side and rear boundaries. Immediately beyond the rear boundary is a hedgerow which runs along the back of the appeal property and a number of other properties. This hedge provides some screening of the rendered rear elevation of the extension but the hedge appears to be outside the control of the appellant.
8. The proposed roof over the asymmetrical extension involves a series of partially hipped roofs and areas of flat roof. Whilst the flat roofs are not readily apparent from beyond the site boundaries the vertical walls which link the partial hips to the largest area of flat roof are evident from the entrance to the garage court serving properties in Fawley Close.
9. Views from the east are predominantly of the hipped elements of the roof and the end wall of the extension. However in these views the mismatch of the roof form and pitch of the extension with the main roofs of the host dwelling is apparent. If the hedgerow to the rear of the extension were to be removed or reduced in height, the awkward roof design of the extension would be more apparent in public views. The incongruous nature of the roof design is readily apparent from within the rear garden of the property. I find that the extension is poorly designed when considered in the context of the design of the appeal property and other properties in the area.
10. Policy DE1 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026² relates to the need for a high standard of design for all types of development. This includes assessing context and character in terms of existing built characteristics and existing site conditions. The form of the development including massing, materials and detailing is also to be taken into account in the design. The proposal causes harm when seen from public vantage points to the east and also where it is visible from other parts of the development beyond the appeal site, albeit that some of these views are not wholly public areas. Consequently, the proposal has a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area and on the appearance of the host property. The proposal therefore fails to comply with Policy DE1 in these respects.
11. The appellant's grounds of appeal address overdevelopment of the site, however this is not part of the Council's reason for refusing the proposal which relates to the design of the proposal. I have taken into account the earlier

² Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 Adopted March 2015

permission for an extension in a similar location, however this was for a smaller extension of a different design and it therefore does not alter my conclusions regarding the proposal before me. Although the appellant refers to a misunderstanding with regard to permitted development rights, it is not part of the appellant's case that permission is not required for the development proposals. I have also noted the appellant's comments with regard to the Council's handling of the proposals but these are not matters for this appeal.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above and having taken into account all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J E Tempest

INSPECTOR