

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2016

by C J Ball DArch DCons RIBA IHBC

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

Decision date: 14 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/D1780/D/16/3157562

1 Woodcote Road, Swaythling, Southampton SO17 3TA

- 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 Mrs Chi Lam Man against the decision of Southampton City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00680/FUL, dated 25 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a 2 storey side extension following demolition of an existing garage
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issues

2. There are 2 main issues in this case:

1: the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the locality: and

2: the impact the extension would have on the living conditions of neighbours, with particular regard to loss of outlook.

Reasons

3. No.1 Woodcote Road is one of a row of 3 pairs of traditionally constructed, pitched roof semi-detached houses at the eastern end of the road. A notable characteristic of these houses is the large gaps between and around them. Their spacious settings make a distinctive contribution to the attractive character of the street scene. No.144 Mayfield Road, on the corner with Woodcote Road and adjacent to the appeal property, has been substantially extended, with a return wing close to the common boundary. Nonetheless the large gap between it and No.1 Woodcote Road remains, and is currently occupied by No.1's large single storey detached garage.
 4. The proposed extension would largely fill the gap between the existing house and the rear of No.144 Mayfield Road, extending to within a metre or so of the shared boundary. The characteristic gap in this location would effectively be infilled and the typical symmetry of the pair of houses would be lost. The extension would be almost as deep as the main house, with a minimal set back on the front elevation. The plans show a lowered eaves, with dormered windows, and a low ridge height in an attempt to give the extension an
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appearance of subordination to the main house. Resorting to a flat roof to reduce the overall height belies the fact that this would be a prominent and large extension. All this serves to diminish the necessary sense of harmony of relationship between house and extension, resulting in a disjointed appearance. This is quite unlike the other local examples of extensions referred to by the appellant, which I saw on my site visit, and nor would it reflect the original traditional design of the building.

5. I consider that, in conflict with policies SDP1, SDP7 and SDP9 of the Local Plan Review and policy CS13 of the Core Strategy, the proposal would not reflect the character of the house as part of the row and would undermine the particular character of the street scene. I find that the proposed extension would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the locality.
6. The rear elevation of No.144 Mayfield Road faces the side elevation of No.1 Woodcote Road. No.144 has a small rear courtyard, partially enclosed by the extended 2 storey return wing. Windows to habitable rooms face into the courtyard. A small single storey outbuilding lies at the rear of the courtyard, on the boundary with No.1. The 2-storey wall of the extension would rise above the courtyard, some 6 metres away from the rear elevation of No.144 and about 2.5 metres from the face of the return wing. I note that the Council's Residential Design Guide recommends a separation distance of 12.5 metres in such circumstances.
7. The 2 windows on the end wall of the return wing serve a garage, so that the extension would not have an unacceptable impact there. However, the proposed extension would greatly increase the sense of over-dominant enclosure of the small courtyard, and the outlook from the windows facing into the courtyard would be severely curtailed. That would be particularly unneighbourly and would conflict with policies SDP1, SDP7 and SDP9 of the Local Plan Review, policy CS13 of the Core Strategy and Part 2 of the Council's Residential Design Guide SPD. In view of this I consider that the proposed extension would have an unacceptably harmful impact on the living conditions of neighbours.
8. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Colin Ball

Inspector