
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 January 2017

by H Baugh-Jones BA(Hons) DipLA MA CMLI

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

Decision date: 27th January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/W/16/3161365

2 Kelston Grove, Hanham, Bristol BS15 9NL

- 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 P Cockram against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref PK16/3197/F, dated 24 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 30 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of new dwelling attached to existing dwelling and increase in height of part of perimeter wall.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises an area at the side of the host dwelling which is a semi-detached house located within a relatively dense residential area. The site occupies a corner location and is prominent in views on the approach from the junction of Granny's Lane and Mount Hill Road to the north. In these views, the rear elevation of a pair of semi-detached dwellings can be seen behind the appeal site. Some nearby properties have been extended but the main characteristics, and thus the overall uniformity, of the dwellings in Kelston Grove have been maintained.
 4. The appeal site accounts for a substantial area at the side of No. 2 and given that there are no other such notable spaces nearby, it therefore appears as somewhat of an anomaly in the street scene.
 5. Because of the site's tapering front boundary, the dwelling has been designed with a stepped front elevation, which would set it apart from the flat front elevations of the neighbouring properties. Although the design would replicate the characteristic full height bow window and hipped roof form of the other dwellings in Kelston Grove, it would create a terrace of three dwellings resulting in an uncharacteristic mass of built form in comparison to the uniform width found on the pairs of semis along the street. Furthermore, part of the dwelling's roof would sit at a lower level which, in combination with the proposed side facing dormer, would give it an obtrusive and incongruous
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appearance. The property frontage would also be diminutive in comparison to those surrounding it and thus out of character with the form of development in this area.

6. The overall result would be a dwelling with a contrived appearance and the uncharacteristically small frontage and lack of visual relief between its flank wall and the pavement would give the impression of it being cramped on its plot.
7. For the above reasons, the proposal would disrupt the overall rhythm of the street thereby appearing at odds with the character and appearance of the area. The visual effects described above would be exacerbated due to the site's prominent location. I do accept that it is not necessarily appropriate to attempt to absolutely replicate the character or appearance of surrounding development. Paragraph 60 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) recognises this, but goes on to say that it is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. For the reasons already given, I do not consider that the proposal would achieve this.
8. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of other schemes nearby. At my site visit, I observed there has been a side extension at No. 21 Hollyguest Road that has filled a substantial part of the area at the side of the property. However, this is not as close to the pavement as part of the proposed dwelling would be and does not appear as a separate dwelling or appear out of proportion to its host. In addition, I noted the development on the corner of Granny's Lane and Mount Hill Road and the available evidence tells me that this is an infill development. However, it does not sit at the end of a line of generally regimented and uniform dwellings as the appeal scheme would. I do not therefore consider there to be any useful direct comparison between these other schemes and the one before me.
9. It has also been put to me that the site cannot properly be used as a private garden. However, no substantive evidence has been put forward to support this claim and I can see no clear reasons why it could not function as part of the overall garden area, particularly if it were to be enclosed by appropriate planting.
10. Taking all of the above into account, the proposal would run counter to Policy CS1 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Core Strategy (2013) that, amongst other things, requires development to demonstrate high standards of design through its form scale, height, massing and details and to integrate with existing development by way of its layout. It would also conflict with Policy H4 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan (2006) that has similar objectives and with the Framework requirement for good design.
11. Notwithstanding the above, the Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Framework paragraph 49 states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It goes on to say that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. However, this does not mean that all policies within the development are out of date or even where they are, that they carry no weight. Policies CS1 and H4 are design policies and do not in my view, equate to policies relevant to the supply of housing. They closely align with the

Framework requirement for good design and accordingly, I give them full weight.

12. In any case, although the proposal would add a further family home to the overall housing supply in South Gloucestershire, its contribution would be very modest and thus insufficient to outweigh the clear identified harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

13. For the above reasons and having had regard to all other matters raised, the appeal does not succeed.

Hayden Baugh-Jones

Inspector