
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 January 2017

by JP Roberts BSc(Hons), LLB(Hons), MRTPI

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

Decision date: 3rd February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/16/3166011

46 The Greenway, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 4HT

- 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 Felice Balasco against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/04341/H, dated 4 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 29 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is a side extension at ground and first floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. The appellant has indicated that he would be willing to change the window arrangement, the degree of set-back and the roof design. No amended plans have been submitted, and I consider that it would not be possible to impose conditions which would effectively require a redesign of the whole proposal, materially altering its nature. I shall therefore deal with the proposal on the basis of the submitted plans.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding residential area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site lies on the corner of The Greenway at its junction with The Chase, and is occupied by a semi-detached house. The proposed two-storey extension would be set back from the front elevation by about 0.33m and would be 4.4m wide, with a hipped roof. Of the policies referred to me the most relevant is Policy DM30 of the Bristol Local Plan – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) which says that extensions should be physically and visually subservient to the host building, including its roof form, and not dominate it by virtue of their siting and scale.
 5. The host dwelling has a width of some 6.8m and thus the extension would appear as a prominent addition, exacerbated by the token degree of set-back from the front elevation. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) *A Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations* sets out detailed guidance on house extensions and aims to ensure that side extensions do not exceed half the width of the dwelling. The extension in this case would be
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much wider than the recommended width, partly as a consequence of the inclusion of a separate hallway and stairs, which the appellant wishes to provide his adult children with a measure of independence.

6. However, this considerable width would make it look unbalanced and overly dominant in relation to the host dwelling, and would unbalance the pair of semi-detached houses. The small setback from the front elevation and the lack of any set back on the rear elevation, which would be clearly seen from the higher ground on The Chase, also contributes to the dominant impact.
7. It is proposed to change the existing hipped roof to a gabled roof, with a hip over the proposed extension. However, because the extension would have a small set-back from the front elevation and would be only slightly lower than the main roof, the junction between the hip and the gable would appear awkward. This adds to my concerns.
8. The window arrangements on all elevations would be poor; the two small windows on the front elevation appear out of scale with the width of the extension and fail to align. Those on the side elevation also lack alignment whilst the rear full height French window and Juliet balcony are out of scale in relation to other windows and offset to one side. These contribute to my view that the proposal does not represent good design.
9. I therefore conclude on the main issue that the proposal would result in significant harm to the appearance of the host building and the surrounding residential area, and would conflict with Policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy which deals with quality urban design. It would also conflict with SADMP Policies DM26 and DM27, which respectively concern local character and distinctiveness and layout and form, as well as with Policy DM30 to which I have referred above. It would also conflict with the SPD mentioned above.

Other matters

10. I have taken into account the appellant's family circumstances and the need for additional accommodation, together with the lack of neighbour objection, but the harm that I have identified above outweighs these matters.
11. The relationship between the extension and the side elevation of 48A The Greenway, in which there are obscurely glazed windows, would be satisfactory and this does not add to my concerns.
12. I note the appellant's contention that the Council did not engage with the appellant in a proactive manner, as promoted in the National Planning Policy Framework. However, this does not alter my findings on the merits of the proposal.

Conclusion

13. I find that the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

JP Roberts

INSPECTOR