
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 March 2017

by Keith Manning BSc (Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J3720/D/16/3165645

8 Hunts Road, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 7JG

- 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 Michael Smith against the decision of Stratford on Avon District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/03381/FUL, dated 14 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 8 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is single storey rear extension, two storey side extension, loft conversion to include two dormer windows and roof lights and the re-roofing of the roof, bay window and porch to front elevation and resurface parking area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for single storey rear extension, two storey side extension, loft conversion to include two dormer windows and roof lights and the re-roofing of the roof, bay window and porch to front elevation and resurface parking area at 8 Hunts Road, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 7JG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/03381/FUL, dated 14 October 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan 16-320 D-01; proposed Site Plan 16-320 D-03; Proposed Plans & Sections 16-320 D-04; and Proposed Elevations 16-320 D-05.
 - 3) The materials used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area with particular reference to the street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is one of a relatively modern, but nevertheless mature, estate of mainly detached houses, typically with continuous ridge lines across their full width gable to gable and, as the appellant correctly points out, there are

examples of such successfully incorporating extensions. There are also examples close by to the appeal site, including at semi-detached properties, of subordinate side extensions. Some of the detached properties are wide across the front and broadly symmetrical in terms of fenestration, similar to that proposed at the appeal site as a consequence of the intended extension. Materials and detailing also vary such that within the overall genre of the house type characteristic here there is wide variation. The street scene does not depend on uniformity of design for its quality of character and appearance. No objections on design or indeed any other grounds have been received from neighbours.

4. Moreover, the appeal site is situated fronting the inside of a gentle curvature in the road such that the plot is widest at the front and narrowest at the rear, creating the space and prominence that would accommodate without any sense of cramping or incongruity the wide and broadly symmetrical style of house that would result from the design of extension proposed. The sense of contextual spaciousness is further enhanced by the proximity of the appeal site to a bifurcation in the road.
5. Although the extension incorporates a bay window over the integral garage, this would be set back on a small forward pitched roof at ground floor level crossing the entire front of the property which would unify the upper part of the front elevation over the less symmetrical detailing of the ground floor level. Amongst other things this would have the advantage of reducing the perception of top-heaviness that the bay over the integral garage might otherwise give rise to.
6. I note that the planning officer's conclusion on the design in context of the proposal was 'on balance' but in my view the design proposed is actually successful in producing an enlarged and unified frontage that would not be incongruous in the context I have described.
7. The appellant's statement usefully includes, at Appendix 5, a comparison of what is proposed with an alternative incorporating a subordinate extension with a lower ridge and a set-back, following the principles set out in the Council's supplementary guidance *Extending Your Home*. Paragraph 3.4 indicates that the guidance is exactly that, not necessarily to be rigidly adhered to in each and every case. Even allowing for the necessarily two dimensional presentation of the comparison, I do not, for the reasons I have given, consider that, in the context of the appeal site, the application of the guidance so as to create an identifiable subordinate extension in this case would materially improve its effect on the street scene.
8. What is proposed therefore represents adequately good design in context, appropriate to the property and its position in the street and, as a consequence, there would be no harmful conflict with or offence to the fundamental objects of the development plan to achieve good design for context, as expressed in policies CS.9 and CS.20 of the Council's Core Strategy.
9. Part B of the latter policy concerning the existing housing stock and buildings does require extensions to be 'subservient' (albeit site location may be taken into account where appropriate) but it is material in any event that the context and specific merits of the proposed extension in this case do not require the application of that principle without discretion and regardless of the individual

merits of what is proposed. Whilst the general principle embodied in the policy will hold good in most street scene situations, the particular circumstances of this site do not demand that it should necessarily prevail in this instance. The proposed extension is of an appropriate scale, there would be no tangible harm and paragraph 5.6.3 of the explanation in any event makes it clear that a balanced approach to homeowners' aspirations is called for.

10. In respect of the main issue, therefore, the proposed development broadly accords with the intention of the development plan as a whole to achieve good design in context; and the material considerations of successful design specifically for the site in question and the exhortation of the National Planning Policy Framework not to be unnecessarily prescriptive in my estimation justify a departure in this case from the universal development plan policy requirement of subservience. I concur with the planning officer's analysis that no unacceptable effects regarding the amenity of neighbouring occupiers would be experienced.
11. The Council suggests the standard conditions for householder appeals and I have no reason to depart from or add to those.
12. For the above reasons, and having taken all other matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Keith Manning

Inspector