

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 May 2017

by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

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

Decision date: 2 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/W/17/3168352

58 Ravenswood Road, Cotham, Bristol BS6 6BP

- 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 John Welland against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 15/06280/H, dated 4 December 2015, was refused by notice dated 23 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as “proposed alterations to an existing unapproved extension”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matters

2. Although the extension has been constructed, alterations to the existing structure were proposed as part of the application. I have considered the appeal on this basis. However the marking of the render on the walls, as shown on the submitted plan, is not an accurate reflection of the scoring that has been carried out. It is clear from the appellant’s statement that he wishes to retain the render in its current form. I have therefore proceeded with the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Cotham and Redland Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The site is within the Cotham and Redland Conservation Area (CA) which, in the vicinity of the appeal site, is primarily characterised by large two storey semi-detached dwellings. Typically the dwellings are finished in high quality stone work. Several properties, including the appeal property and its attached neighbour, have Bath stone as the primary walling material which has fine joints between the blocks. The quality and finish of the stonework on the appeal property, and neighbouring buildings, contributes positively to the character and appearance of the CA.
 5. A single storey extension has been erected at the site and it is finished in render. This has been scored in an attempt to mimic the stonework of the existing building. In places the scored lines are not straight or consistent in width and this noticeably fails to imitate the finish of the stonework on the host property. The appearance of the scored lines jars with the character of the stonework on the building. The finish fails to reflect the quality of the external materials that are typical of the area. Consequently the scored lines appear harmfully discordant with the character and appearance of the CA.
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6. The extension sits behind a high boundary wall, and thus the lower portion is obscured from views from the street. However, the poor finish of the render scoring is evident in the sections visible above the wall. There is ivy covering a portion of the appeal building, close to the extension. This is not a permanent feature and the contrast in quality of the finish is apparent even with the ivy in place. The ivy and the boundary wall do not minimise the harm that has arisen.
7. The existing render matches well with the colour of the Bath stone on the existing building. This match does not minimise the harm that has arisen from the scored render and I have no evidence that a similar match could not be achieved again.
8. The extension is of a modest size and it has been carefully detailed with a curved window head. It has a timber window similar in appearance to the existing windows and would be finished in roofing materials appropriate to the character of the host building. These features appear in keeping, but they do not minimise the harm that has arisen from the scored render.
9. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention is paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. This is a matter of considerable importance and weight. The marked render is seen from a small section of the CA and consequently the extent of the harm to the heritage asset is "less than substantial" in the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). However, no substantive public benefits have been put forward to weigh against this harm.
10. For these reasons the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Cotham and Redland Conservation Area. As such it would be contrary to the conservation and design aims of Policies BCS21 and BCS22 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy Adopted June 2011 and Policies DM26, DM30 and DM31 of the Bristol Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan Adopted July 2014. The proposal would also run counter to the thrust of the Framework's aims to conserve heritage assets.

Other matters

11. The appellant suggest that, in other circumstances, the extension would be permitted development. It is not disputed that the appeal scheme needs planning permission and I have determined the appeal on its planning merits. In any event, as it appears that no. 58 has been separated in to a number of flats, permitted development rights would not apply. Not all the comments received from neighbouring residents have raised specific objections to the appeal scheme; however this does not minimise or outweigh the harm I have found.

Conclusion

12. The adverse effects of the development are sufficient to mean that the proposal would conflict with the development plan when taken as a whole. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Taylor
INSPECTOR