



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 July 2017

by H Butcher BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 28 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D0121/D/17/3177304

1 Avon Close, Weston-Super-Mare, BS23 4QP

- 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 N Davison against the decision of North Somerset Council.
 - The application Ref 17/P/0412/F, dated 30 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 5 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the extension on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. 1 Avon Close is part of a residential estate which comprises a mixture of flats and houses. No 1 is one half of a pair of semi-detached dwellings which sits side on to Avon Close at the end of a row of properties. Being an end property it is relatively prominent in the immediate street scene.
4. The Council's Residential Design Guide – section 2, Appearance and character of house extensions and alterations, Supplementary Planning Document (2014) (SPD) highlights that side extensions can harm the balance and proportions of buildings and that subservient extensions can help maintain the architectural integrity of the original building. The SPD therefore advises that side extensions should set back from the front wall of the house by at least 400mm at first floor level and stepped down from the roof ridge height the same distance. I consider this to be sound design advice, particularly in this case, as it would allow the form and proportions of the front elevation of No 1 to remain visible thereby maintaining a sense of balance between the pair of semi-detached properties to which it belongs.
5. The proposed two storey side extension, whilst incorporating a matching hipped roof and materials to the original house, would not be set back or set down. As a result it would significantly widen the front elevation of No 1 giving the pair of semi-detached dwellings an unbalanced appearance and making No 1 appear overly large and dominant. This would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area particularly given the relatively prominent location of the host dwelling. Consequently the proposal would

conflict with Policies CS12 of the North Somerset Council Core Strategy (2017), DM32 and DM38 of the North Somerset Council Sites and Policies Plan (Part 1) (2016), and the SPD, which, broadly speaking require high quality design. Policy DM38, in particular, relates to extensions to dwellings and sets out the need for these to respect the overall design and character of the existing property.

6. In coming to the above conclusions on character and appearance I find no harm in terms of any breach of the building line along Avon Close created by the sides of No 1, and 2 Loxton Road as this building line is already angled and therefore not particularly strong. I also find no material harm in terms of a loss of openness and spaciousness as the extension would be contained within the property's curtilage and set in from the side boundary which is clearly demarcated by a low wall. It would therefore have no impact on the area of open space immediately to the rear of the appeal property. These matters do not, however, outweigh the harm I have identified above.
7. The appellant has commented that including a step back in the side extension would make accessing the family room created by the extension impossible without major internal works. However, the SPD requires a set back only at first floor level. Therefore, whilst acknowledging that the additional living accommodation proposed is for the appellant's step mother, I am of the opinion that the appeal property could be extended in a way which would meet the appellant's needs and not result in the harm I have identified above.
8. Reference is made to other similar extensions around the estate. Only limited information is before me with respect to these therefore I am unable to make any detailed comparisons. Nevertheless, the Council have confirmed that the extension to 9 Canberra Road was approved in 1989, since which time it is inevitable that matters, such as planning policy, will have moved on. In any event, from the pictures before me there appears to be a slight set back of the extension from the main front elevation of this property. 11 Avon Close, also referred to, is an end of terrace with a different design to No 1, and occupies a less prominent position. Finally 42 Byron Road concerns a separate dwelling rather than an extension. It is also some distance from the appeal site and as such does not provide an immediate context. On the evidence before me these matters do not, therefore, alter my findings above.
9. For the reasons given the proposed extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Hayley Butcher

INSPECTOR