



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 December 2019 by Alex O'Doherty LLB(Hons) MSc

Decision by S M Holden BSc MSc CEng MICE CTPP FCIHT MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3115/D/19/3236678

122 St Andrews Road, Henley-on-Thames RG9 1PL

- 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 M Tavinor against the decision of South Oxfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref P18/S3430/HH, dated 11 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 3 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is extensions and alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matters

3. Notwithstanding the description of the development on the application form, the appeal form and the Council's decision notice gave the description of development as: 'erection of part two storey front and rear extensions and conversion of integral garage to living accommodation (revised plans received 30th April 2019, amending the scale and design of the front extensions)'. This is a more detailed and accurate description of the development and reflects the manner in which the Council determined the application. I have assessed the appeal on the same basis.
4. It is clear from the Council's decision that it has no objection to the part single, part two-storey rear extension. I have no evidence before me to reach a contrary view to the Council in this regard and therefore my decision focuses on the proposed alterations to the front of the house.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the two-storey front extension, and the extensions and alterations to the existing attached front garage, on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The existing property is a detached, two-storey dwelling, which incorporates a projecting single-storey front garage. The proposal would introduce a two-storey front extension, which would extend the full depth of the existing garage, with a ridge height that would match that of the host dwelling. Its hipped roof would be out-of-keeping with the simple pitch of the host property. The placing of the first floor window would not be in keeping with the existing fenestration arrangement, and there would be an awkward relationship between the existing large windows and the flank wall of the proposed extension.
7. Additionally, it would introduce a mass of brickwork that would detract from the appearance of the host dwelling, particularly when viewed from the side. This would contrast with the remainder of the front elevation with its large windows, that currently provide an open appearance. The extensions and alterations to the garage would create a wide area of roof that would neither complement the hipped roof of the proposed extension nor that of the host property, due to the lack of alignment with the two-storey front extension. The proposal would be excessively bulky, overly-dominant and out-of-keeping with the style and form of the original property, materially harming the appearance of the host property.
8. Even though there is some variation in architectural styles along St Andrews Road, many properties on this street, including those properties on the opposite side of the street to the appeal property, are characterised by pitched roofs. The proposal, with its front projecting gable and hipped roof, would be a new and alien feature in the street scene.
9. The appellant referred me to photographs of extended properties in the vicinity, but as limited details have been provided, it has not been demonstrated that the front projections are not part of the original designs, rather than subsequent additions as proposed in this appeal. Similarly, as only minimal details have been provided regarding an extant approval at No 120 St Andrews Road, a fair comparison cannot be made. None of these examples is therefore directly comparable with the appeal proposal which I have assessed on its individual merits.
10. Therefore, the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. The proposal is contrary to Policy CSQ3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (adopted December 2012) which requires new development to be of a high quality that responds positively to and respects the character of the site and its surroundings.
11. The proposal conflicts with Policies G2, D1 and H13 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (adopted January 2006) which collectively seek to promote good design and the protection and reinforcement of local distinctiveness, and with Policy DQS1 of the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Development Plan 2012 – 2027 (Final Submission Version) which provides that all new development should be sensitive and make a positive contribution to the local character of the area. Additionally, the proposal would conflict with the advice given in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2016) in relation to proposed extensions being sensitive to the character and appearance of the original dwelling and the street scene.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. I appreciate that the proposal would improve the living accommodation available to the appellant and his family and am aware that there were no objections from neighbours in relation to the scheme before me. However, these are not factors in the scheme's favour as it is my duty to consider the effects of the permanent alteration to the house on the wider street scene.
13. Based on the above, I have found that the proposal would be harmful to the host property and the surrounding area, and therefore I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Alex O'Doherty

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

S M Holden

INSPECTOR