



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 November 2019

by S Thomas BSc (hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/19/3235807

16 Clare Road, Cotham, Bristol BS6 5TB

- 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 Zamboni against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01293/H, dated 14 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 26 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing rear extension and replacement with new rear and side extension, plus internal alterations to existing dwelling including addition of first floor bathroom window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Cotham and Redland Conservation Area including the effect on the character or appearance of the existing building.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is semi-detached and located on a prominent corner at the junction of Clare Road and Fremantle Road. The property is set back from a stone boundary wall fronting Fremantle Road aside from an existing side extension which has been described as a later addition to the property. It is located within the Cotham and Redland Conservation Area (CA).
4. The CA is defined by its individually developed urban streets dominated by its high-quality Victorian townscape. The varying nature of houses both in terms of materials and design give it a distinct character and identity. The site is within the St Matthews Character Area which identifies that the majority of properties are set back from the street. Furthermore, beyond the identified Listed Buildings there is a high quality and unity of built fabric in the area with strong architectural character given by the consistent material palette.
5. The property is identified amongst many other buildings as a mid-Victorian Character Building within the Cotham and Redland Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals document (CACAMP). Such buildings are considered to make a positive contribution to the overall character and sense of place of the wider CA. It is further identified that their value is in their overall

- scale, form, materials or date which help to form the built backcloth for the area. Whilst single storey extensions have been added to the original property, it still retains its character and together with similar properties in this part of the CA provides an important contribution to the character of the area.
6. The proposed extension is considered by the Council to result in a breach of the historic building line along Fremantle Road. On the opposite side of Fremantle Road there is a common pattern of development with housing set back from the pavement following a common building line. However, on the side of Fremantle Road to which the side elevation of the appeal property faces there is a varied building line. The terrace to the north west of the appeal property is set back from Fremantle Road behind large front gardens. This contrasts with the appeal property closer to the road and properties along that side of the road being built or extended up to the pavement. Therefore, extending built development at the appeal property closer to Fremantle Road, given the varying nature of the pattern of development on this side of the street, would not detract visually from the character of the street scene. As a result, it would not cause harm to the character or appearance of the CA.
 7. Turning to the form and footprint of the extension, whilst acknowledging the existence of a single storey extension up to the property boundary, the proposed extension would result in the footprint of built development extending a considerable distance along the boundary with Fremantle Road. It would also be higher than the existing extensions. Given this and the expanse of this extension along this boundary in relation to the footprint of the original building, together with the roof overhanging the stone boundary wall, the proposed scheme would appear dominant against the original property on the Fremantle Road elevation.
 8. The proposed north elevation proposes a contemporary form with angled elevations fronting the garden and a segmented roof pitch. Whilst this would be at odds with the form and character of the building when viewed from the garden of the property, this elevation is on a non-public facing façade and not visible from the street scene. Thus, whilst I find harm to the character of the building, the north elevation roof form would not be visually prominent in the street scene and would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the CA.
 9. The proposed extension would incorporate a zinc standing seam roof fronting Fremantle Road. This would be a dominant feature in the street scene and would be out of character with the area. The proposed roof material would detract from the character of the original building and would appear as an incongruent feature.
 10. There is a local design cue for a metal canopy and railings as features on the Listed terrace on the opposite side of Fremantle Road. However, these are set back behind a front garden and form an integral part to the front elevation of the row of terraced properties. The proposed side extension would be deeper and includes skylights which would provide a different context. As such, rather than forming an integral design element of the original property, it would appear as an isolated expanse of roof on a side extension. It would also overhang the boundary wall making it much more prominent and thus different to the canopy on the other side of the road. As a result, the zinc standing seam

roof would not be reflective of the canopy opposite and would not blend successfully into the street scene.

11. Whilst there are prominent two storey side extensions on existing buildings up to property boundaries along Fremantle Road their existence does not lead me to conclude that the appeal proposal is acceptable. For the reasons outlined above the proposed extension would be out of character with the original dwelling and a dominant feature in the street scene detracting from the qualities of the area.
12. I therefore conclude, in accordance with my statutory duty under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, that the proposed extension would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Cotham and Redland Conservation Area resulting in less than substantial harm to its significance as a designated heritage asset. It would also cause harm to the host character building. The Framework says that such harm to a designated heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this case the extension and improvement of the house would serve only as a benefit for the private dwelling and its occupants. Whilst there may be minor public benefits in terms of the improvement of the single storey extension, this does not outweigh the harm I have found that the proposed extension would have on the character or appearance of the CA.
13. Consequently, the proposal would be contrary to the design aims of Policy BCS21 of the Bristol Core Strategy (2011), Policies DM30, DM27, DM26 of the Bristol Local Plan Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2014) and the Supplementary Planning Document 2 (A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions) (2005). Amongst other matters, these policies seek development to contribute positively to an area's character and identity, to respond appropriately to historic assets and be of high-quality design that integrates effectively with its surroundings. Furthermore, extensions should respect the scale, form, proportions, predominant materials and roofscapes and the overall design and character of the host building and the street scene.
14. The proposal would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework which, in respect of a designated heritage asset, states that great weight is to be given to an asset's conservation. It would also be contrary to guidance within the CACAMP. This seeks to resist unsympathetic development which would harm the character or appearance of the CA and to ensure that development is in line with local plan policies.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons outlined above, the appeal is dismissed.

Stephen Thomas

INSPECTOR