
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 May 2020

by R E Jones BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st June 2020.

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/20/3244765

130 Doncaster Road, Southmead, Bristol BS10 5PZ

- 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 Scott Phillips against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/04534/H, dated 12 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 November 2019.
 - 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 in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the terrace and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling comprises the end property in a terrace of four houses located in a large planned residential estate made up largely of two storey semi-detached and terrace dwellings.
4. The groups of semi-detached and terrace dwellings along Doncaster Road are set back from the highway and follow a consistent front building line. Many of the properties have single storey side extensions and garages built up to the neighbouring boundary although the space above these structures is largely undeveloped. This results in visible and evenly spaced gaps between the groups of dwellings that line the street and along with gardens and forecourt areas contribute to the area's spacious character.
5. The dwellings in the appeal terrace are largely characterised by equally proportioned frontages featuring symmetrically positioned windows and roof canopies above front doors. Whilst there is a modest front porch projecting from the adjoining dwelling at No 132, the scale of the individual dwellings in the terrace combine to give it a predominantly uniform appearance.
6. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document 2 (A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions) (SPD), states that gaps between detached or semi-detached houses are an important characteristic and their filling in with side extensions can detract from the appearance of the neighbourhood. Accordingly, a side extension should ideally, where space is available, leave at least 1 metre between it and the adjoining boundary.

7. The proposed extension would extend to within less than 0.5 metres of the side boundary and given its height and mass would noticeably fill the space that currently exists above the detached garage while significantly enclosing the gap between the appeal property and No 128 Doncaster Road (No 128).
Consequently, the proposal would appear confined within the plot in contrast to other dwellings in the street which largely maintain visible and consistent gaps between one another and side boundaries. The proposal would therefore appear inconsistent and out of kilter in this context and would have a harmful effect upon the prevailing development pattern of the area.
8. The ground floor portion of the appeal proposal includes a single storey element that would project forward from the existing front building line of the terrace and elongate the dwelling to the side, adding to the physical mass of the proposal. The proposal's forward projection, along with its excessive bulk and frontage length relative to the host dwelling and the adjoining dwellings in the terrace, would appear incongruous and harm the fundamental balanced appearance of the terrace in the street.
9. The first-floor portion of the proposed extension has been set back from the front elevation and set down from the ridgeline to appear subservient. Nevertheless, this does not overcome the harmful effect the extension would have on the appearance of the terrace and in enclosing the gap between the existing flank wall and side boundary.
10. I note the concerns of the Council that the proposed development would result in a terracing effect with No 128 if that property were to gain permission for an extension of similar scale. However, I have not been presented with any evidence to suggest that this permission exists. Were a proposal to come forward then it should be considered on its own merits in the light of the circumstances prevailing at that time. Therefore, I have not found the appeal scheme harmful in this regard.
11. I conclude that the proposed development would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the terrace and the surrounding area. Therefore, it would be contrary to Policies DM26, DM27 and DM30 of the Bristol Local Plan – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies, adopted July 2014 and Policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy, adopted June 2011. Amongst other matters, these require proposals to respect and respond to the character of the building, the local pattern of development and reinforce local distinctiveness. The proposal would also be contrary to the SPD.

Other Matters

12. Where I have been referred to specific examples of properties that have been extended close to their boundaries, I note that these are more reduced in terms of their scale or would have complied with the Council's guidance. Moreover, examples have been referred to that preceded the Council's guidelines on separation distances from boundaries. Accordingly, I have given these examples limited weight in favour of the appeal. In any event I have considered the current appeal scheme on its own planning merits.
13. I acknowledged that the appellant has space needs that would be met by the proposed extension. However, these do not outweigh the harm the proposal would incur on the character and appearance of the terrace and the area. I

therefore attach limited weight to this matter. Furthermore, whilst there may be specific reasons for the siting of the extension relative to the location of sewers, I have not, however, been presented with any detailed technical evidence in relation to this. Therefore, I attach greater weight to the harm I have identified and the resultant conflict with development plan policies.

14. No specific harm with regard to neighbouring living conditions has been referred to in the submissions. On the basis of the evidence before me I have no reason to conclude otherwise. However, the absence of harm in those regards would be neutral, rather than a factor weighing in favour of the proposal.

Conclusion

15. Whilst I have found in favour of the appellant with regard to the terracing effect of the proposed development, I do not consider this would outweigh the identified harm in relation to its effect on the character and appearance of the terrace and surrounding area. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R. E. Jones

INSPECTOR