
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 June 2020

by M Allen BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/D/20/3250369

Stoneford, Camp Road, Oldbury On Severn BS35 1PR

- 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 Oliver Ward against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref P19/16132/F, dated 31 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is the erection of rear extension and loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Oliver Ward against South Gloucestershire Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. Stoneford is a single storey property, set back from the road atop a grass bank. There are shrubs and hedging to the front of the property which provide a level of screening. However, there remain views of the property from the road and adjacent footway. There is considerable variety in the scale and form of properties within the vicinity, as well as in the use of external materials. I observed that a number of properties in the area have been extended and that any such extensions integrated well into the streetscene.
5. The proposed scheme would result in a considerable extension to the property. The pitch of the roof to the front would be extended and increased in height. Behind this would be a large expanse of flat roof allowing the provision of a second floor of accommodation. Whilst the flat roof is unlikely to be appreciable from views directly to the front of the property and there are no public views of the rear of the dwelling, I noted that there are views from the adjacent road of both side elevations, particularly of the northern side elevation. In these views, the increased mass of the building would be markedly apparent and would overwhelm what are the modest proportions of the existing dwelling.

6. As a result, rather than having a contemporary appearance, the extension would appear as a dominant and overly prominent visual element. It would be out of scale with the host property and result in an addition that would appear incongruous within its context, notwithstanding the existing variety in the nearby properties which I refer to above and the use of matching materials. Whilst reasonably localised in its extent, the effect would be to unacceptably diminish the character and appearance of the existing property, with consequent deleterious effects on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
7. I have had regard to examples of other developments in the locality, including those incorporating flat roof elements, most notably to the conversion of the public house near to the appeal site. However, I observed that where flat roofs have been utilised, they have been smaller, subservient features which sit harmoniously against the host buildings. As I outline above, this would not be the case in the scheme that is currently before me. As such, I find that the presence of other flat roof elements within the area is not sufficient reason to permit the proposed scheme. The other examples to which I have been directed are different from the appeal scheme in terms of their design and as such I can draw no useful comparisons between them and that which is before me. I am also conscious that I have been provided with no policy basis to prevent contemporary design elements within extensions to properties. However, given the specific circumstances of the case before me, I find that the proposed flat roof would not be acceptable.
8. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would not be a sensitive or sympathetic addition and it would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. Thus, the scheme would conflict with policy PSP38 of the South Gloucestershire Policies, Sites and Places Plan (2017) and policy CS1 of the South Gloucestershire Core Strategy (2013). Together, and amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that residential extensions respect scale and proportions as well as that the form and massing of developments respect the character of the site and its context. The scheme would also conflict with the design aims of the National Planning Policy Framework.
9. I acknowledge that the appellant seeks to improve the standard of accommodation provided and that this would result in some social benefit. This is not a matter however that is sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Martin Allen

INSPECTOR