



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 October 2020 by Ben Phillips BSc MSc

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V3120/D/20/3254605

1 Norwood Avenue, Southmoor, Abingdon OX13 5AD

- 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 Marcus Didcock against the decision of the Vale of White Horse District Council.
 - The application Ref P20/V0174/HH, dated 19 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 20 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as extension, re-modelling and replacement garden buildings.
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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. I note that the appellants are willing to modify the proposed extensions and re-modelling of the property, however I am required to consider the scheme before me and as determined by the Council. Any proposed alterations should be taken up with the Council and is not a matter for consideration under this appeal.
4. The scheme proposes the moving of the northern side boundary of the dwelling to incorporate land immediately next to the pavement. Whilst there is dispute between the parties regarding the established use of this land, a change of use is not being applied for. As such, the use of this land is not assessed under this appeal.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons for Recommendation

6. Norwood Avenue is a pleasant, spacious suburban street characterised by detached two storey dwellings of varying scale, appearance and character. The

appeal property, is prominently sited on a curve of the street where Bellamy Close turns into Norwood Avenue.

7. The property, along with others nearby has a prominent gable feature facing the road with single storey elements to both sides. Although the ridge height of the extensions would be lower than the existing and there would be a slight step back on the front elevation, I find that their design and scale would result in bulky additions which would visually compete with the existing dwelling. Their scale and massing would result in the property being engulfed by extensions.
8. Whilst the use of differing materials would provide some visual relief, given that the proposal would significantly increase the width of the property at first floor level, the extensions, in combination, would not be subservient to the scale of the host dwelling. The original form of the property would be overwhelmed by the extensions and its original character and appearance would not be readily apparent.
9. There are a number of side extensions evident within the immediate street scene, however, most appear to be subservient to the host property, whether they be 2 storeys in height or single storey. They do not dominate the original dwelling as the proposal before me would, and they are not therefore directly comparable. Whilst noting that the extensions at Nos 1 and 11 Bellamy Close are substantial, they have resulted in a staggered frontage which reduces the overall massing of the extended dwelling, and as such are also not comparable.
10. Reference is made to the extended dwelling being similar to others in Norwood Avenue and Bellamy Close. These properties are of a different architectural design to the host dwelling, and in any event, as extended, the resultant property would be different in appearance to them.
11. I acknowledge that there is a variety of architectural designs nearby, as noted by the Inspector in the appeal for land south of 2 Bellamy Close¹. However, the extended property would not reflect nearby development. The resultant dwelling would appear as a prominent, incongruous development in the street scene which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
12. The proposed outbuilding to the rear would replace an existing structure in the same position and would be limited in scale. As such, it would have no detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the dwelling or the wider street scene. However, the lack of harm in this regard does not outweigh the harm identified to the host property.
13. It is unclear from the plans but both parties set out that a close boarded fence is proposed along the boundary of the property which would enclose a small area of land adjoining the pavement. Whilst close boarded fences are visible within the street scene, none are immediately adjacent to or run along the boundary with the pavement, other than along the footpath to the rear, which does not compare in terms of visual impact on the street. A fence along the pavement would be a prominent, alien addition which would be more visually stark than the existing brick boundary wall along the northern boundary and that seen on the opposite side of the road. Similarly, a fence along the

¹ Appeal reference APP/V3129/W/19/3240069

frontage would also be incongruous in the context of the characteristic open frontages within the street scene.

14. The appellant sets out that the fence is required partly for security reasons. It is unclear as to how this would be substantially better than the existing or previous boundary treatment in this regard, and in any case, it has not been demonstrated that a solution that does not detract from the wider street scene is not possible.
15. As such, it is concluded that the proposed development, taken as a whole would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area, in conflict with Policy CP37 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 Strategic Sites and Policies (2016) (LP), which, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework, seeks to ensure that development should be of a high quality that responds positively to the site and its surroundings. There is also conflict with the guidance set out Supplementary Planning Document Design Guide (2015) which requires the original building to remain the dominant element of the property when extended.

Other Matter

16. I understand that the appellant has some issues with the way the Council determined the application. This is a matter between the appellant and Council and not for this appeal.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

B Phillips

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR