



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 October 2020 by C Brennan BAE (Hons) M.PLAN MIPI

Decision by Andrew Owen BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/W/20/3255580

533 Southmead Road, Southmead, Bristol BS10 5NG

- 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 Alexander Ahmadi against the decision of Bristol City Council.
- The application Ref 19/03570/F, dated 21 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 March 2020.
- The development proposed is to extend and modify an existing structure to provide a new 1-bedroom house on a plot fronting Felstead Road.

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. The description of the proposed development states that the proposal seeks to extend and modify an existing structure. However, the Council asserts that the existing structure is unlawful. Regardless of the status of the existing structure, I nonetheless consider that I can provide a recommendation on the proposal based on the drawings before me.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site is located to the rear of No 533, adjacent to Felstead Road. The surrounding area is characterised by short terraces and semi-detached pairs of two-storey dwellings, with many properties featuring hipped roofs and modest rear gardens. As properties within the surrounding area have a similar appearance in terms of their height, width, form and detailing, the surrounding built environment is characterised by a sense of visual uniformity.
 6. In comparison, the proposed development would result in a particularly narrow detached dwelling that would appear overly cramped between the rear elevation of No 533 and the flank wall of No 1 Felstead Road. Furthermore, due to its height the proposal would not appear appropriately subordinate to the
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host building, and due to its proportions and detached siting it would not relate positively to the predominant character of the surrounding area. The resultant small rear garden space to the rear of the host building would also appear especially incongruous in the context of the surrounding pattern of development. The proposed dwelling would therefore appear as an obtrusive addition that would contrast poorly with the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

7. While I acknowledge that the proposal would incorporate a hipped roof and additional width at the rear, compared to the previous proposal, it would nevertheless appear narrow when compared to neighbouring properties and so would appear as an inharmonious addition to the streetscene.
8. Regarding the development to the rear of No 535 Southmead Road which lies opposite the appeal site, the proportions of this dwelling are more typical of properties within the surrounding area. Furthermore, there is a greater sense of spaciousness around this property, largely because of the greater distance on this side of the road between the rear of the houses facing Southmead Road and the side of the first house on Felstead Road, and so it does not have a cramped appearance. As such, the house rear of No. 535 is not comparable.
9. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy 2011 and Policies DM26, DM27, DM28 and DM29 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan 2014 (the SADMPPLP) which, amongst other things, state that development should contribute positively to an area's character and identity, respect the local pattern and grain of development, have a height, scale and massing appropriate to the immediate context and be designed to a high quality. The proposal would also conflict with Policy DM21 of the SADMPPLP, which states that development of garden land should not result in harm to the character and appearance of an area.
10. It would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework 2019, which states that development should add to the overall quality of the area and be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

11. I accept that the proposal would provide an additional dwelling within a sustainable area. However, this would not justify the identified harm that would be caused by the proposal as set out above. I also note the letters of support from neighbours, but the common theme in these is that the proposal would represent an improvement of the existing building. I give this little weight, particularly as it appears this existing building is subject of an Enforcement Notice to have it removed.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

C Brennan

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR