



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 November 2020 by Ben Phillips BSc MSc MRTPI

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/W/20/3256207

2 Welsford Road, Stapleton, Bristol BS16 1BS

- 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 Mrs Temitope Emmanuel against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/03388/F, dated 10 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 27 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as a 2 storey side extension to form a 2 bedroom separate dwelling. 2 storey rear extension and loft conversion + landscaping in the rear garden with log cabin.
-

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 Matter

3. It is understood that a number of amendments were submitted to the Council during the determination period. The Council based their decision on the final submitted plans and I will do the same.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposal on:
 - the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area; and
 - highway safety with particular regard to off-street car parking provision and bin storage area.

Reasons for Recommendation

Character and appearance

5. Welsford Road is a short residential street consisting of, at its western side, traditional two storey semi-detached and detached units, set back from the highway with off road parking and a consistent separation gap between units, providing a sense of space. The appeal property is prominently sited at the end

- of the cul de sac turning head, directly next to a pedestrian footpath connecting the cul de sac with Bell Road to the rear.
6. Whilst the proposed side extension would be set back and set down from the ridge of the existing property, its width, including a single storey element extending up to the side boundary would, taken with the two storey rear extension and rear dormer, result in a scale of development which would overwhelm the character and appearance of the host dwelling. The new extensions would, taken as a whole, result in bulky additions which would visually compete with the existing dwelling and result in the property being engulfed by extensions.
 7. I acknowledge that the side extension from the front would be similar in design to that of the attached neighbour at No 1 and in this regard, it would result in the pair of semi-detached dwellings of which the host property forms part, being broadly symmetrical in appearance from the street scene. However, the new extension would be read as a separate dwelling, given its front door and different design of fenestration to the host property, as well as the subdivision of the garden. The short terrace row that would result would be an alien form of development in this location.
 8. Moreover, the new side extension would extend close to the side boundary with the footpath. It would result in a prominent, dominant feature to users of the footpath and have an enclosing effect upon it. It would also substantially reduce the visual gap between the property and the neighbouring detached dwelling which would harm the spacious character and appearance of the streetscene within this part of the road.
 9. The proposed outbuilding would be a large addition in the rear garden. It would be sited in part, on raised land. The outbuilding, wall and fencing proposed would further enclose the footpath adjoining the boundary of the site.
 10. Whilst an appropriate level of garden would be provided to both properties, in combination with the other elements of the development proposed, I find that the outbuilding would further overwhelm the host dwelling, to its detriment.
 11. The appellant has pointed to a number of dwellings within the wider street scene that have been extended variously through two storey side extensions, not least the attached neighbour, No 1¹, which has a similar side extension and extensive rear outbuilding. However, these developments are not considered to compare with the development proposed in terms of scale and massing (for example No 1 does not include a two storey rear extension), nor in terms of visual prominence given the position of the host property to the footpath, and the proposal to build on and raise the side boundary wall. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the developments at Nos 7 and 5 Rowland Avenue² detract from the character and appearance of the existing property and wider street scene. Such harmful development is not in my opinion a positive example to emulate.
 12. In addition, the appellant points to a certificate of lawfulness³ recently approved at the appeal site for a loft conversion, involving a hip to gable conversion and rear dormer. The visual impact and scale of this does not

¹ Reference number 09/00360/H

² Reference number 15/03508/F

³ Reference number 20/01635/CP

compare to that proposed under this appeal. In any case, I find it unlikely that this represents a reasonable fall-back position given that this would not result in a new independent dwelling, as is proposed in this case. Accordingly, this matter carries limited weight.

13. In light of the foregoing, it is concluded that the appeal proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, in conflict with Policies BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy 2011 (CS) and DM21, DM27 and DM30 of the Bristol Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2014 (DM), which collectively advocate that new development should deliver high quality urban design that contributes positively to an area's character, appearance and identity, respect the scale, form, proportions and the overall design and character of the host building and the broader street scene. Moreover, the proposal conflicts with the advice set out in the Supplementary Planning Document 'A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions' (2005) (SPD) which requires extensions to be subservient to the main property. These policies are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which requires at paragraph 127 that developments, amongst other matters, are sympathetic to local character and establish or maintain a strong sense of place.

Highway Safety and Parking

14. The plans show that the proposed 2-bedroom property would be provided with 1 off-street parking space. However, should the two parking spaces allocated to the existing property be occupied by vehicles then this space would not be accessible to occupiers of the new dwelling. This could result in inconvenience to the occupiers of the new dwelling, particularly if they wanted to access or exit the parking space but were unable to do so because of the presence of their neighbour's cars.
15. Given these matters there would be a high probability that vehicles associated with the new dwelling would park within the turning area of Welsford Road, or on the pavement, which would be likely to result in vehicles using the turning area having to make a number of manoeuvres because the presence of parked vehicles would reduce the size of the area. In the event of the pavement being blocked by parked vehicles, pedestrians would need to walk within the road.
16. However, notwithstanding my findings above, it is likely that the use of the turning area would be low, given the presence of off-road car parking within the road. Moreover, there is a pavement around the cul-de-sac and pedestrians would be likely to be able to walk on another part of the pavement in the road, if vehicles were parked elsewhere upon it. Consequently, in the event that vehicles associated with the new dwelling were parked within the road, and in the absence of substantive evidence to demonstrate otherwise, I find that this matter would be unlikely to result in harm to pedestrian or vehicle safety.
17. The proposal also sets out that a new access gate would be installed off the pedestrian footpath. Whilst visibility would be limited, given the slow-moving nature of pedestrian traffic and likely limited use of the access gate by the occupants of 2 dwellings, the potential for harmful conflict between pedestrians would be limited. The plans also show bin storage to the front of the property. Whilst limited detail has been provided, this arrangement would be similar to

that seen elsewhere along the street scene. A condition could secure appropriate details. It is unclear why this arrangement would impact highway safety.

18. Paragraph 109 of the Framework states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. This would not be the case with the appeal proposal, and I conclude that the proposal would not adversely affect highway safety and accordingly the proposal complies with the aims of CS Policy BCS10 and DM Policy DM23 which requires development to provide safe and adequate access and to not give rise to unacceptable traffic conditions.

Other Matters

19. I acknowledge that the proposal would make an efficient use of land, in a sustainable location, close to services and facilities. The new dwelling would make a contribution to the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and the development would be constructed in a sustainable manner. I attach moderate weight to these matters. I also acknowledge that the proposal would provide acceptable living conditions to the occupiers and nearby occupiers. However, these matters are neutral factors which do not weigh in favour of the proposal because they would be expected of any well-designed development.
20. Against these benefits is the substantial harm that the proposal would cause to the character and appearance of the area. I find therefore that the benefits of the scheme do not individually, or cumulatively, outweigh the harmful impact identified.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above 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

22. 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