



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 September 2021 by A Coombes

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W3330/D/21/3277521

Site Address 9 Statham Close, Taunton TA1 5AF

- 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 Ms Eleanor Smith against the decision of Somerset West and Taunton Council.
 - The application Ref 52/21/0003, dated 29 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 1 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side extension and single storey rear extension. Cladding to front elevation of existing house.
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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. On 20 July 2021 the Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). I have had regard to this as a material consideration however, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The main parties were provided an opportunity to comment on the updated Framework and the comments received have been taken into account.
4. Planning permission has recently been granted at the appeal site for a two-storey side extension and single-storey rear extension. Although similar to the appeal scheme, differences include a lower ridge height and no cladding proposed to the front. I have had regard to this recent planning history.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area; and
 - the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal site is situated in a cul-de-sac within a highly residential area. Statham Close is characterised by two-storey semi-detached properties with

white rendered finishes. Though some properties have been extended, the appearance of the houses remains largely uniform. The application proposes a two-storey side extension and single-storey rear extension, as well as the addition of cladding to the front elevation of the existing house.

Character and Appearance

7. The proposal seeks to extend the dwelling up to the shared boundary with 11 Statham Close. This would mimic the two-storey side extension of the attached 7 Statham Close and create a sense of balance between the two semi-detached properties. However, the building line for 11 and 13 Statham Close is stepped back and the front elevation is angled toward the appeal site, which appears dominant. Although the development would be subservient to the host dwelling, in some respects, and balance with the adjoining property, it would appear dominant in the wider setting. This would be specifically in relation to the neighbouring property at 11 Statham Close, with a full height ridgeline extending the full width of the plot. This would exacerbate the existing relationship and cause harm to the character and appearance of the area.
8. On the site visit it was observed that a small minority of properties on the nearby Galmington Drive have introduced cladding. However, there is a degree of variation in finishing materials used on properties along this road. Although the appeal site is not within a Conservation Area, rendered facades are integral to the character of Statham Close, and the introduction of cladding would be an incongruous addition to this enclave of properties.
9. Although, in isolation, the development would not cause harm to the host dwelling, this does not outweigh the harm found to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, the proposal does not comply with Policy DM1 of the Taunton Deane Borough Council Core Strategy 2011 – 2028, adopted 2012 (CS), which resists unacceptable harm to street scenes. The development would not respond well to the locality and would also conflict with the Framework.

Living Conditions

10. In terms of siting, the appeal site already has a close relationship with 11 Statham Close. Due to this relationship, the appeal site is highly visible from habitable windows in the neighbouring property. As the development would extend the property to the shared boundary, and retain the existing ridge height, it would increase the dominance of the appeal site and exacerbate the existing sense of overbearing. Outlook from habitable rooms would also be reduced and this would be detrimental to the living conditions of the occupiers. Furthermore, although the development may meet the 45-degree rule, due to the siting of the two properties, there would be an overbearing effect to 11 Statham Close.
11. For the reasons given above, the development would be detrimental to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. Therefore, it would not comply with Policy DM1 of the CS or Policy D5 of the Taunton Deane Borough Council, Site Allocations and Development Management Plan, adopted 2016. Together these Policies require that development does not cause unacceptable harm to residential amenity.

Other Matters

12. It is understood that the appellant has expanding accommodation needs. There would also be modest economic benefits during the construction phase. However, for the reasons outlined above, the proposed development would cause significant harm that would not be outweighed by the personal circumstances of the appellant, the economic benefits, the absence of objections or the support from the Parish Council.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. Although no harm would result to the character and appearance of the host dwelling in itself, this would not mitigate or outweigh the other harms that would arise. The proposal would not accord with the Development Plan when it is considered as a whole. For the reasons given above, I recommend the appeal should be dismissed.

A Coombes

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

K Taylor

INSPECTOR