



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 December 2021

by K Stephens BSc (Hons) MTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th January 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1825/W/21/3277067

62 Bromfield Road, Southcrest, Redditch, Worcestershire B97 4PQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Nadia Mahmood against Redditch Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref 21/000152/FUL, is dated 11 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Resubmission of a previously approved application 2011/336/FUL, without any changes to the originally approved scheme, utilising the original drawings for a side first floor extension over the garage, rear kitchen & conservatory extensions.'
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed and planning permission for 'Resubmission of a previously approved application 2011/336/FUL, without any changes to the originally approved scheme, utilising the original drawings for a side first floor extension over the garage, rear kitchen & conservatory extensions' is refused.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council refers to the appellant as Mrs N Mahmood. Whilst the appellant's surname is not clearly written in box 1 of the application form, the remainder of the submitted appeal documentation, including statement of case, final comments and the previous decision notice for the lapsed planning permission, all relate to Mahmood. Therefore I shall proceed on that basis.
3. The appeal results from the Council's failure to reach a decision on the application submitted by the appellant within the prescribed period. However, within its appeal statement, the Council has indicated the reasons why planning permission would have been refused, had the application been determined.
4. In its statement the Council raises no objections to the proposed single storey rear extension. Having regard to the evidence before me and what I saw on my site visit I see no reason to disagree. I have therefore confined my assessment to the first floor extension and framed my main issue accordingly.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed side first floor extension over the garage on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. The appeal site comprises a detached dwelling located on a corner location at the junction with Bromfield Road and Soudan and opposite the junction with

Tilehouse. It is located within an established predominantly residential area of houses from the 1960s/70s of broadly similar design. Bromfield Road is on an incline rising up to the corner, such that the appeal property with its exposed side elevation and roof are particularly visible and prominent in the street scene. Gable frontages and pitched roofs are a prevailing characteristic. Whilst I saw that some properties had been extended or altered, Bromfield Road and the immediately surrounding roads display a striking rhythm and consistency of design and materials that gives the street and surrounding area a visual cohesion. The site is not located within a Conservation Area.

7. The proposal would involve the erection of a single storey rear extension across the back of the property to provide a conservatory and enlarged kitchen. To the front a first floor side extension would be constructed above the attached single garage. It would have a long sloping 'catslide' roof that would come down to ground floor eaves level. A wide dormer window would be installed in the new sloping roof to allow the creation of a fifth bedroom.
8. Policies 39 and 40 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4¹ (the 'Local Plan No.4') are general policies that in themselves do not prevent extensions such as the appeal proposal. However, they collectively seek to ensure that development reflects or complements the local surroundings, and responds to and integrates with the distinctive features of the surrounding area such that the character and appearance of an area is not compromised. The Council refers in particular to Local Character paragraph 3.1.11 of its High Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document (the 'Design SPD'). This requires consideration to be given to how extensions or alterations impact on the street scene and expects them, amongst other things, to reflect local styles and features. It also advises that roof forms should match that of the original property, particularly where a two storey extension is proposed.
9. The design of the long sloping 'catslide' roof would not match the roof of the host dwelling and would be at odds with the prevailing pitched roofs and profile of properties in the area. I did not see any similar front dormers or catslide roofs on my site visit. Due to the appeal site's prominent corner location, the proposed extension would be exposed to view above the height of the existing boundary fence along Soudan. This would make the roof extension a visually prominent, incongruous and discordant feature in relation to both the host dwelling and the surrounding properties in the immediate area. The use of matching materials would not overcome my concerns regarding the inappropriate form of the extension.
10. I conclude that the side first floor extension over the garage would harm the prevailing character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, the proposal would be contrary to Policies 39 and 40 of Local Plan No.4, whose aims are outlined above. It would also be contrary to the general advice in the Design SPD, described above.
11. I am sympathetic to the appellant's desire to accommodate her growing family and am mindful that roof lights may not achieve the necessary head height. However, in my view, these do not justify allowing harmful development.

¹ Adopted 30 January 2017

Other Matters

12. I understand a previous application for the same development was approved², but under a different development plan³, policies and Supplementary Planning Document⁴. I have not been provided with the wording of these to be able to make any comparisons, although I note the appellant refers to them as being similar. Following approval of the previous application, the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework') was first published in March 2012, and was revised in July 2021. The Framework places a greater emphasis on good design and that development that is not well designed should be refused (paragraph 134). In any event, the previously approved scheme does not represent a 'fallback' position because the permission lapsed almost 10 years ago and cannot be implemented lawfully.
13. The appellant refers me to a number of properties that have had single storey extensions or have been refaced in stone or blue timber, to illustrate the range of alterations. I do not know the circumstances in which any of the extensions or alterations were made. Nonetheless, from my observations on site none of the appellant's examples present the same form of development or relationship to the street scene, and I find the distinctiveness of the area has not been eroded as the appellant alleges. None of the examples are as harmful to the character and appearance of the area as the appeal proposal would be. Therefore, they are not directly comparable to the appeal proposal, which I must consider on its own planning merits in any event.
14. I acknowledge the appellant's concerns with the Council's handling of the application, but in reaching my decision I have been concerned only with the planning merits of the case.

Conclusion

15. The proposed development would be contrary to the development plan and there are no other considerations which outweigh this finding. Accordingly, for the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed and planning permission is refused.

K. Stephens
INSPECTOR

² LPA ref: 2011/336/FUL approved 8 February 2012

³ Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

⁴ Encouraging Good Design dated March 2001