



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2022

by A Tucker BA (Hons) IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/U3935/D/21/3287792

45 Rowan Road, SWINDON, SN2 1JA

- 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 Gary Knight against the decision of Swindon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref S/HOU/21/1255/EMMI, dated 23 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is storage building.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The outbuilding has been erected, although was not complete at the time of my site visit as it was without its proposed timber clad finish. The proposal is therefore part retrospective, and I have determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is within a residential area of consistent character and appearance. Dwellings were largely built at a similar time, and are comparable in terms of scale, materials and position. Most dwellings open out onto an area of front garden that is largely open in appearance, divided only by modest low level fences and hedges. These give the area an open and spacious appearance. The appeal site is at one end of Rowan Road, which aligns with a short length of Mulberry Grove. Although the roads do not connect for vehicles, they are linked by a pedestrian path.
5. The large outbuilding is prominently positioned in front of the existing dwelling and is significantly at odds with the open character and appearance of front gardens in the area. It disrupts the strong connection between the two roads and the open appearance of the areas to the fronts of the dwellings. Its blank rear elevation provides an abrupt termination to the long views across the front gardens to the south, which would have continued over the appeal site and beyond prior to the erection of the building.
6. I could see no examples nearby of similarly scaled buildings positioned in front of a dwelling. Examples of developments where outbuildings are in a forward

position are before me, however these appear to relate to housing developments with a more varied arrangement of building positions.

7. The area was previously occupied by a row of evergreen trees. These would have had a similar impact on open views between the roads and across these garden areas. However, unlike the outbuilding, they would have had a softer and more natural appearance and would have been similar to vegetation planted to the fronts of other nearby dwellings.
8. The appellant suggests that a 6ft fence could be erected around the front boundary, which could have a similar impact to the outbuilding. Such a fence would however be lower than the outbuilding, and it would not appear to be permitted development as the provisions of Schedule 2 Part 2 Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 would preclude such development owing to the relationship between the site and the adjacent highway.
9. It is also suggested that the building defines the end of the road and prevents drivers from incorrectly thinking they can drive between the ends of the two roads or park on the appeal site. Both matters could however be addressed by enclosing the front area in a more modest manner, similar to the low level enclosures nearby. The proposed timber cladding, the use of a rendered finish or the insertion of a garage door would not address the harmful impact of the scale and position of the building.
10. In summary, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to Policy DE1 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 which seeks to ensure that proposals are designed to a high quality with regard to existing context and character. It would also not accord with advice within the Residential Extensions & Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2011, which suggests that detached buildings should not be prominent or set forward of a principal elevation.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons above, the appeal should be dismissed.

A Tucker

INSPECTOR