



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2022

by David Wyborn BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/D/21/3288134

42A Monkton Road , Hanham , Bristol BS15 3JG

- 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 Paul Arnold against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref P21/03085/F, dated 6 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is the raising of roofline to facilitate a loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have used the description of the development from the decision notice rather than the application form as it more comprehensively describes the proposal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and area, and
 - the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of adjoining properties, in particular 42 Monkton Road, having regard to any overbearing effect.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Monkton Road is a residential road mainly characterised by semi-detached, two storey houses with hipped roofs. There are some short terraces constructed in a similar style and occasional individually designed houses within the runs of buildings. Some of the properties have had roof additions and alterations, however, in these cases the roof extensions appear as generally minor changes when viewed from the road. These buildings still broadly retain the characteristic roof which slopes back from the road and thereby assists in maintaining the reasonably consistent and fairly pleasant appearance to the street scenes.
5. 42A Monkton Road is a detached dwelling that has been designed such that it takes some reference from the character of the surrounding buildings. The front hip of the roof slopes away from the road and the sloping sides to the roof

are broadly similar to some side hipped gables of other buildings. The building has a lower ridge than others nearby, and together with the roof form and design of the front elevation, the result is that the building does not appear cramped on this plot which, because it tapers to the rear, is more constrained than most others in the road.

6. The scheme would effectively remove the existing hipped roof and replace it with a virtually flat roofed structure across much of the building and with steeply sloping front and back tiled elements. The resulting height may not be above the surrounding buildings, however, the roof shape would comprise an unduly bulky and inelegant form that would appear top heavy and thereby would relate poorly to the design and proportions of the other parts of the host dwelling.
7. The front section of the proposed roof would be conspicuous from within adjoining parts of Monkton Road and when approaching the site along Launceston Avenue. It would make little reference to the characteristic and positive features that comprise most of the other roofs of buildings within the road. Consequently, it would appear as a discordant and unsympathetic addition within the run of adjoining buildings. This is even taking into account the flat roofed, two storey addition to the side of the neighbouring property which, although visually apparent, is at least lower in height and does not materially affect the roof shape of the original house.
8. I have taken into account all the submissions in support of the scheme including the comments in relation to the neighbouring properties and that the Parish Council raise no objection. However, for the reasons explained, the design and bulk of the proposal would not sit comfortably with the existing property and the street scene, and it would be at odds with the characteristic features of the surrounding area. The reference to the scheme's similar design and appearance with a property near the junction of Martins Road and Hunters Road is noted, however, this building is in a different street scene context. Also, I am not persuaded by the evidence and from my site visit that the design and appearance of this other building displays the qualities that would justify it as an example to be replicated within this part of Monkton Road. Consequently, I attribute this other site, and the other examples drawn to my attention including those with living space in the roof, limited weight in support of the case for the appeal development.
9. In the light of the above analysis, I conclude that the proposal would unduly harm the character and appearance of the host building and area. Accordingly, the scheme would conflict with Policy CS1 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Core Strategy 2006-2027 (the Core Strategy), Policies PSP1 and PSP38 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Policies, Sites and Places Plan (Adopted November 2017) (the Local Plan) and the provisions of the South Gloucestershire Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted March 2021) (the Design SPD) which seek, amongst other things, that development proposals will be acceptable where they demonstrate an understanding of, and respond constructively to, the buildings and characteristics that make a particularly positive contribution to the distinctiveness of the area.

Living conditions

10. The proposal would extend up the flank walls of No 42A to form reasonably high sided elevations, albeit not higher than the ridges of the hipped roofs of the adjoining houses. In relation to No 40, broadly to the west, most of the extended side wall would be alongside the two storey part of this neighbouring property. As a consequence, the proposal would not adversely affect the living conditions of the residents of this adjoining dwelling.
11. No 42 is the adjoining property on the broadly eastern side. This dwelling has an area of patio behind a single storey garage and a side kitchen window that overlooks this area. At the present time the side wall of No 42A is close to the boundary with No 42 and parts of this wall are clearly visible for these neighbours when they are using sections of their garden. However, the sloping roof to the side and rear of the present building at No 42A helps to mitigate the extent and thereby the impact of the existing side wall when viewed from the adjoining property at No 42.
12. With the appeal proposal, the height and length of the extended side wall, with the quite steep angle of the rear, end section, would produce a bulky and overly prominent addition when viewed from the garden of No 42. The height and extent of this side wall, in such proximity to a patio area of No 42 and other nearby garden areas, would have a conspicuous and intrusive presence. The effect would be materially greater and more harmful than the present situation and would be such as to result in an unduly overbearing impact on the living conditions for the occupants of No 42.
13. Accordingly, I conclude that the scheme would unduly harm the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjoining property at 42 Monkton Road because of the overbearing effect of the proposal. In this respect the scheme would conflict with Policies PSP8 and PSP38 of the Local Plan and the Design SPD which seek, notably in this case, that development proposals will be acceptable provided that they do not create an unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of occupiers of nearby properties.
14. While the related reason for refusal also refers to conflict with Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy and Policy PSP1 of the Local Plan, as these policies principally concern the need for high quality design and local distinctiveness, they are not directly relevant to the consideration of this main issue concerning the impact on living conditions.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

15. The scheme would provide additional living space, in particular an additional bedroom, to help to meet the accommodation needs of the present occupiers both now and in the future. However, the development would harm the character and appearance of the host building and area, and unduly detract from the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjoining property.
16. This cumulative harm I attribute substantial weight and this would not be outweighed by the benefits of the scheme which I attribute limited weight. It follows, because of the identified harm and related policy conflict, that the scheme would not accord with the development plan when considered as a whole and there are no considerations that indicate otherwise.

17. Accordingly, the proportionate response having regard to all the considerations, including the appellant's needs and justification for the additional accommodation, is that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Wyborn

INSPECTOR