



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 February 2022

by N Praine BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 MARCH 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1825/D/21/3289077

9 Farmcote Close, Redditch B97 5XX

- 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 Matthew Graham against the decision of Redditch Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00636/FUL, dated 20 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 3 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is a 2 storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a 2 storey side extension at 9 Farmcote Close, Redditch B97 5XX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/00636/FUL, dated 20 April 2021, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Existing Floor Plans and Elevations 21120-01B and Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations 21120-03B.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Farmcote Close is a cul-de-sac of ten detached dwellings. The dwellings are of similar age, and all share similar design features such as gable fronts, materials, and single storey front projections. Some properties also have single storey side projections, and this creates a sense of spaciousness between the dwellings.
4. 9 Farmcote Close follows this theme although it sits next to a turning head which breaks the row of development. The adjacent neighbour, 8 Farmcote Close is of different design to the other dwellings in Farmcote Close. It is L shaped, set back behind No 9 and also splayed slightly away with its closest

wall, above the garage, facing away from No 9 toward its neighbour at 7 Farmcote Close.

5. The development proposal would extend No 9 at first floor to the side over the existing single storey side projection and also at two storey to the rear behind the existing garage. The proposal incorporates design features to match the existing features which include matching materials, fenestration aligned with existing, and a gable feature above the proposed front window.
6. Although the ridge line of the appeal proposal would match the existing, the Borough of Redditch High Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document 2019 (the SPD) acknowledges that each application is to be considered on its own merits to ensure that design is appropriate to the existing property and its surroundings. In this case, the front wall of the proposed development would be set behind the existing front projecting gable and the single storey front projection of the existing dwelling. In addition, the proposal takes its design cues from 4 Farmcote Close's first floor accommodation above its garage in this regard.
7. Notwithstanding the matching ridge height, this setback of the first floor in combination with its width and detailed design ensures that the proposed development would remain in proportion and would complement the scale and general massing of the existing building therefore remaining subservient. Accordingly, the extension would be in balance with the proportions of the host building. Consequently, its siting, size and design would not create a dominating, or adverse effect on the design, character, or appearance of the existing dwelling.
8. While the development proposal would extend over the entire width of the garage at first floor, it would extend no closer to the side boundary than the existing side wall, retaining the existing gap between built form and the shared boundary. Additionally, the splayed nature and setback of No 8 would also ensure that a sense of spaciousness between No 9 and the wider character of the area would be maintained. As a result, the appeal proposal would not be incongruous or have a detrimental impact upon the street-scene and I find it would contribute positively to the local character of Farmcote Close.
9. The development of a single storey side projection into a two-storey side projection would match Nos 4 and 8. While there is some concern from the Council about the loss of dwellings with single storey side projections and an associated effect on the rhythm of the street-scene, change is not synonymous with harm. Given I have found no harm above, this does not change my overall findings.
10. While I have had regard to the planning history of 5 Farmcote Close and No 8 these largely pre-date the adoption of the SPD and the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 2017 (the Local Plan). Therefore, this planning history has limited bearing on my findings.
11. The Council refer to recognised setbacks and advised ridge heights, however, I have not been advised where these recognised and advised figures are set in policy or guidance. Nevertheless, in accordance with the SPD, I have considered the appeal proposal on its own merits, and this does not alter my findings.

12. I conclude the proposed development would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. Accordingly, I find no conflict with the relevant provisions of Policies 39 and 40 of the Local Plan and the SPD, all of which seek to ensure satisfactory design which does not harm the character or appearance of the area.

Conditions

13. I have attached conditions on the time limit for development and plans in the interests of certainty. The materials condition is also necessary to ensure that the development is in keeping with the character of the existing dwelling.

Conclusion

14. Policy 1 of the Local Plan guides decision makers to take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the above reasons, having regard to the development plan as a whole, the approach in the National Planning Policy Framework and all other relevant material considerations, the appeal is allowed subject to the conditions above.

N Praine

INSPECTOR