

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 April 2022

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 26TH April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/D0121/D/22/3292803

35 Brockley Crescent, Weston-Super-Mare, BS24 9LL

- 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 Karen Drake against the decision of North Somerset Council.
 - The application Ref 21/P/3070/FUH, dated 1 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is the removal of conservatory and construction of single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. A variety of house designs are apparent in the residential estate surrounding the appeal property, which is one of several similarly designed bungalows set out in a row with their front gables facing Brockley Crescent and their ridges running at right angles to the street. The appeal property stands at the junction of Burrington Avenue with Brockley Crescent, and is thus in a more open, prominent position in the street scene than the other bungalows.
4. A modest conservatory has been attached to the western elevation of the bungalow. The intention is to replace this with a flat roofed extension. Its front wall would be set slightly more forward than that of the conservatory, and it would be wider and deeper. The extension would be at its widest at the front, tapering towards the rear with its blank western wall running parallel to the existing boundary wall on the Burrington Avenue frontage. The proposed extension's footprint would be significantly larger than that of the conservatory, and its roof would be higher.
5. The Council's SPD¹ explains that flat roofed extensions would generally not be inappropriate in some unobtrusive locations, but not normally where

¹ Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guide – section 2: Appearance and character of house extensions and alterations (Adopted April 2014)

prominently sited. If it survived the construction process as proposed, the extant boundary wall would provide a degree of screening; nonetheless, parts of the extension would be clearly visible above it when viewed from the side. From the front and in oblique views from the Crescent, where no such screening would be in place, the extension would be far more apparent. The flat roofed, box shaped extension would contrast sharply with the ridged, sloping roof of the host property, and would appear incongruous. The extension's junction with the main roof, where it would join above eaves level, would appear clumsy, thus accentuating the extension's incongruity.

6. To my mind, the scheme represents a clear example of poor design. The Government attaches considerable importance to design, and the Framework² advises that *'development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies'*. I propose to follow that guidance here.
7. I therefore conclude that the extension would prove harmfully disharmonious and out of place both in respect of the host property and its surroundings in this prominent setting. Accordingly, a clear conflict arises with those provisions of policy CS12 of North Somerset Core Strategy (CS) and policies DM32 and DM38 of the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies, which strive towards achieving high quality design, sensitivity to local character and respect for the character and appearance of the existing property when considering development proposals, in particular house extensions.

Other matters

8. I note that the Council is not opposed to the principle of an extension to the property, but that it should be appropriately designed. I have also noted the appellant's views on the Council's design suggestions. However, it does not fall to me to comment on possible alternative designs, but to determine the proposal before me, which I have found wanting for the reasons set out above.
9. I was referred to a flat roof permission granted recently in the Crescent, but in the absence of any further detail, I give this matter little weight.
10. I have taken account of all other matters raised in the representations but none outweighs those considerations which led me to my conclusions.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is dismissed.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR

² National Planning Policy Framework 2021 paragraph 134.