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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 March 2022 by Ms S Maur

**Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 26 July 2022**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/U3935/D/22/3290696**

**Site Address: 56 Purton Road, Swindon SN2 2LZ**

- 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 D Smart against the decision of Swindon Borough Council.
  - The application Ref S/HOU/21/1711/JP, dated 26 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 December 2021.
  - The development proposed is two storey front, side and rear extensions with loft conversion and dormers to the rear.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

### Procedural Matter

3. Revised drawings were submitted during the course of the application which included removing the proposed front dormer windows. The Council determined the application on the basis of the revised drawings and so this appeal will be considered on the same basis.

### Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed extensions on:
  - i) the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area; and
  - ii) the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties (Nos.54 and 56a) with particular regard to outlook and light levels.

### Reasons for the Recommendation

#### *Character and Appearance*

5. The appeal property is a modest, two storey detached dwelling with an existing single storey side extension, which includes a garage and a single storey rear extension. The property is well proportioned and balanced with regard to opening to wall ratio. It has a front projecting feature and a hipped roof. The appeal dwelling sits within a fairly large plot and the majority of nearby

neighbouring dwellings are detached and sit in large plots. The appeal site is in a prominent elevated position close to a roundabout junction. There is not a uniform character to these nearby dwellings. However, the two dwellings to the west both have front projecting features, which creates some consistency to this part of the street.

6. The proposed extensions would consist of a two-storey rear extension, which would extend across the full width of the rear elevation and a second storey side extension above the existing attached side garage. The proposal also includes a two-storey front extension which would infill the existing set back in the south-western corner of the dwelling. The development involves the raising of the roof, and the addition of dormer windows in the rear roof slope, to create additional habitable loft space.
7. The proposed two storey extension to the front would undermine the existing projecting feature and result in a loss of the reprieve this feature creates in the built form between the appeal dwelling and number 56a. The additions at roof level would not respect the lower height of the surrounding properties. Together, the extensions would result in a dwelling of considerable depth, with an overall bulk which would be significantly greater than its neighbouring properties. The prominent nature of the appeal site is such that the large scale of the dwelling would be highly noticeable from the street. For these reasons, despite being in an area of mixed character, the resulting dwelling would appear incongruous to the character of the area.
8. Full details of examples of other extensions in the area have not been provided and during my site visit I did not see any that are directly comparable
9. The proposal would be in conflict with the Swindon Borough Residential Extensions & Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2011 (SPD) which states that all extensions and alterations should be of a scale and form that does not conflict with the existing dwelling or street.
10. For the reasons identified above, the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. As such, the proposal would not meet the criteria of Policy DE1 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026, which requires development proposals to be of a high standard of design and take consideration of context and character in respect of existing built characteristics, layout and form of the development in respect of scale, massing, and detailing.

#### *Living Conditions*

11. The neighbouring No.54 is a dormer bungalow located to the east of the appeal site. It is set back further from the road than the appeal property, with the current single storey side extension sitting next to the shared boundary. The proposed first floor side extension would close the reprieve between the existing garage and No.54 at first floor level. In combination the depth and height of the proposal would result in significant bulk sitting forward of the front of number 54. This would significantly reduce the open outlook and light-levels at the front of this neighbouring property.
12. The neighbouring property to the west, No.56a, projects out further to the rear than the appeal dwelling. The resulting proposed rear extensions would extend out minimally past the rear building line of No.56a. Even taking into account

the proposed increase in height at roof level, the orientation and projection is such that it would not significantly effect light levels or unacceptably diminish outlook. Therefore, the proposal would not cause harm to the living conditions of the occupants of No.56a. This would not, however, mitigate or outweigh the harm identified to the occupiers of No.54.

13. The proposal would be in conflict with the SPD which states that all extensions and alterations should safeguard the amenity of the neighbouring residents in terms of daylight, sunlight and visual intrusion.
14. For the reasons detailed above, the proposal would cause harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No.54 in terms of outlook and light levels. This would be contrary to Policy DE1 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026, which requires high standards of design for development proposals and have consideration of amenity, in respect of light and outlook.

### **Other Matters**

15. There would be benefits of extra space in the property to allow for a growing family and for elderly parents to be accommodated in the future. These would be private benefits and as such they only carry limited weight. If works are required to a property of this age, the appeal scheme would not be the only way to achieve this and so this factor carries very limited weight. Taken together, the benefits of the proposal would not outweigh the harm identified.
16. Regardless of whether there are no intentions to sell or rent the property if the works were completed, this is not fundamental to the planning merits of the case and does not alter the conclusion I've reached.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

17. Based on the above, and having regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Ms S Maur*

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

### **Inspector's Decision**

18. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

*K Taylor*

INSPECTOR