



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 26 July 2022

by Helen Davies MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th August 2022

Appeal A Ref: APP/P0119/W/22/3294010

668 Southmead Road, Filton BS34 7RD

- 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 Nick Howell against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref P21/04649/F, dated 25 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 17 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and construct a 3 bedroom 3 storey house (one bedroom in the roof) together with ancillary cycle storage for both existing and new houses.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/P0119/W/22/3294641

668 Southmead Road, Filton BS34 7RD

- 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 Nick Howell against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref P21/06718/F, dated 17 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 27 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and construct a 3 bedroom 3 storey house (one bedroom in the roof) together with ancillary cycle and shed storage for both existing and new houses.
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Decision

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B is dismissed.

Applications for costs

3. Applications for an award of costs were made by Mr Nick Howell against South Gloucestershire Council, which are the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

4. As set out above there are two appeals on this site. They differ in that appeal B increased the width of the proposed front bay and added a gabled roof rather than the flat bay roof included in Appeal A. Appeal B also added a portico at the main entrance to the side. I have considered each proposal on its individual merits. However, to avoid duplication I have dealt with the two proposals together, except where otherwise indicated.

Main Issues

5. The main issue in Appeal A and a main issue in Appeal B is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.
6. With regard to Appeal B, there are additional main issues which are:
 - Whether the proposed development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, with regard to amenity space.
 - The effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of the occupants of 666 Southmead Road, with regard to outlook and privacy.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

7. The stretch of Southmead Road within which the appeal site is located has dwellings on one side only, with open space opposite. The site is one half of a pair of two storey semi-detached dwellings. It is surrounded by three other pairs of semi-detached dwellings of a similar design, featuring two storey flat roof bays to the front. 670 Southmead Road, which is attached to the appeal dwelling, has an existing two storey side extension with a hipped roof. The rest of this block of Southmead Road contains dwellings with a mix of design styles and finishes, including detached dwellings. Roofs in the area are predominantly hipped but the host dwelling has previously changed the roof form to a gable.
8. Despite this lack of uniformity in the general design and detailing of the dwellings, the area is characterised by good sized detached or semi-detached dwellings, with relatively wide frontages, divided by distinct spaces, and prominent and clearly defined main entrances to the front. There is a short terrace of 3 dwellings on the north side of the junction where Southmead Road meets Rannoch Road but these also feature the characteristic wide frontages and prominent entrance to the front. At present, the appeal site reflects these predominant characteristics and sits harmoniously within the street scene.
9. The proposals under Appeal A and Appeal B would both add a relatively narrow new dwelling to the side of the existing dwelling, creating a short terrace set between semi-detached pairs, with the main entrance to the side. Although the main roof is already a gable, extending it across the new dwelling would emphasise the contrast between the site and the hipped main roofs of the surrounding dwellings.
10. Two storey side extensions are evident elsewhere in the area, including at No 670, but the proposals are for dwellings so cannot be considered in the same way as an extension. The inclusion of a front bay in both appeal proposals moves them more towards the appearance of a separate dwelling but the size of the available space means the frontage width would not reflect the existing dwelling. As a consequence, both proposals would be too narrow and constrained to be read as an independent dwelling in this context.
11. The larger bay with a gabled roof which is proposed under Appeal B would also unbalance the frontage of the host pair of semi-detached dwellings. The side portico proposed under Appeal B would be a modest scale and set back from the front. Despite this, it would serve to emphasise the uncharacteristic feature of a main entrance to the side.

12. Taken together, the above elements mean that the form, scale, layout, proportions, and density of the proposals under both Appeal A and Appeal B are not informed by or respectful of the existing rhythm and pattern of development. Therefore, both proposals would be detrimental to the established character and appearance of the area.
13. My attention has been drawn to an example of a separate dwelling added to the side of 652 Southmead Road. Details of this are not before me but I viewed it during my site visit. No 652 is a corner plot on the south side of the junction with Rannoch Road. As such, the plot size and the context within which the additional dwelling is viewed is considerably different to the appeal site, which sits between other semi-detached dwellings. In any event, each case must be considered on its own merits and impacts and direct parallels are not easily drawn.
14. I conclude that the development proposed in both Appeal A and Appeal B would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the development would not comply with Policy CS1 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-2027 (2013) (CS), Policy PSP38 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan Policies, Site and Places Plan (2017) (PSP), and the South Gloucestershire Householder Design Guide (March 2021) (HDG), which together, seek to ensure high quality design which responds to and reflects the surrounding context.

Amenity Space

15. Policy PSP43 of the PSP sets expectations for private amenity space in new residential units and requires a sufficient size and functional shape to meet the needs of the likely number of occupiers. The plans show the shape of the amenity space would be functional. The Council state the space would fall short of the recommended size¹ but the appellant says it would exceed the minimum size when the patio area is included².
16. I acknowledge that the sizes set out in policy are a guide only and that amenity space was not identified as a reason for refusal under the application subject to Appeal A. However, Policy PSP43 also specifies that amenity space should be designed to take account of the context of the development, including the character of the surrounding area. Therefore, regardless of whether or not the proposal can meet the size guidance, the amenity space would be significantly smaller than the gardens which characterise the surrounding area.
17. I conclude that the development proposed in Appeal B would not provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, with regard to amenity space. Consequently, the development would not comply with Policy PSP43 of the PSP, which seeks to ensure that new residential units have private amenity space of a suitable size and quality which reflects the surrounding context.

Living conditions of No 666 – Outlook and Privacy

18. The footprint of the proposed two storey built form, and the distance to the boundary with No 666 is the same in Appeal A and Appeal B and would inevitably have an impact on outlook. However, despite the guidance in the

¹ 53 square meters as shown on the plans provided against a minimum standard for a 3 bedroom dwelling of 60 square metres.

² Taking the area up to 66.2 square metres.

HDG, given the remaining separation distance, the orientation of the site and the location of windows at No 666, I consider the impact of the two storey built form to be acceptable. This is in line with the Council conclusion in the application subject to Appeal A.

19. The application subject to Appeal B includes the addition of a portico which would come up to the side boundary with No 666. This would be single storey and largely open at the sides. The additional impact on the outlook from No 666, above and beyond that of the two storey built form, would be limited to the portico roof and columns which is considered to be acceptable.
20. The proposals under Appeal A and B both include a main entrance to the side of the new dwelling. The use of a side entrance would be likely to increase comings and goings in this area, which is adjacent to the boundary with No 666 and opposite a kitchen window. However, given that there is existing access along the side of the dwelling and there is a boundary fence between the appeal site and No 666, I do not consider the side entrance to reduce the privacy of occupants of No 666.
21. I conclude that the development proposed in Appeal B would not cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupants of 666 Southmead Road, with regard to outlook and privacy. Consequently, the development would comply with Policy PSP8 of the PSP which seeks to ensure that development does not have an unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties.

Other Matters

22. I note support for the proposal from a neighbour, but this does not outweigh the harm identified.
23. How the appellant interpreted Council comments on the original proposal or how such comments informed revisions to the proposal are not for consideration under this appeal. Neither are any perceived inconsistencies between the Council approach to the two proposals. I have considered each proposal on its own merits and made a determination based on the submitted documents and my own observations on site.

Conclusion

24. For the reasons given above and taking into account the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that both Appeal A and Appeal B should be dismissed.

Helen Davies

INSPECTOR