

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 August 2022

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/D/22/3294444

56 Harper Road, Salisbury SP2 7HQ

- 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 A Hicks against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref PL/2021/10613, dated 5 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 12 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is to raise the roof line of the existing bungalow to form bedrooms and a 2 storey extension to the rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matter

2. The appellant has submitted a set of amended plans with the appeal, which his agent has circulated for comment. A set of neighbour responses is also provided. The appeal is, however, proceeding by the Householder Appeals method, as outlined in Annex C of the *Procedural Guide – Planning Appeals – England*. This method does not allow for any further representations either by the Council or by neighbours and the informal round of consultations carried out by the appellant is not an adequate substitute for public consultation by a local authority. The introduction of these new, amended plans would therefore be prejudicial to participation in the appeal process. I must base this decision on the application plans considered by the Council.

Main issues

3. The main issues are the effects of the proposal on: (i) the character and appearance of Harper Road; and (ii) living conditions at neighbouring properties, in terms of outlook and privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Although Harper Road as a whole contains both houses and bungalows, No 56 sits within a section of the street which is lined on both sides by low bungalows of fairly uniform design, all with hipped roofs at the front. No 56 is typical in this respect. The proposal would raise the roof, convert the front roof hip to a

gable and add 2 large, blank dormer features to the side roof slopes in order to provide upper floor accommodation. It would also add a 1.5 storey gabled extension at the back – not a full 2 storey extension as stated above because the eaves level would be kept low - with a covered first floor balcony at the back.

5. The existing bungalows, though simple in form and architecture, are not without charm. Together they form an attractive group, with a character that various extensions and alterations have largely left intact. These changes have included the conversion of roofspaces and some 1.5 storey rear extensions, as at No 58 next door.
6. Although the proposed small increase in roof height and the rear extension on their own would not be notable in the street scene, the front gable and blank side dormers would be overly bulky and awkward. I saw no other similar features on this group of bungalows. These aspects of the proposal would be seriously out of character with the existing bungalows and would disrupt the harmony of the street scene. The Council also mentions the loss of the existing chimney, but many of the other bungalows here do not have chimneys so I see no objection to that minor aspect of the proposal.
7. I conclude that, mainly due to the proposed front gable and dormers, the proposal as a whole would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of this part of Harper Road. It therefore conflicts with the aims of Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (CS), the Council's design guidance *Creating Places*, the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Design Guide, to secure a high standard of design which enhances local distinctiveness and responds positively to the existing townscape.

Living conditions

8. The proposed rear extension, including the covered balcony, would stretch well to the rear of the bungalow at No 54 next door, which has a side facing glazed projection near the back that would look directly out onto the extension at very close range. In the absence of any information about whether this serves a habitable room I have to assume that it does. The side wall and roof of the proposed rear extension would be highly dominant and intrusive on the outlook from this glazing. It would furthermore also dominate, to a lesser but still significant extent, views from the area of garden immediately to the rear of No 54. I therefore find that the proposal would be unduly overbearing on the outlook from No 54.
9. The rear extension would project slightly further than the existing rear extension to No 58. That bungalow does not have any side facing windows to be affected, however, and the amount of additional depth is not significant, so that the proposal would not be overbearing on any views from that property.
10. Some sideways views from the proposed balcony would be limited by a roof overhang, but the balcony would still provide close range views of much of the neighbouring gardens from an elevated position. A degree of mutual overlooking is normal within urban areas, but balconies like this provide wider ranging and more intrusive views than ordinary windows. I find that the proposed balcony would unduly harm the privacy of the next door neighbours at Nos 54 and 58.

11. I conclude that the proposal would unacceptably harm living conditions at neighbouring properties, in terms of outlook and privacy. It therefore also conflicts with the aim of CS Core Policy 57 to ensure a high standard of design in regard to the impact on the amenities of existing occupants.
12. I have considered all other matters raised. In particular, I note that the construction of the extension would bring some minor benefits to the local economy and that the project could improve the energy efficiency of the bungalow. The new front gable window would add some additional natural surveillance of the street, bringing a marginal benefit in terms of public safety and security. These other points are not of sufficient importance to outweigh my findings in regard to the main issue, however.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR