

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 October 2022

by Andrew Dale BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 November 2022

Appeal Ref. APP/U3935/D/22/3302194
2 Keyneston Road, Nythe, Swindon SN3 3PT

- 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 M Brown against the decision of Swindon Borough Council.
 - The application ref. S/HOU/22/0375, dated 8 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 24 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as "Two storey side extension, first floor front & rear extensions, single storey front extension, garage conversion and new garage with dropped kerb."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matter

2. The new garage and dropped kerb do not appear in the description of the proposal on the Council's decision notice and the appeal form as those 2 elements were omitted during the processing of the application in response to concerns raised by the Senior Transport Development Management Engineer. I make no further comment on those matters.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings.

Reasons

4. The appeal concerns a 2-storey detached house situated on a corner plot at the junction between Keyneston Road and The Drive. Whilst no outstanding urban architecture is evident hereabouts, it is nonetheless a pleasant residential area with most of the houses nearby on Keyneston Road being of a similar design and age. No. 2 is positioned so that its gable end, which contains the main entrance, faces The Drive. The front elevation faces Keyneston Road and has a 2-storey advanced bay alongside an attached forward-projecting single garage.
 5. The principle of extending the property and adapting it to meet the changing needs of the current occupants are not at issue. However, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development; so, development should add to the overall
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quality of the area and be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and sympathetic to local character. I consider that the appeal proposal is ill-judged in these important respects.

6. The proposed 2-storey side extension would be joined to the proposed part 2-storey, part first floor front extension. Combined together in the form presented, they would add substantial mass and bulk to the front and side elevations. The design does not successfully break up the mass and bulk. No attempt has been made to set the 2-storey side extension back from the principal front elevation or to ensure that its ridge is below the existing ridge height. The new 2-storey front-projecting gable would span across almost three-quarters of the width of the front façade as extended. This, added to its height, would result in it appearing out of proportion with the host dwelling. The effect would be worsened by the inclusion of a ground floor extension in front of it. Including the new roof swept over the garage, this would span the entire width of the dwelling and present a dominant horizontal element uncharacteristic of the host dwelling.
7. The appeal property has extra space to the southern side as a result of being on a corner plot. However, the substantial infilling of the gap between the dwelling and the walling and fencing that form the site's boundary to The Drive would make the extended building appear unduly prominent in that street scene, particularly when seen against the building lines in relation to The Drive of 1 Keyneston Road and 22 Ashmore Close to the west and east respectively.
8. In all the above respects, the scheme eschews various design criteria within the Council's Residential Extensions & Alterations Supplementary Planning Document which, when read together, are in place so that the scale and design of extensions should ensure an existing house is not subsumed by overbearing or incongruous additions. In the appeal case, it would be very difficult to detect the original dwelling after the extensions had been built.
9. Whilst the Council raised no objections to the proposed rear extension, I consider that their concerns about the front and side extensions were justified as they would appear as prominent and insufficiently subservient additions to the host dwelling in public views from Keyneston Road and The Drive. Their scale, bulk and design would be disrespectful of and inappropriate to the character, appearance and setting of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. The use of matching materials would not overcome the visual harm arising from the design, scale and bulk.
10. I walked along the streets in the vicinity in order to get an idea of the houses that have been extended, noting in particular 4 and 6 Keyneston Road and 1 and 3 Tollard Close. However, I have no details of the planning history of these properties. The latter 2 properties really relate to a different street scene. The former 2 properties have both been extended at the front but the gabled front-projecting wings do not seem to be out of proportion to the front elevations in terms of their scale, width or height. I saw nothing to justify what is proposed on the appeal site.
11. I find on the main issue that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings.

12. Policy DE1 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan, adopted in 2015, seeks high standards of design for all types of development. It requires development to follow various design principles. These include character and context in respect of existing built characteristics and also the layout, form and function of the development in respect of siting, orientation, scale, massing, materials and detailing. The proposal would not meet the expectations of this policy when viewed in the round and would also fail to respect the key design themes in the Framework insofar as they relate to achieving well-designed places.
13. The Council raised no objections in relation to neighbouring residential amenities, parking and highway safety. I see no reason to disagree on any of those matters. Still, my finding on the main issue is decisive to the outcome of this appeal. There is conflict with the development plan. The harm cannot be mitigated by the imposition of planning conditions and it is not outweighed by other material considerations.
14. For the reasons given above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that this appeal should not succeed.

Andrew Dale

INSPECTOR