



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 October 2022

by Lewis Condé BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/W/22/3299027

37 Crowther Road, Lockleaze, Bristol BS7 9NS

- 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 Matthew Scott against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 21/03150/F, dated 7 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 19 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as 'To Convert an existing 4 bedroomed 3 storey house into a 1 bed flat and 2 bed, 2 storey maisonette, including a new dormer on rear roof. Also to build a similar dwelling next door on the vacant land to the north west: A ground floor and basement 2 storey maisonette. and a 2 story maisonette on 1st and second floor. In all 4 dwellings'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development in the banner heading above is taken directly from the planning application form. The Council's decision notice refers to the description of development as "Conversion of an existing house into a 1 bed flat and 2 bed, 2 storey maisonette, including a roof extension and single storey extension. Erection of 2 dwellings on land to side". This more accurately and succinctly describes the proposal. Accordingly, the appeal has been determined on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is an existing two-storey, end of terrace dwellinghouse. It is sited on an elevated, corner plot within Crowther Road. The surrounding residential area largely comprises of terrace properties of a similar overall design and appearance to the appeal property. Due to changes in topography, neighbouring dwellings opposite the appeal site and to the north-west are set at a significantly lower level than the appeal site.
5. In addition to converting the existing property, the proposal would introduce a two-storey building attached to the side of the existing dwelling to provide a further two dwellings. Whilst it may not actively be used by the occupants of the existing dwelling, the side plot that forms part of the appeal site appears to be part of residential garden land associated with 37 Crowther Road. The plot is lawned and is set behind a low boundary/retaining wall. As such, it is

prominent and exposed. It also provides some openness and relief to what is otherwise a rather dense, tightly knit suburban street.

6. The proposed two storey, new build, element of the scheme would be of a similar scale and appearance that would reflect its surroundings. However, the proposal would harmfully disrupt the generally consistent building line that corner properties that sit along the side of Crowther Road follow. It is recognised that the building line is not universal, having already been somewhat eroded by single storey extensions and outbuildings to the other corner properties. However, the proposed development due to its much larger scale, would have a more pronounced and harmful effect on the building line.
7. The elevated nature of the site, alongside the overall scale of the proposed development and its proximity to the north-western boundary, would also result in the proposal being imposing in the streetscene and unduly prominent on this corner plot. Thus, also removing the sense of openness that the site currently contributes.
8. In support of the current proposal, the appellant has raised examples of other similar developments nearby that the Council has allowed. However, from the evidence before me and my observations on site, they appear to be of markedly different contexts. Notably, the Muller Road example, despite being of a large scale, is on a junction that has a much wider arrangement than the appeal site. Whilst the example at 12 Lindsay Road does result in an inconsistent building line, it is set significantly lower than the public highway. As such, that development is far more discrete than the appeal scheme.
9. Details of a historic, unbuilt, extension at 14 Lindsay Road and a relatively recent approval for a dwelling at Romney Avenue have also been provided. Again, these schemes have varying contexts including the precise nature of the appeal proposals and site arrangements. In any event, I consider that examples of disharmonious development do not provide appropriate justification for further similar proposals. Consequently, my view is not turned by these other nearby examples.
10. Whilst reasonably localised in its extent, the effect of the appeal scheme would be to unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, it is contrary to Policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Plan: Core Strategy (adopted 2011) and Policies DM21, DM26, and DM27 of the Bristol Development Plan: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Document (adopted 2014). Together these policies, amongst other matters, seek to ensure that new development is of a high-quality design, that respects the local pattern and grain of development, and positively contributes towards local character.

Other Matters

11. The delivery of three additional dwellings would make a limited but beneficial contribution to the supply of housing in the area. It would also be capable of providing a variety of other modest social and economic benefits associated with the development of new dwellings. However, I do not consider these benefits would outweigh the harm that I have identified.
12. The sustainability credentials of the proposals would be high and exceed adopted policy expectations, whilst the proposed development is also likely to

result in a more efficient use of the land. Again, however, these factors do not outweigh the harm that the proposal would cause.

13. I note the appellant's frustrations regarding the service received by the local planning authority (LPA) during the application process. However, this is a matter for the LPA to address. The appeal has been determined upon the merits of the proposals.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight that would indicate a decision other than in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR