

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 February 2023

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 01st March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/22/3312688

53 Shirehampton Road, Stoke Bishop, Bristol, BS9 2DW

- 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 Chris Lawrance against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/02794/H, dated 6 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 2 November 2022.
 - The developments proposed are two-storey side extensions and single-storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matters

2. No-one was at home at the appeal property when I visited. However, having regard to the main issue set out below, I could see all that I needed to see from outside the site to make a full assessment of the proposal.
3. Pursuant to the appeal, the residents of 51 Shirehampton Road drew attention to a possible error of fact in the officer report on the application¹. Accordingly, as a check, and since a consented development at this address was referred to by the appellant, I entered that property's garden during my site visit, with the residents' consent.

Main issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a detached dwelling with a small garage fronting, but set back from, a busy highway. It lies adjacent to a modest suburban retail area, but to the south-east detached houses line the frontages on both sides of the road. The aim is to extend the house on either side in two-storey fashion, together with a single-storey rear extension. The Council has not objected to the rear extension proposed, and I have no reason to either.
6. Both the Council and the appellant share the view that dwellings in the vicinity of the appeal site are generally of a substantial size and vary in design. There are also fairly generous gaps between most of the dwellings resulting in what

¹ The report refers to a two-storey extension having been 'carried out' at 51 Shirehampton Road, whereas the extension built is single-storey.

the appellant and Council agree to be a residential area of a spacious open character. I concur with this assessment.

7. Much of the Council's objection is directed to what it regards as the proposal's non-compliance with some of the content of the Council's SPD², in particular its design advice in relation to subservience. The SPD represents guidance rather than regulation, and I acknowledge that the appellant has gone some way towards meeting the Council's concerns in the revised plans presented during the determination.
8. To my mind, however, the appellant's proposal, if built, would fail to fit acceptably into its spatial context. Unlike most other nearby dwellings, including those already extended, two-storey development would be built virtually to both side boundaries of the plot. In addition, whilst noting the extant gable towards the rear of the house, the gabled treatment proposed on either side at the front, would result in the introduction of an uncharacteristic bulkiness virtually across the width of the plot, materially impinging on the spacious open character of the residential part of the street.
9. I acknowledge that the appearance and form of the adjacent retail development also plays a part in forming local character. To my mind, however, the scheme, whilst possibly not representing an overdevelopment of the site as a whole, seeks to unacceptably cram unrelieved two-storey development virtually across the full width of the plot to the detriment of local visual amenities.
10. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposal would materially harm the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings. Thus, a clear conflict arises with the design provisions and requirements in respect of development of this type contained in policies BCS21 of the Bristol Local Plan, Core Strategy; and policies DM26, DM27 and DM30 of the Bristol Local Plan Site Allocations and Development Management Policies.

Other matters

11. I have noted the appellant's reference to other appeal decisions³, but these are given limited weight since the spatial circumstances of each case is different. As required, I have dealt with this appeal on its merits.
12. I also note the reference to the Council's grant of planning permission⁴ for a two-storey extension at 51 Shirehampton Road, the next-door property. However, this is distinguishable from the appeal proposal since firstly, a clear gap between the as-approved extension and its side boundary with No 53 would remain; secondly, the roof would be hipped, which would assist in conveying the impression of space around the extended house.

² Supplementary Planning Document Number 2 – A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions

³ Ref APP/Z0116/W/22/3295964; APP/Z0116/D/20/3246747; APP/Z0116/D/22/3302223 & APP/Z0116/D/19/3241192

⁴ Ref 21/02389/H, dated 24 June 2021

13. All other matters referred to in the representations have been taken into consideration, including the references to the Framework⁵. The Framework, however, advises⁶ that development that is not well designed should be refused, and I shall follow that advice in this case.

14. No other matter raised outweighs those which led me to my conclusions.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR

⁵ The National Planning Policy Framework

⁶ At paragraph 134