



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 July 2023

by C Rafferty LLB (Hons), Solicitor

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/J2373/D/23/3321052

31 Stockydale Road, Blackpool FY4 5HP

- 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 Mrs Celine Threlfall against the decision of Blackpool Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 23/0037, dated 17 February 2023, was refused by notice dated 17 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a part two storey/ part single storey side extension including integral garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The site is a two storey detached dwelling in Marton Moss. It dates from the 1930s with later alterations, to include single storey side and rear extensions and a rear dormer. Despite these alterations, their subtle positioning and limited scale ensure the original context, character and proportions of the dwelling remain evident. The area is residential, made up of properties of various designs and forms in generous plots surrounded by open space.
4. The proposal seeks to erect a part two storey, part single storey side extension at the property. Policy CS26 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy 2012-2027 (the CS) states that development in Marton Moss is limited to, among other things, extensions in keeping with the scale and character of the area and not exceeding 35% of the original ground floor footprint of the existing dwelling. The Council has stated that the original property comprises the main two storey dwelling, such that the addition of the proposal would far exceed the 35% of the original footprint, contrary to Policy CS26. This has not been directly contested by the appellant.
5. The proposal would represent a sizeable addition to the appeal property. While it would be constructed from materials in keeping with the wider site, by virtue of its added bulk it would nevertheless significantly alter the character of the dwelling, resulting in an unduly imposing property clearly visible from Stockydale Road. It would sit flush with the front elevation of the dwelling,

failing to read as a subservient addition, instead overwhelming the proportions of the property and creating a dominant expanse of built form at the site.

6. In this regard, I note the guidance contained within the Extending Your Home Supplementary Planning Document (the SPD), which advises that two storey side extensions should be set back from the front main wall of the property by at least 1 metre and have the ridge height set at least 0.5 metres lower. It also states that proposals that fail to be visually subordinate to the host building should not be permitted. While this is not policy, it remains guidance that is a material consideration and with which the proposal would not accord.
7. The appeal property currently features a bay window projection at both ground and first floor level along the front elevation, a defining design feature of the dwelling that allows the traditional character of the original property to be readily appreciated. The introduction of the proposal, with the additional bulk and resulting front elevation with a range of fenestration and front projecting garage, would visually compete with this bay window feature. It would create a busy, contrived, and imbalanced façade that would overall detract from the contribution of the bay windows to the character of the site.
8. I acknowledge the wider surrounds are varied, with properties of differing scale, forms and designs, many of which have been or are in the process of being extended and altered. This includes sizeable properties in close proximity to the site. However, I do not have any substantive information as to the circumstances under which these alterations and extensions were permitted or the original footprints of these other dwellings for the purposes of Policy CS26. In any event, each scheme is decided on its own merits and, for the reasons given above, I find that the proposal would cause undue visual harm to the appeal property, appearing as an incongruous addition at the site and readily experienced as such from Stockydale Road.
9. For the reasons given, the proposal would result in significant adverse harm to the character and appearance of the property and surrounding area. As such, it would fail to comply with Policies CS7 and CS26 of the CS, Policies DM17 and DM20 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2021, and the SPD insofar as they seek to ensure high quality development that is appropriate in terms of scale, mass and character, including extensions that are well designed in relation to the original building.

Other Matters

10. I note that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan does not limit extensions to 35% of the original ground floor footprint of the existing dwelling. However, on the evidence provided this is yet to be adopted such that limited weight can be attached to this. It remains that I must determine the proposal against current planning policy, which includes Policy CS26 of the CS.
11. The Council has raised concerns that the proposal could result in a self-contained unit. However, it remains that I must assess the scheme as it appears before me, which is for an extension to the dwelling rather than a self-contained unit and, for the avoidance of doubt, I have proceeded on this basis.
12. The appellant has made a general reference to permitted development. I have no substantive evidence of the permitted development rights referred to or the comparability of any scheme permitted by such rights to the proposal. I have

nothing to indicate that any scheme that could be constructed under permitted development rights is a greater than theoretical possibility at this stage, such that I attach limited weight to this, which does not outweigh the harm identified above.

13. The proposal would enable the appellant to meet the needs of their growing family. However, this is a personal circumstance that, in this case, does not outweigh the harm identified in the planning considerations. The main parties agree the proposal would not harm the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties. This represents a lack of harm that is neutral in the overall planning balance.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given, the proposal would not accord with the development plan when taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the appeal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Rafferty

INSPECTOR