



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 August 2023

by K Jones BA (Hons) DipLA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/D/23/3323608

**Naite Cottage, Oldbury Naite, Oldbury On Severn, South Gloucestershire
BS35 1RU**

- 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 Deborah Williams against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref P22/07063/HH, dated 17 January 2023, was refused by notice dated 14 March 2023.
 - The development proposed is a single storey extension to form a dependent person's annexe.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I note that this is a resubmission of a previous planning application (South Gloucestershire Council reference P21/05585/F), but for clarity I have omitted reference to this from the description above as this is not a form of development.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site is part of a dispersed rural settlement at Oldbury Naite. Nearby properties are typically of a traditional rural character, with pitched tile roofs set above a mixed material palette of brick, render, and stone. Properties tend to be set down long driveways, and are often partially screened by vegetation. Alongside the attached house at Windy Willows, the appeal site makes a positive and consistent contribution to this character, the two comprising an attached pair of modest two storey cottages, with traditional proportions and detailing.
5. The proposed development comprises two main elements: a garage extension and a glazed link back to the main building. Together they would form a substantial extension to the host property. Whilst the height of both proposed elements would be subservient to the main building, the width and horizontal massing of the proposals would extend almost the full width of, and a considerable distance away from, the main elevation of the host dwelling. In

addition, whilst the garage extension is proposed to continue the existing roof pitch, the glazed link would introduce a substantial feature with a roof form that would conflict with the character of the property and its context. This form of development would lack subservience, dominating and obscuring this elevation and failing to respect the character, form, and massing of the host property.

6. I acknowledge that the appeal property has a somewhat mismatched appearance, with varied materials resulting from past additions and alterations to the property. However, the current mixed palette of materials on Naite Cottage is sympathetic to local character, reflecting the traditional materials of render and stone used locally. Despite the variation present, the cottage maintains the cohesive appearance of an older property that has been sympathetically extended and updated over the years. Whilst the proposed garage extension would maintain this appearance through the use of render under a pitched tile roof, the large glazed panels of the link structure would markedly contrast with the established palette of materials, resulting in an incongruous and jarring feature.
7. During my site visit I saw that there are some examples of modern features in extensions in the local area, including the use of oak and glazing. Several have been highlighted by the appellant. Those I noted were smaller 'lean-to' structures or more typically conservatory-style extensions, and tended to be well-related to the host property, for example by orientation with the main building line, or being set below a pitched tiled roof matching that of the host property. I do not therefore consider that they provide a justified context for the proposals.
8. Both parties have referred to the South Gloucestershire Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (the SPD). I note that there is disagreement between the parties over whether the extension is proposed to the 'front' or 'side' elevation of the property, and that this has a bearing on the application of the SPD guidance. Even if considered as a side extension, the width of the proposals would still conflict with the design principles set out in Section 2.3 of the SPD, where it refers to extensions not extending to more than half the width of the principal elevation, and where it notes that in most cases this would see an extension a third of the width of the principal/front elevation.
9. Whilst individually the elements of the proposals may accord with some of the SPD design principles including maintaining a subservient height, and providing some consistency in the mixed palette of materials, when considered together the proposals would form a discordant relationship with the host dwelling. This would fail to meet the purposes of the SPD which include bringing forward high quality design with a positive response to context and character.
10. Even though there is not a significant public view of the scheme as a whole, for the reasons given above I conclude that the scale and massing of the extension elements, their form and detailing, would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. This harm would conflict with Policy CS1 of the South Gloucestershire Core Strategy and Policy PSP38 of the South Gloucestershire Policies, Sites and Places Plan. Taken together these policies require, amongst other criteria, the highest possible standards of design, and

that extensions respect the building line, form, scale, proportions and architectural style of the area.

11. The harm I have identified would also conflict with guidance in the SPD, and paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework where it seeks to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and maintain a strong sense of place.

Other Matters

12. Given the personal circumstances of the appellant and proposed occupant of the annexe, I have had regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which sets out the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity for those who share a protected characteristic.
13. During my site visit I was able to see some of the difficulties associated with the host property for a person living with a disability, and accept that the proposed development would address these. I also recognise that the glazed link would serve a specific function in providing a safe and warm access to and from the house. Furthermore, the Council's Annexes and Residential Outbuildings Supplementary Planning Document mentions the benefits of adapting existing housing to better support older relatives to live independently.
14. Notwithstanding the above points, there are limited details before me to demonstrate that this proposal would be the only solution to meet the identified needs of the appellant and their family. Therefore, whilst the proposed development may help a person who shares a protected characteristic for the purposes of the PSED, I am not persuaded that this would outweigh the unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. Accordingly, this has not altered my overall decision.
15. The appellant has also highlighted a number of other policy criteria which are met by the proposals including flood risk, neighbouring living conditions, and highway safety. These issues are not disputed by the council. However, the absence of harm in these matters is neutral in the planning balance and does not outweigh the harm I have identified.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above I find that the proposal would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole. There are no material considerations that have been shown to carry sufficient weight to indicate a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. Accordingly, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Jones

INSPECTOR