

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 September 2023

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

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

Decision date: 20 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/D/23/3325377

8 Cloverdale Drive, Longwell Green, Gloucestershire, BS30 9XZ

- 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 Ward against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref P23/00962/HH, dated 7 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 29 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two-storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The Council's two reasons for refusal, taken in combination, relate to the alleged effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the neighbouring residents at 10 Cloverdale Drive. Accordingly, the main issue is the effect of the proposed two-storey side extension on the living conditions of the residents of No 10 with particular reference to visual impact, parking and access.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached brick-built dwelling set within a relatively modern housing estate. A narrow gap separates it from No 10. Within the gap are two concrete access drives and off-street parking spaces for both properties. The driveways are separated by a grassed strip. No 10 has a garage at the rear of the dwelling.
4. The appellant proposes the erection of a two storey side extension comprised of what is described as a car port on the ground floor with bedroom and bathroom accommodation above. Although slightly set back from the front elevation, the extension's profile closely matches that of the appeal property's existing flank elevation.
5. The proposed side elevation would be sited very close to No 10's side elevation. One of the two windows in No 10's side elevation serves a bathroom, where outlook is not expected. The ground floor window serves a kitchen and the outlook from that would be severely and harmfully affected in that a high brick wall would be brought very close to it. Moreover, the drive also acts as a pedestrian access to the rear of the dwelling and its users would feel hemmed-in and oppressed if the proposed overbearing structure was built.

6. The appellant's drawings contain the warning that '*responsibility is not accepted for errors made by others in scaling from this drawing. Constructional information should be taken from figured dimensions only and thoroughly checked on site.*'
7. I have not therefore scaled from the drawings, and not a single dimension is shown on them. In circumstances where the gap between dwellings is so narrow I would expect clarity and accuracy. I raise this point because there are grounds to question the accuracy of the plans in some respects. For example, the appellant makes the point that No 10's garage is '*offset*' and has provided a photograph to show that that is indeed the case. Yet the appellant's proposed site plan (*sheet 3*) shows the garage not to be offset.
8. On the basis of the information depicted on the drawings and having regard to the visual evidence of my site visit, I am not convinced of the practicalities or the ability to provide operationally functional car spaces on either driveway in the future in such a narrow gap were this proposal to proceed. In this regard, the appellant's photograph shows that the residents of No 10 currently use their driveway for parking purposes and are not entirely reliant on their garage. It has not been clearly demonstrated that they could do so successfully in the future were the extension built. They could therefore be deprived of off-street parking spaces, which are required to be provided on site in accordance with the Council's parking guidelines.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would harm the living conditions currently enjoyed by the residents of No 10 by reason of its adverse and oppressive visual impact upon them, and by the effect of the development on their ability to park vehicles on their property. Accordingly, a clear conflict arises with those provisions of Policies PSP8 and PSP38 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Policies, Sites and Places Plan November 2017, and The Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document March 2021 requiring that development proposals do not create unacceptable living conditions, have an unacceptable impact on, or prejudice the residential amenity of, occupiers of nearby properties.

Other matters

10. All other matters referred to in the representations have been taken into consideration, including the references made to the Framework¹. I have also noted the comments made by the Parish Council.
11. No other matter raised is of such strength or significance as to outweigh the considerations that led me to my conclusions.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR

¹ The National Planning Policy Framework