



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 September 2023

by N Perrins BSc (hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 October 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/L3815/D/23/3323626

Herongate, 53 Grosvenor Road, Donnington PO19 8RT

- 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 & Mrs Cunningham against the decision of Chichester District Council.
 - The application Ref: D/22/01819/DOM, dated 13 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 March 2023.
 - The development proposed is for demolition of existing garage and conservatory, new single storey rear extension, first floor extension and new roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I am aware that the Council refused planning application Ref: 23/00770/DOM for similar works to the property that is subject to a separate appeal¹. Notwithstanding this, I have assessed this appeal proposal on its own merits in reaching my decision.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposal on (i) the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and (ii) the living conditions of neighbouring dwellings.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is a detached brick built bungalow located within a residential area comprising a mix of detached houses and bungalows. The southern side of Grosvenor Road is predominantly made up of bungalows with a generally uniform character. This is in contrast with the northern side, within which the appeal site is located, that has a wider mix of housing types.
5. The appeal scheme proposes to demolish the existing garage and conservatory and erect a new single storey rear extension and first floor extension including associated roof works.

¹ APP/L3815/D/23/3323626

6. The appeal proposal would have a gable ended roof to incorporate the first floor living accommodation. I observed on the site visit that the majority of roof types along the northern part of Grosvenor Road close to the appeal site have part gable and part hipped roofs; this includes the existing roof on the appeal property. The effect of having part hipped roofs helps to reduce the bulk of the first floors in a context where detached dwellings are interspersed with bungalows. This roof style forms part of the character of the street scene and creates a sense of spacing between the dwellings, particularly on the narrower plots such as the appeal site. I acknowledge that two dwellings No 59 and 61 have side gabled roofs but this is a separate context to the dwellings on and close to the appeal site where part gable and part hip roofs are prevail.
7. I consider, therefore, that the proposal to extend the width of the property close to the boundary with No 55 in conjunction with the gable end roof would result in the first-floor element appearing overly large for its plot when viewed within the street scene. Furthermore, the design of the roof with the ridge being moved back from where it is on the existing dwelling would result in a squat looking development that would not assimilate successfully within the prevailing street scene.
8. In reaching this conclusion I have reviewed the examples provided by the appellant of other properties along the northern side of Grosvenor Road that have been changed from bungalows to larger dwellings including extending closer to their site boundaries, similar to what is proposed in this appeal. I agree with the appellant that given these examples and the character of the area, the plot is sufficiently large to accommodate the proposed width in principle; albeit due to the roof design not being acceptable in this case, the first floor would result in a dwelling that would appear as an over development of the site.
9. In terms of appearance, the proposal would have a more modern design than the existing property. The inclusion of the Juliet Balcony is a feature that is only evident on one other property at No 45 and is not a particularly strong reference point to base the appeal proposal on. However, it also cannot be said that it is an alien feature in terms of the area's character. The materials proposed are more modern than on the existing property and those adjacent but they do relate to a number of other properties along Grosvenor Road that co-exist with the more traditional designs evident without causing harm. On balance, I do not consider the appearance and proposed use of materials to be unacceptable in the context of the mix of styles evident along the northern part of the Grosvenor Road street scene.
10. However, for the reasons set out, the appeal proposal by virtue of its roof design would result in a dwelling that would appear too large for its plot and harm the character and appearance of the street scene. I therefore conclude that the appeal proposal conflicts with Policies 2 and 33 of the Chichester Local Plan 2014-2029 (the Local Plan), which amongst other things require development to meet the highest standards of design, enhance the character of the surrounding area and the site in terms of proportion, form, massing, siting, layout, height, size and scale. The appeal proposal would also not be consistent with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which seeks to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character.

Living conditions

11. The main impact in this regard is the effect of the proposal on No 55, which the Council consider would be harmed by the development causing overshadowing and being overbearing; There would be no harm caused by the development to the living conditions of the other neighbouring property at No 51 Grosvenor Road.
12. I note from the information before me, and observed on my site visit, that there is a window on the side elevation of No 55 that would be the part of the neighbouring property that would be most affected. From the information provided, this window would appear to be secondary to the rooms that it serves. Therefore, I do not consider that any overshadowing arising from the appeal proposal would be materially harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 55.
13. However, I do consider that the scale, depth, bulk and mass of the appeal proposal would harm the outlook and enjoyment of No 55 from some of its external areas. I note the appellant has referred to the two-storey rear extension at No 51, which is of similar scale to the appeal proposal. However, that is a different design that includes a set back from the boundary that reduces the perception of scale when viewed from the appeal site. In this case, the depth of the side elevation at two-storeys would be likely to have a more harmful overbearing impact than the arrangement at No 51.
14. In view of the harm I have identified to the outlook of No 55 by virtue of the bulk, scale, depth and mass of the side elevation, the appeal proposal conflicts with Policy 33 of the Local Plan that seeks amongst other things to ensure that development respects and where possible enhances neighbouring amenity.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the policies of the development plan as a whole in terms of its impact on the character of the area and the living conditions of the occupiers of No 55 Grosvenor Road and there are no material considerations that would lead me to a different conclusion. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR