

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 October 2024

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

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

Decision date: 06th November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/D/24/3351211

33 Fern Grove, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, BS32 8DS

- 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 Emre Cetin against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref is P24/01439/HH.
 - The development proposed is the erection of two storey rear extension to provide additional living accommodation and single storey side extension to form garage.
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This decision is issued in accordance with Section 56(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and supersedes the decision issued on 18 October 2024.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of two storey rear extension to provide additional living accommodation and single storey side extension to form garage at 33 Fern Grove, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, BS32 8DS in accordance with the terms of the application Ref P24/01439/HH, subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule to this decision.

Preliminary matters

2. My inspection was arranged as unaccompanied, but when I arrived at the site the roof was scaffolded, shrouded in plastic, and building works were taking place. The temporary cover did not allow a full view of the rear from outside the site. However, the appellant was at home, and I was allowed access to the rear garden.
3. From there I could see that a dormer roof extension was being formed – this is not shown on the plans subject of appeal. However, at my request, copies of the dormer plans were provided following my visit. These were the subject of a successful application for a lawful use certificate granted by the Council¹.

Main issues

4. The main issues are: (a) the effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings, and (b) whether living conditions for future residents of the property would prove acceptable.

¹ Ref P/24/01438/CLP dated 7 August 2024

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal property is the southernmost of a small terrace of dwellings at the end of a short cul-de-sac within a large and relatively modern residential estate. The dwelling projects forward of the other dwellings in the terrace. It has a small open area to the side upon which a garage is proposed. This would take the form of a lean-to with a mono-pitch roof. It would taper from front to rear reflecting the shape of the wedged-shaped land on which it would be built. The Council, having regard to the advice contained in its SPD², considers that the front of the garage would be too wide when compared with the width of the host property, and that the garage's shape is such that it would appear as a contrived addition harmful to the street scene.
6. The Council acknowledges that views of the garage from within Fern Grove would be limited. I agree with this; moreover, the perceived width of the garage at the front would be influenced by the width of the terrace as a whole, and would not appear disproportionate. From the highway in the adjoining cul-de-sac, Penrose Drive, the garage would be seen in profile set against the appeal property's gabled side elevation. However, much of it would be screened by the fence and planting which separates the two culs-de-sac. In my view, it would not have a deleterious impact on the street scene in either cul-de-sac.
7. The extant ground floor conservatory would be demolished, and the proposed two storey extension would be largely set on its footprint. I share the Council's view that the proposed extension would appear subservient to the dwelling as a whole. As to the shallowness of its roof, commented upon by the Council, it seems to me that this takes account of the shape of the dormer being built above. The extension and dormer would be viewed in profile when seen from the adjacent cul-de-sac, and its visual impact would prove acceptable, particularly in view of the Council's comments on subservience. Otherwise, the development would largely be screened from views in the public realm by extant development. Residents in surrounding properties to the side and rear would see the extension, but what they would see is an acceptable form of development – and none have objected to the proposals.
8. I conclude that the proposed development would fit harmoniously into its visual context without harming the character and appearance of the host property or its surroundings. Accordingly, no conflict arises with those provisions of policies CS1 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Core Strategy (December 2013) and PSP1 & PSP38 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Policies, Sites and Places Plan (November 2017) (LP) directed to promote and encourage high quality design generally, and specifically in residential extensions.

Living conditions

9. The Council is satisfied, as am I, that the proposals if built would not harm neighbouring residential living conditions. It is also satisfied that the reduction

² Householder Design Guide - Supplementary Planning Document 2021

in external amenity space would not warrant the refusal of planning permission.

10. The Council's concerns centre on the living conditions of the current and future residents of the appeal property with specific reference to 2 bedrooms. Judging from the plans, including those for the dormer, the smallest of the extant bedrooms would be used as the access to a larger bedroom facilitated by the extension, and to accommodate a staircase providing access to the dormer being constructed above. Realistically, it could no longer function as a bedroom, but as a form of utility space.
11. The other bedroom of concern to the Council would be served by a replacement window set against the side wall of the proposed extension. Outlook from this bedroom would be much reduced, as would the level of daylight³. However, in my view, these disadvantages should be set against the overall benefits arising from the extensions to the improved internal quality of the dwelling as a whole. In this respect the new rear bedroom on the first floor of the extension and the accommodation in the roof would introduce a greater level of internal space, and both rooms would enjoy excellent levels of daylight and outlook. It should also be borne in mind that the window serving the bedroom of concern would receive direct sunlight for much of the day.
12. On balance, I conclude that the current and future residents of the dwelling would not suffer an unacceptable reduction in their overall living conditions as a result of the proposed extensions, and nor do I consider the proposal as an overdevelopment, as suggested by the Council. Accordingly, I find no material conflict with the provisions of LP policies PSP8 & PSP38 directed to protecting residential amenity.

Conditions

13. In the interests of visual amenity, I shall impose the Council's suggested condition in respect of external materials.
14. It is also necessary, in the interests of certainty, that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

Other matters

15. All other matters referred to in the representations have been taken into consideration, including the views of the Bradley Stoke Town Council. 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

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1). The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.

³ Taking account of the SPD's guidance.

- 2). The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Ref D01 to D08 inclusive.
- 3). The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing dwelling.