



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 October 2024

by Rebecca McAndrew, BA Hons, MSc, PG Dip Urban Design, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/U3935/D/24/3349902

18 Pleydell Road, Old Town, Swindon SN1 4DH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs M Garratt against the decision of Swindon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is S/HOU/24/0537/JAAB.
 - The development proposed is a hip to gable loft conversion with a flat roof box dormer to the rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council's Officer Report and Reasons for Refusal do not raise concerns regarding the proposed rear dormer roof extension. From the information before me, and observations on my site visit, I have no reason to disagree. Therefore, I have focused my attention on the matters outlined in the Reasons for Refusal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are;
 - i. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the property and area; and
 - ii. Whether an adequate level of off-road parking would be provided for the proposal.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. Taken together, Policy DE1 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (2015) (LP), the Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (2011) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the framework') seek to secure high quality development which responds to the context of the site and area.
5. The part of Pleydell Road in which the appeal property is located is characterised by a mixture of traditional detached and semi-detached homes.

The houses include a variety of roof forms. The semi-detached properties largely remain as matching pairs.

6. The appeal property is a semi-detached house which benefits from an existing hipped roof two-storey side extension. This extension responds to the original roof form of both the house and the adjoining semi-detached home. The hipped roof design also limits the overall mass of the property, ensuring that it does not unacceptably imbalance the pair of houses.
7. By contrast, the creation of a gable roof form to the appellants' home would give rise to a large bulky roof structure which would unacceptably imbalance the pair of semi-detached homes. It would not respond to the context of the host dwelling, the adjoining house and other pairs of semi-detached properties in the vicinity. As such, it would be a discordant feature.
8. I note that the existing space between the appeal dwelling and neighbouring house, No 16, would be retained and that property includes a lower level pitched roof with a side gable. As such, I accept that the proposal would not present an awkward relationship with No 16. Nonetheless, overall, the proposed roof extension would appear as unsympathetic and at odds with the character and appearance of the site and street scene.
9. In conclusion, the proposal would unduly harm the character and appearance of the site and area. Therefore, it conflicts with LP Policy HE1 and Section 12 of the framework.

Parking

10. The proposed extension would increase the number of bedrooms in the property from three to four. The Swindon Borough Council Parking Standards 2021 document confirms that 3 off-road parking spaces are required to service dwellings with over 4 bedrooms in this area. The appeal property does not currently benefit from any off-road parking and therefore residents of the house rely on on-street parking. On my site visit I observed that Pleydell Road experiences a good level of on-street parking.
11. No information has been submitted to demonstrate that off-road parking could be provided as part of the development. The appeal site is at a significantly higher ground level than the highway and therefore, if it were possible to provide off-road parking, it would inevitably involve significant ground works. In the absence of information or details to confirm otherwise, it must be assumed that the scheme would not be able to provide sufficient off-street parking that accords with technical requirements. The additional parking space requirement would inevitably be met by on street parking, which would be contrary to the Council's parking standards and would unduly harm highway safety.
12. There is no information before me that persuades me that relying on on-street parking, in a location where there is already a good level of on-street parking near to the site, provides sufficient justification for the requirement not to be met in this case
13. I recognise that the appellants' household owns only one motor vehicle. I also acknowledge that whilst the proposed scheme would include a new bedroom in the roof space, an existing bedroom would be used as a home office. However, there would be no control over the number of vehicles the appellants or any

future residents would own in times to come or how they would choose to use the upstairs rooms. Therefore, these matters warrant only limited weight and do not lead me to a different view in this case.

14. In conclusion, the appeal proposal would result in harm to highway safety contrary to LP Policy TR2, which requires development to provide parking provision in accordance with the Council's adopted parking standards.

Other Matters

15. I have considered the appellants' reasons for not wanting to retain the existing hipped roof as part of their loft conversion. I note it would render the proposed stair location unfeasible, alternative locations for the stairs would be awkward and the reduced level of accommodation would impact the economics of the scheme. The appellants also state the proposal is only slightly larger than what could be constructed under permitted development. Nonetheless, I have found that, due to its significant scale and mass, the scheme would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the pair of semis and the area. Therefore, none of these matters are adequate justification for the appeal proposals.
16. I have reviewed a number of examples of nearby pairs of semi-detached houses which have been identified by the appellants in support of their proposals. All of these cases vary in circumstances to the appeal scheme. A single storey side extension to No 32 and a two-storey side extension to No 38 Pleydell Road are both small in scale in comparison to the host dwellings and their original hipped roofs remain intact. No 44 includes a two-storey side extension which is set down below the ridge height of the host dwelling. In view of this, unlike the appeal scheme, these extensions do not unacceptably imbalance those pairs of semi-detached houses. Also, each proposal must be considered on its own merits. I have therefore attached limited weight to these examples in considering this appeal.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Rebecca McAndrew

INSPECTOR