



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 January 2020

by B Davies MSc FGS CGeol

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/L3245/D/19/3240051

Violet House, Whitehouse Lane, Bomere Heath, Shrewsbury, SY4 3PF

- 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 Ms K Short against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref 19/03887/FUL, dated 30 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 10 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is a 'two storey rear extension, two storey side extension with balcony and single storey side extension'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposals are described variously as 'erection of two storey extension to include balcony to western elevation' and 'erection of two storey extension', neither of which I consider capture the full extent of the application. I have therefore amended them in the description above to fully reflect the proposed development.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host house and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a three-bedroom detached house in a large plot of land on the edge of Bomere Heath village. It faces school fields and is surrounded on the other three sides by large, modern housing estates. The host house is noticeably older than the surrounding development and displays some thoughtful architectural features, such as curved eaves and corbelled kneelers, and in my opinion contributes positively to local character and appearance. Although largely unaltered from its original state, it has previously been extended with a full-length dormer along one side of the house. It is prominently situated at a high point and at a road junction, although partly screened by fences, high hedges and mature vegetation.
5. The proposed external changes would subsume the original building. I note that the Parish Council has no objections to the design and style of the extension, and I agree with all parties that replacement of the large dormer would be beneficial to the appearance of the house. However, these factors do

not overcome the harm to the host house from the loss of attractive architectural features and overall character, contrary to Policy CS17 of the LDF¹, which requires that development should protect and enhance high quality and local character in the built environment.

6. Given large-scale modern development of the surrounding land, I attribute significant weight to the character that this older, architecturally distinctive house contributes to the area. In not protecting or reflecting architectural features of the original house, I consider the proposals conflict with both policy CS6 of the LDF and Part 3 of Policy MD2 of the SAMDev², which require that local context and character be taken into account when protecting the built environment.
7. The proposal would result in a footprint two and a half times bigger than the host house. The Council have advised the appellant that an extension of no more than 70% is 'a useful guide' to remaining subservient, but there is no policy basis for this, so I can only give it limited weight. Guidance in the 'Type and Affordability of Housing Supplementary Planning Document' (SPD), states that consideration should be given to the visual impact of large buildings and creation of excessively large properties should be avoided. Policies CS6 and MD2 together require development be appropriate in scale, taking in local context. Whilst the scale of the proposals is clearly not sympathetic to the original building, when viewed in the context of the substantial plot size and the large modern houses on two sides of the property, the proposals are not harmfully large. I therefore do not find that the scale of proposals conflicts with the LDF.
8. Nonetheless, the loss of original and attractive features from the host property which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area is contrary to local plan policies which seek to protect local character.

Other Matters

9. I have noted the recent appeal decision³, which was drawn to my attention by the Appellant. The Inspector makes clear that harm to character is lessened because the existing building does not bear much resemblance to its origins, which is not the case here.
10. I recognise that a modernised house should result in a more energy efficient building and that this is an aspiration of the SPD. However, given that this is a single house, the contribution to sustainability would be limited and not sufficient to overcome the harm identified above.

Conclusions

11. For these reasons, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

B Davies

INSPECTOR

¹ Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy (2011)

² Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan (2015)

³ APP/L3245/D/19/3226633 (September 2019)