



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 November 2011

by David Richards BSocSci DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 12 December 2011

Appeal Ref: APP/D1780/D/11/2162765
36 Abbots Way, Southampton, SO17 1NS

- 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 Dr Amir Jamill against the decision of Southampton City Council.
 - The application Ref 11/01057/FULL, dated 6 June 2011, was refused by notice dated 7 September 2011.
 - The development proposed is single storey rear extension and raising of existing garage roof to include additions of 3 dormer windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the Portswood Residents' Gardens Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The Council's reasons for refusal do not raise any objection to the proposed single storey conservatory extension. While it was suggested by others that the extended footprint including the conservatory would be out of character with other dwellings area, I consider that this element of the proposal, which would not be visible in public views, would not significantly affect the setting of the building in the conservation area, or its relationship with other buildings. While it would involve an increase in plot ratio, a substantial area of garden would be retained, and I do not consider that the size of the resulting dwelling would be disproportionate to the plot. I therefore conclude that it would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.
4. The element of the proposal which resulted in the application being refused by the Council concerns the raising of the garage roof by some 1.09 metres, to accommodate a gymnasium above the garage, and the construction of three dormer windows facing over the rear garden of the property.
5. The appeal building occupies a prominent location on the corner of Abbots Way and Highfield Lane. While it has been extended in the past it is an attractive and well-proportioned dwelling which retains many characteristic design details of the period and adheres to the Garden City principles which inspired the original development. In particular the prominent gables and decorative

timbering contribute characteristic visual interest to the appearance of the conservation area.

6. I accept that the garage as it stands is not an original feature of the estate. However it is at present a clearly subordinate building which allows the gable at the rear of the dwelling to be viewed above the ridge of the garage from the public domain. The walls of the dwelling are visible below the overhanging eaves of the gable at the rear, which allow the form of the building to be read more clearly. To my mind raising the ridge of the garage as proposed would obscure views of these gables and unacceptably alter the relationship between the garage and the dwelling itself, resulting in a distinct loss of visual interest in this part of the conservation area. The inclusion of dormers would result in the loss of the simple characteristic pitched roof form and give it an unbalanced appearance. The design would conflict with the advice in Policy PRG8 of the Conservation Area Appraisal which states that garages should relate to the character, height, scale and position of the associated house. It would also conflict with the relevant policies of the Southampton Core Strategy and the City of Southampton Local Policy Review which require a high standard of design and seek to ensure that development in conservation areas preserves or enhances their character or appearance.
7. I acknowledge that the appeal site lies at the edge of the Conservation Area, and it is close to the busy commercial area of Portswood Road. Some of the development immediately opposite on Highfield Lane is of a more mixed character. However the appeal site itself is wholly within the conservation area and makes a distinctive contribution to it. The dwelling and outbuildings are important features marking the associated change of character. As such the appeal site is an integral part of the conservation area and the proposals should be judged accordingly. For the reasons given I consider that the raising of the ridge would be harmful to views into the conservation area from Highfield Lane, and fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.
8. I have taken into account the appellant's requirements for additional space, but such personal matters do not outweigh the more general planning considerations which have led me to the conclusion that the appeal should be dismissed.
9. Although I consider the conservatory would be acceptable, it is not clear that it would be severable from the other elements of the proposal and accordingly I do not consider that it would be appropriate to issue a split decision in this instance.

David Richards

INSPECTOR