2021/1705
Mr Scott Keen

First floor side extension including new roof with an increased roof ridge height compared with the existing dwelling and changes to the window arrangements including replacement and new windows to the front, rear and side

5 Willow Bank, Barnsley, S75 1BN

Site Location & Description

The application site is in relation to a detached residential property located on Willow Bank in Barnsley. The property is set back from the road by 16m and is part two-storey and part-single storey, with the two-storey part having a distinctive sloped lean-to roof leading up to an apex with a flat roofed dormer at the top of the slope. The dwelling is constructed from natural coursed stone with white UPVC cladding to the frontage with the dormer has also been constructed from white UPVC cladding. The property has 2 accesses which allows for an 'in-and-out' driveway leading to a hard surfaced parking area to the front of the dwelling and the integral garage which is underneath the two-storey part of the dwelling. There is screening to the front with numerous scattered trees and vegetation on the front boundary line. To the side and rear of the house is a grassed garden.

Willow Bank is an entirely residential street, with a fairly significant slope from South to North with the site itself having an approximate 2m level difference from South to North which is reflected on the elevation drawings. The property is also slightly raised over the street with a slope down from the frontage (West) to East. Willow Bank is comprised entirely of detached and individually designed properties with a variety of dwelling type, structure, sizes and external materials. Some properties have undergone significant extensions fairly recently, most notably towards the Northern end of Willow Bank on the corner with Devonshire Drive. Whilst most neighbouring properties are fairly large builds, the immediate property to the North is a single storey bungalow.






Background

There is planning history on the site in the Northern side garden of the host property for the erection of a detached dwellinghouse with associated access – application references 2013/0757, 2016/0128 and 2018/1543. The latest approval of which was granted on 27th February 2019 with a 3-year time period which meant that the decision expired on 28th February 2022.

Proposed Development

The applicant is seeking approval for a first-floor side extension including a new roof design with an increased roof ridge height, as well as various other domestic alterations to the dwelling including replacement windows. The roof ridge will effectively be increased by 0.7m to a maximum of 9.5m measured from the lowest ground floor level on the frontage, as well as being re-positioned slightly further North by 2m. The Northern-facing side elevation eaves height being increased from 2.3m to 5m from ground floor level.

The extension has been scaled back from the original permission to show a reduction in the height of both the eaves on the Northern-facing side elevation to 5m and the roof ridge height to a maximum of 9.5m as measured from the lowest ground level on the frontage. This is compared with the original submission which showed a roof ridge height of 11m measured from the same ground floor point. Equally, the eaves height has substantially reduced from 6.5m to 5m when measured from the ground floor level adjacent to the North-facing side elevation.

The development also contains internal alterations which do not require planning permission themselves such as changing the integral garage into a living room. However, there are some other associated external alterations such as replacement windows and the blocking up of existing windows with stonework. Specifically, the minor external alterations can be broken up into the following:

1. Removal of the existing first floor window on the front elevation and replacement with a larger, four-panelled window serving bedroom 1,
2. Removal of the garage door on the ground floor front elevation and replacement with a four-panelled window serving the lounge,
3. Removal of the existing ground floor window serving the hallway and blocking up with natural coursed stone to match the existing,
4. Removal of 2 x windows on the ground floor side elevation (Northern facing) and blocking up with natural coursed stone to match the existing.

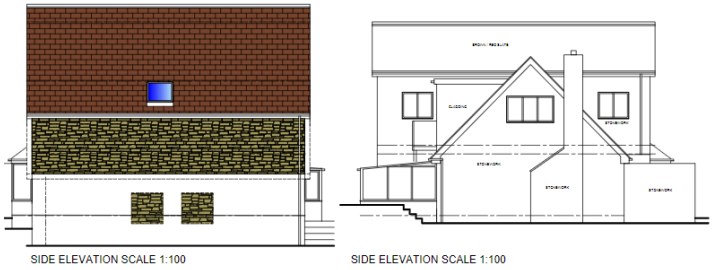
Original submission elevations:





Amended elevations:





Planning History

B/88/0840/BA – Erection of detached dwelling (Historic)

B/98/0037/BA/TF – Crown lift and dead wood Sycamore, Acer and Beech trees and fell sycamore within Tree Preservation Order (Historic)

2013/0757 – Erection of detached dwelling (Approved with Conditions)

2016/0128 – Erection of 1 no. detached dwelling (Approved with Conditions)

2018/1543 – Erection of two storey dwellinghouse and associated access and landscaping (Approved with conditions)

Policy Context

Planning decision should be made in accordance with the local plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The Council has also adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, which are other material considerations.

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In respect of this application, relevant policies include:

Section 12: Achieving well designed places - The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

Within section 12, paragraph 130 is the most relevant which indicates that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Local Plan

The new Local Plan was adopted at the full Council meeting held 3th January 2019 after it was found to be sound by the appointed Planning Inspector following the examination process. This means that it now takes on full weight for decision making process in planning law terms as the development plan for the Borough, superseding the remaining saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (adopted in the year 2000) and the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011). In reference to this application, the following policies are relevant:

Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development – sets out principles when considering development proposals.

Policy GD1: General Development – sets out appropriate proposals for development.

Policy D1: High quality design and place making – sets overarching design principles for the borough to ensure that development is appropriate to its context, and improves what needs improving, whilst protecting what is good about what we have.

Policy T4: New Development and Highway Improvement - New development will be expected to be designed and built to provide all transport users within and surrounding the development with safe, secure and convenient access and movement.

SPD: House extensions and Other Domestic Alterations

Supplementary Planning Document - House Extensions sets out the design principles that specifically apply to the consideration of planning applications for house extensions, roof alterations, outbuildings & other domestic alterations. The general principles are that proposals for should:

1. be of a scale and design which harmonises with the existing building
2. not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties
3. maintain the character of the street scene and
4. not interfere with highway safety.

These policies are considered to reflect the 4th Core Principle in the NPPF, which relates to high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Consultations

None

Representations

Neighbour notification letters were sent to neighbouring residents; no comments were received.

Assessment

Principle of development

The site falls within the urban fabric which has no specific land allocation, however the site and immediate surrounding area is made up principally of housing. Extensions, alterations to residential properties and the erection of domestic outbuildings are considered acceptable in these areas where they do not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of surrounding residents, visual amenity or on highway safety.

Residential Amenity

The dwelling is situated directly to the South of the neighbouring property at no. 9 Willow Bank (there is no property addressed as no. 7 in between), the dwelling is already larger than this neighbouring bungalow in terms of height and scale. The extensions and alterations do not extend the footprint of the dwelling, and the separation distance between the dwelling and no. 9, or any other property, is not being reduced. The extension to the property is a first-floor side extension on top of the single storey section of the dwelling which currently contains an integral garage.

It is appreciated that the proposed development will result in a larger than average residential property which is slightly accentuated by the fact that Willow Bank has a significant South to North slope with the Northern part of the site being around 2m below the Southern part. This is reflected in the proposed build as the Northern facing elevation has a larger eaves and roof ridge height than the Southern-facing elevation of the two-storey part. Effectively, the Northern part of the dwelling elevation is built on a slight platform which adds approximately 0.75m to both the eaves and roof ridge height. Further, the front of the dwelling has a slope downwards (West to East) onto the road which accentuates the tall/large nature of the dwelling in the street. The LPA initially raised concerns with the increased massing, height and scale to the dwelling which originally featured a very high roof ridge height of 11m as measured from the lowest ground level on the frontage. Equally, the original eaves height on the northern-side of the frontage and northern-facing side elevation was proposed at 6.6m. Both of these heights are generally considered excessive for two storey domestic properties and were requested to be reduced to a height which was more appropriate. The amended scheme shows a significantly reduced roof height to 9.5m and re-configured roof design which maintained the existing/original more shallow roof slope with the roof ridge further away from the nearest neighbour to the North (no. 9) than the original submission.

The footprint of the dwelling is not being increased and a separation distance of 12m to the Northern side boundary line and 14m to the side elevation of the neighbouring property at no.9 Willow Bank. The amended scheme slightly re-positions the roof ridge to the South which maintains a separation distance of approximately 21m from the amended roof ridge and the side elevation of no. 9. All of these distances are considered to be fairly significant and will result in any overshadowing impact occurring on the side garden of the applicant's property rather than the neighbouring property at no.9. The existing dormer located on the side roof slope is being removed and replaced by a single window serving an en-suite bathroom. This will be conditioned to ensure that it is obscure glazed and it is not considered

that any significant overlooking impact will occur on no.9. The proposed windows on the rear elevation are located around 20m from the rear boundary line which is double the recommended distance in the SPD, and do not face directly onto neighbouring properties. None of the other windows, such as the ground floor window for the lounge or the enlarged window for bedroom 1 have any direct overlooking impact on neighbouring properties given the large separation distances.

On balance, whilst the existing dwelling is already fairly large and Willow Bank is sloping, from South to West which results in the dwelling at a higher ground than both the street itself and the neighbourign property, the proposal has been significantly reduced in scale and retains the existing footprint. The property is set to the South of the neighbouring property (no. 9) but there is a significant separation distance from the new proposed roof ridge and the Northern-facing side elevation, which will result in the main overshadowing impact occurring onto the applicant's side garden. The proposed development is not considered to have any significant detrimental impact on the residential amenity enjoyed by any neighbouring property and is considered to be acceptable in terms of residential amenity.

Visual Amenity

The existing dwelling is fairly large and will be increased in scale and massing through the proposed development which seeks to erect a first floor side extension which effectively increases the roof ridge hight and the Northern-facing Eaves. Willow Bank features a significant South to North slope and the front the property is also slightly higher than the road itself. This accentuates the building appearing large and places a further limitation on any proposed development on the plot. The initial scheme sought to increase the roof ridge and eaves height to levels which were considered to be very excessive which would have resulted in a large and bulky dwelling and would have disrupted the stepped relationship of this section of Willow Bank. Alterations to the scheme were therefore requested to ensure that the original design characteristics of the dwelling were retained and the impact on the street scene was in compliance with Local Policy. Generally, the SPD speaks to ensure that domestic extensions and alterations are sympathetic and retain the original character of the dwelling. Ultimately, it was felt that the original submission did not do this which was accentuated by the fact that the roof design was being significantly changed, as well as the increase massing and scale.

Willow Bank, whilst it is entirely residential, is very diverse in terms of dwelling type, structures, sizes and external materials. All of the properties are individually-designed and there is not a uniform street scene which would be interrupted by the proposed development. The amended scheme has been significantly reduced from the original submission, reducing the roof ridge from the highest height of 11m to 9.5m, with the Northern facing eaves height being dropped from 6.6m to 5m. The amendment also largely retains the original roof style/pitch which has a distinctive 1970s-style sloping roof, albeit the dormer on the side is being removed. The alterations generally help to retain the original design characteristics of the dwelling despite the increase to the general massing and size of the property. The amended eaves and roof ridge height are still considered to be fairly large for a domestic property but these are increased due to the natural slope of the ground which is already evident on site with the ground floor level of the Northern-facing side elevation already being 0.75m lower than the Southern side of the dwelling. This, alongside the front of the property being at a higher level than the street itself, exacerbates the increased height. That being said, the amended scheme is considered to be a significant improvement on the original submission and is now at a height which is more in lien with what is usually expected for two storey domestic properties – despite being on the larger side. It is felt that, despite the fairly large addition to the property, the amended changes largely retain the original character of the dwelling retaining its shape and general appearance.

The originally submitted wraparound window on the ground floor serving the living room would have been an uncharacteristic addition to the dwelling which has since been removed by a standard three-panelled window, which is more typical. The development also removes the existing flat roofed dormer located on the side roof slope of the dwelling which is finished in UPVC cladding in white. Further, the UPVC cladding on the frontage will also be removed and replaced by matching stone. These smaller elements are considered a general improvement to the dwelling.

All of the external materials are to match the existing, but given the nature of the proposal, extra care was required to ensure that there was no unsightly bonding between the old and new materials. The applicant stated that the existing roof tiles on the side roof slope are to be reclaimed and re-used on the extension and a good local stone has been sourced and samples were assessed on site. The samples were compared with two different elevations on the site and were considered to be a good match and the LPA is confident that there will not be any unsightly bonding between old and new materials.

There are smaller changes the property such as replacement windows with slightly larger, and the removal of other ones to the blocked up with natural coursed stone to match the existing. These are very minor changes which would otherwise have met Permitted Development Rights.

On balance, whilst the proposed extension and alterations add more bulkiness to the property, which is already large, it is felt that the amended scheme retains the original character of the dwelling and drops the roof ridge and eaves height to levels more expected for two storey dwellings. Willow Bank is entirely residential but is very diverse in dwelling type, structure, sizes and external materials and the proposed development would not disrupt any uniform street scene. The amended scheme is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of visual amenity.

Highway safety

The existing dwelling is reached by two established accesses which form an 'in-and-out' access and lead to a hard surfaced parking in the front of the dwelling which has sufficient space for the parking of at least 2 vehicles. The garage is being removed but as mentioned, the site still has sufficient space for two off-street parking spaces which is in line with the SPD for Parking. The proposed development adds an additional bedroom to the site leading to an increase from 3 bedrooms to 4, but this doesn't require additional parking space on the site with two spaces being in line with the SPD. The proposed development is in compliance with the Council's Parking SPD and Local Plan Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety and is acceptable in terms of highway safety.

Other matters

There is planning history in the side garden of the site for the erection of a two storey dwellinghouse and associated access and landscaping which is reflected in various permissions. The latest of which is application reference 2018/1543 which was granted on 27th February 2022 with the decision therefore expiring on 27th February 2022. There were concerns raised from the LPA to this background of permissions, especially given the most recent permission was extant at the time of submission of this application for the householder extension/alterations. The concerns have been covered in more detail in the above sections, but were expressed to the applicant and agent who stated that it was not the intention to go ahead with the development. The LPA had not reason to dispute this and several proactive conversations were had with both the applicant and the agent regarding this matter. However, the permission was extant and clearly the LPA had to approach carefully given the design concerns with the impact on the street scene with what the LPA

considered to be an overdevelopment of this section of Willow Bank. It is commonplace for a Legal agreement to be signed to ensure the previous permission is no longer developed. But, given that the permission was due to expire soon after the 8-week decision date, there was an easier and less time-consuming alternative by simply letting the decision go out of time but checking that no material start had been made on site. The site visit (21st February 2022) clearly showed that no start was made on the development and no discharge of conditions application was submitted to cover the outstanding information on the decision notice of 2018/1543. With all this considered, it wasn't considered necessary in this case to progress with a Legal agreement which has cost and time implications for both the applicant and the Council.

Conclusion

The application site had some planning history for the erection of a two-storey dwelling I the side garden of the existing property to the North – the latest application referenced 2018/1543 remained extant at the time of submission of the application but the application was extended to facilitate alterations to the scheme. The extended decision date (28th February) coincided with the expiration date of 2018/1543 with the latest site visit occurring on 21st February 2022, which clearly showed that there was no commencement of works for the permission. Colleagues in Building Control at BMBC were also consulted who confirmed that a Building Regulations application had not been submitted, and the relevant conditions on 2018/1543 had not been discharged. All of this evidence comes together to confirm that the application has now expired and is no longer extant.

The LPA initially raised some concerns with the original submission which proposed a large and bulky first floor side extension which significantly raised the eaves and roof ridge height of the dwelling. This presents concerns largely in terms of visual amenity as it would have resulted in a large and bulky addition to an already large dwelling, which would exacerbated by the significant slope from South to North on Willow Bank and also the fact that the front of the dwelling is raised from the street itself. There were also smaller concerns with the impact on residential amenity of the neighbouring property to the North (no. 9 Willow Bank)

An amended scheme was submitted which changed the roof design of the dwelling to retain the existing distinctive roof slope and reduced the roof ridge height from 11m to 9.5m, and the North-facing side elevation eaves height from 6.6m to 5m. The roof ridge was also slightly re-positioned to the South by 2m. The proposed heights are still considered fairly large for a two-storey domestic property, but the heights are larger partly due to the fact that the ground floor level of the site is larger to the North by around 0.75m. The reductions and change the roof design help to ensure that the dwelling retains the original design characteristics and also significantly reduces the height and massing to levels which are more appropriate. The roof ridge being re-positioned has the added benefit that it is at an even greater distance from the Northern side boundary line and the side elevation of the neighbouring property at no. 9 Willow Bank. The separation distance is significant and there are no concerns raised in terms of residential amenity to any neighbouring property.

All in all, the amended scheme is now considered acceptable and largely alleviates the LPA's initial concerns in regard to the dwelling's design characteristics not being retained and the excessive roof ridge and eaves height. The proposed development is considered acceptable and is recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Approve with conditions