CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/10602
Application Type:	Householder planning permission
Site Inspection:	24 January 2024
Consultation ends:	16 January 2024
Case officer:	Joe Leesam

Site Address:	Newlands, 3, Seend Cleeve, Seend, Melksham, SN12 6PS
Proposal:	Rear first floor sun canopy extension & two front porch extensions for the two front doors.
Recommendation:	Refuse

POLICIES

Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015):
Core Policy 51 - Landscape
Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design & Place Shaping

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
Wiltshire Design Guide

Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2030

REPRESENTATIONS

Seend Parish Council – No Objections.

Third party representations – No response received at the time of writing.

ASSESSMENT

The application relates to Newlands, 3, Seend Cleeve in Seend. It is a two-storey, detached house located on a residential street. There are other residential properties on either side of the site, to the from is Seend Cleave Road and to the rear of the property are some houses and a relatively long view into open countryside.

Proposals:
The application seeks consent for the erection of a rear first floor sun canopy extension & two front porch extensions for the two front doors.

Impact upon the amenity

- Neighbouring amenity

Due to the application's nature as a sun canopy and two front porch extensions, there is no risk of any overlooking occurring as a result of the proposed plans. The 'first floor' sun canopy is relatively large, but the host dwelling is detached and this element would be situated away from the shared boundaries. Furthermore the structure has open sides which would allow some light to pass through. As such this structure is not considered to give rise to any unacceptable impacts upon neighbouring properties in terms of overbearing effect, loss of outlook, overshadowing or loss of light.

In relation to the 'ground floor' canopy elements, these are modest in scale and are single storey in nature. These would also be sited off the shared boundary and therefore would not result in any adverse overbearing effect, loss of outlook, overshadowing or loss of light as to warrant an objection.

- Amenity of future occupants

It is noted that the proposed first floor sun canopy would have an impact upon the light provision to all the rear elevation windows on the existing dwelling. The windows serve habitable rooms in which appropriate levels of daylight is required. In this respect, the sun canopy does have the potential to adversely impact the level of light beyond the existing situation however it is considered on balance that this loss of light is not so unacceptable as to justify refusal of planning permission in this instance. Whilst overhead light would be removed from the windows (in particular at first floor level) light would still serve the windows to some element through the open sides. Noting as well the orientation of the dwelling whereby overshadowing of the area would already occur in the morning hours of the day.

In regard to the above, the proposed plans are considered acceptable on residential amenity grounds.

Scale, design and materials:

Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy outlines that 'a high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality." One of the ways in which this is supposed to be achieved is through "responding positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting." The Wiltshire Design Guide, within Appendix D outlines that "proposed extensions should be carefully considered to respect the original building and the neighbouring properties. Extensions should fit into the general street scene e.g. considering the character of the architecture, materials, scale, separation and changes in levels along the street."

Attention is first given towards the proposed 'first-floor' canopy. The proposed sun canopy is located to the rear of the property whereby it would not be prominent from the public highways to the north and south. Glimpsed views through the gaps between the dwellings would be possible,. To the west lies the open countryside which is expansive in nature, as viewed from the site visit. In this respect it is noted that the development may be visible from the Public Right of Way footpath (SEEN38).

The proposed first floor sun canopy is considerably large, and the design is not considered to be of an appropriate high standard of design. Sun canopies would normally be expected to be located over the ground floor rather than the first floor as proposed here, so the appearance is somewhat jarring. The aluminium poles proposed to hold the canopy will be very tall and the structure as whole appears disproportionate to the property. There is no set precedent for a structure of this nature within the wider locality and it would appear out of character in most residential properties due to the poor design and overbearing scale/proportions. Whilst it is acknowledged that the canopy has a somewhat 'light' appearance due to the open sides, the expansive nature of the flat roof would not be appropriately sensitive to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. The flat roof design is not considered in-keeping with the design and appearance of the existing dwelling and is considered an unacceptable design for a two storey structure. As demonstrated on the proposed plans the roofing of the canopy would also be set slightly higher than the eaves of the property which would draw unnecessary attention to the development and would not be sensitive to the dwelling.

The proposed 'porches' (ground floor canopies) to the front of the property are not considered ideal in their design but given the relatively small scale and in-fill nature of the proposed, they are not considered materially harmful to the character and appearance of the street scene. The flat roof design is not considered to give rise to demonstrable harm in this instance due to the single storey nature and noting the roofline follow the eaves of the ground floor elements (and therefore are in line with the main aims of Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide).

In light of the above assessment, officers conclude that the introduction of this first-floor sun canopy does not respond positively to the “existing townscape and landscape features” to ‘effectively integrate’ with the existing street-scene as required by part iii of CP57 of the WCS. The sun canopy is not in-keeping with the vernacular of the locality and fails to respect the general character of the dwelling and area. The canopy appears visually obtrusive and conflicts with Core Policy 57 of the WCS and Paragraph 135 of the NPPF which requires development to be “sympathetic to local character" and "are visually attractive as a result of good architecture."

RECOMMENDATION:
Refuse

Refusal Reason(s): (1)

1 The proposed first-floor sun-canopy by reason of its design, scale and height would be visually unsympathetic to the character and appearance of the application site and the host dwelling. The development would fail to achieve an acceptable level of design to the detriment of the character and appearance of the site. As such the development would be contrary to Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy which seeks to secure high standard of design in all new developments, including extensions, and alterations, which make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire by being complimentary to the locality and guidance contained within the Wiltshire

Design Guide. The development would also be contrary to Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

Informatives: (1)

2 In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in dealing with this application, the Council has worked with the applicant in the following positive and proactive manner:

- seeking amendments to the proposed development following receipt of the application.

In this instance:

- the applicant was updated of any issues after the initial site visit

In such ways, the Council has demonstrated a positive and proactive manner in seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to the planning application.