
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 October 2016

by Andrew McCormack BSc (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 2nd November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/16/3158407
40 Wentworth Avenue, Leeds LS17 7TN

- 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. T Riad against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/02304/FU, dated 9 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is first floor extension to provide en-suite and extend bedroom.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is situated within an established residential area. Nearby properties are predominantly two-storey detached and semi-detached houses. The appeal property is a two-storey detached building which is positioned on a prominent corner plot at the junction of Wentworth Avenue and St Andrew's Croft. The front elevation has a two-storey gable projection which extends to just under half the width of the property. A single-storey projection is positioned across the remaining part of the front elevation and has a mono-pitched roof. The mature landscaping in the front and side gardens provides some screening of the property from the street. The appeal property is one of several similarly designed houses in the nearby area.
 4. Policy P10 of the Leeds Core Strategy (Core Strategy) states that development, including extensions, should be based on a thorough analysis of its context. It should respect and enhance existing streets and buildings according to the particular local distinctiveness and be of a size, scale and design which is appropriate to its context. Policies GP5 and BD6 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review 2016 (UDP) seek to ensure that development has regard to any guidance prepared for the area and that alterations and extensions should respect the scale, form, detailing and materials of the host building.
 5. Similarly, Policy HDG1 of the Leeds Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2012 (HDG) states that all extensions and alterations
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should respect the scale, form, proportions, character and appearance of the main building and its surrounding area with, amongst other matters, particular attention given to the roof form and roof line. It also states that such development which harms the character and appearance of the main dwelling or the locality will be resisted.

6. The existing two-storey front gable is the main feature and most prominent design element of the appeal property. The proposed extension would create a second gable within the front elevation of the property which would be of a similar but slightly larger size and scale to the existing gable. The appearance of two competing gables would create an over-dominant and out of scale addition to the property's main elevation. Furthermore, from the submitted drawings, the new gabled extension would be wider than the existing front gable and would significantly change the character and appearance of the property. As a result, it would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the immediate streetscene.
7. The appellant argues that the proposal would be in scale with and compliment the architectural style of the host dwelling and would be part of the character of the area which has been undertaken on several properties nearby. However, the proposed extension would result in a prominent addition which would be higher and wider than the existing front gable. It would appear out of scale with the existing property and would dominate and unbalance the appearance of the property from the streetscene.
8. With regard to the appellant's statement that similar developments to the proposal are part of the character of the area and are being undertaken on properties on the estate, there is no evidence before me to support this view. From the site visit, I saw several similar properties to the appeal property where the original design has remained intact. The continuity and consistency of the design within the locality resulting from these properties provides a distinctive character and appearance to the area which would be harmed by the proposed extension.
9. It is stated that the proposed extension would be subservient to the original property as the ridge height of the proposal would be lower than the main roof ridge of the original property. Whilst this would be the case, the size, scale and massing of the proposal would not result in a subservient extension. The proposed extension's roof ridge height would be higher than that of the existing two-storey gable projection to the front of the property. Furthermore, the proposal would not be set back from the existing front gable and it would be wider than it, covering more than half of the front elevation of the property. As a result, the proposal would not be a subservient addition to the host property.
10. Whilst the footprint of the original property would not be altered, the overall size, scale and massing of the extension would create an over-dominant and unbalanced appearance to the building which would diminish the existing features of the property. Furthermore, the mature landscaping at the property would provide some screening of the host building and the proposed extension when viewed from the southwest and west on Wentworth Avenue. However, when viewed from the east and south east, the landscaping would not conceal the host building or the proposal which would be positioned on the visible and prominent southeast corner of the property.

11. Given the size, scale and position of the proposed extension, I conclude that it would be an over-dominant addition to the existing property which would significantly harm the character and architectural style of the existing building. Furthermore, despite the mature landscaping and potential part screening of the proposal from the public highway, it would be a prominent and visible development which would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the locality and would result in material harm being caused to the immediate streetscene.
12. The appellant's reasons for the proposed extension which relate to the need for more internal space and improving the living conditions of the occupiers of the property. Whilst I appreciate the importance of such matters to those concerned, having considered the effect of the proposal on its surroundings and against the relevant policies and guidance, I find that these benefits would not outweigh the harm I have identified.
13. No objections to the proposed extension were made. However, this does not necessarily mean that the proposal would be acceptable in policy terms. Accordingly, I have undertaken an assessment of the appeal proposal against the relevant policies and guidance before me and have determined it within its own context and on its own merits.
14. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would have a materially harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the immediate streetscene. As a result, it would be contrary to Policy P10 of the Core Strategy, saved Policies GP5 and BD6 of the UDP, Policy HDG1 of the HDG and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

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

Andrew McCormack

INSPECTOR