
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 October 2016

by D Boffin BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI Dip Bldg Cons (RICS) IHBC

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

Decision date: 17 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4625/D/16/3156176

16 Wellsford Avenue, Solihull, West Midlands B92 8HA

- 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 Mr John Beck against the decision of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref PL/2016/00736/MINFHO, dated 16 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 2 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Councils' decision notice and Officer Report refer to the House Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document but I have not been provided with a copy of this document and as such I give it limited weight.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property comprises one of a pair of semi-detached houses located within a residential area. The dwelling is sited at a corner of Wellsford Avenue and it is aligned to face the corner rather than Wellsford Avenue directly. There are a number of instances in the immediate vicinity where the dwellings are aligned in a similar way at road junctions/corners. As such the dwellings at these road junctions are a prominent feature of the Wellsford Avenue street scene.
 5. The proposal would involve the demolition of the existing single storey garage and it would introduce a 2-storey side extension that would extend close to the boundary with 18 Wellsford Avenue (No 18). The extension would be in line with the front and rear elevations of 16 Wellsford Avenue (No 16) but it would 'turn the corner' and as a result part of it would be in line with the No 18. There would be a slight set down from the existing ridge height. I acknowledge that the host property has been extended in the past and as such its roof design does not exactly match that of similar properties on Wellsford Avenue.
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6. However, the combination of the substantial width and distinctive kink of the proposal would mean that it would not be subservient to the host dwelling despite the use of sympathetic materials and general architectural style. The overall proposal would add significant bulk and massing to the original dwelling. These factors would result in a disproportionate and incongruous development that would not be subordinate or sympathetic to the size and scale of the original dwelling and would unbalance the pair of semi-detached houses. Whilst reasonably localised in its extent, the effect of the scheme would be to diminish unacceptably the character and appearance of the host building with consequent harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
7. I have taken into account the examples of development pointed out to me by the appellant including a 2-storey side extension at 6 Wellsford Avenue. This, however, is an isolated example which does not reflect the general character of the area and served to confirm that such extensions result in disproportionate and incongruous development. Moreover, I do not have full details of the circumstances of those cases or the policies that applied at the time of their consideration. In any case, I am required to determine the appeal on its own merits.
8. I note the appellant's desire to not extend the dwelling above 2-storeys due to his age. However, these personal circumstances are not sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified.
9. In conclusion, the proposal would have a significantly harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. As such it would conflict with Policy P15 of the Solihull Local Plan which, amongst other things, requires development to achieve good quality design that conserves and enhances local character, distinctiveness and streetscape quality.
10. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D. Boffin

INSPECTOR