
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 April 2017

by Graeme Robbie BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/D/17/3168885

40 Askam Avenue, Pontefract, Yorkshire WF8 2PN

- 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 Miss Sandra Lockwood against the decision of City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/03007/FUL, dated 20 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 31 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is a single storey extension to front and side.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have adopted the description of development given on the Council's decision notice and subsequently adopted in the appellant's appeal submission as it more accurately and fully describes the proposed extension.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area in which it is located.

Reasons

4. Although outwardly similar in scale and form, the houses on the western and northern sides of Askam Avenue differ in detail from those on the eastern side of the street (which includes the appeal property). Whereas the former feature relatively simple ground floor bays and canopies with lean-to roofs over, those properties on the eastern side of the street feature curved, two storey bay windows that are a defining and distinctive feature of the houses on the this side of the street. This sense of rhythm is complemented by the regular spacing between properties, the repetition and uniformity of roof slopes and the small, simple, unfussy canopies above front doors.
 5. Where properties have been extended, I observed these extensions to be, on the whole, relatively discretely located at the sides of the properties, set behind or level with the front of the host property. Whilst there is the occasional example of a more substantial forward projecting extension or porch, these are the exception rather than the rule, and do not otherwise detract from the defining characteristics of the street identified above.
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6. The appeal property is located towards the northern-most corner of Askam Avenue on the outside of a corner where the road turns sharply. It has been added to previously at the side with an attached garage that extends some distance to the rear of the property along the boundary with No. 42. Despite its large footprint area, as it is set back behind the front corner of the main house I find that the garage has a relatively discrete, unobtrusive presence at the side of the house and within the wider street scene.
7. The appellant states that the proposed extension would remove '*the eyesore of the current garage*'. I disagree. The proposed porch would project significantly further forward than the existing curved bay window, whilst there would also be an awkward kink between the porch and the garage extension that would add to the ground floor bulk and massing of the proposed extension. Although both the porch and garage elements of the extension would incorporate a front-facing lean-to roof, the asymmetric gable wall facing towards No. 42 would fail to reflect the prevailing hipped roof form of the main house, and those surrounding it.
8. Whilst the proposed development would be small in absolute terms, it would nonetheless be located at the front of the property where it would be highly visible from public view in both directions along Askam Avenue. The forward projection of the extension, the awkward articulation between porch and garage, the conflicting roof profiles and the resulting angular appearance of the extension would result in a discordant and jarring form of development. This would, I find, dominate the front of the host property. It would also overpower the distinctive curved two storey bay and the otherwise simple form of the host property, disrupting the balance of the host dwelling and the adjoining dwelling and eroding the rhythm evident within Askam Avenue.
9. Thus, for the reasons set out, I conclude that this would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property, and would disrupt the rhythm evident along the eastern side of Askam Avenue, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such, the proposal would conflict with policy CS10 of the Wakefield Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy (CS) and policies D9 (part a) and D10 (part d) of the Wakefield LDF Development Policies Document (DPD). Together, these policies recognise the importance of good design and seek to ensure that all new developments are of a high quality design that are appropriate to, and respect the character and appearance of the locality and are not discordant with the style of the host property. The proposal would also be at odds with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks high quality design as one of its core planning principles.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out, and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graeme Robbie

INSPECTOR