
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 May 2017

by David Cross BA (Hons), PGDip, MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P4415/D/17/3169870

23 Renway Road, Broom, Rotherham S60 3EU

- 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 Kamran Afzal against the decision of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref RB2016/1678, dated 8 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 6 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is double and single storey side extension with cellar and detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is one of a pair of semi-detached dwellings. Although there is a single storey garage to the side of the neighbouring property of 25 Renway Road, this garage is subservient to the host dwelling and I saw that these semi-detached dwellings have retained their symmetrical appearance. The dwellings face onto a landscaped area adjacent to Renway Road and, due to this arrangement, it is the side of the appeal property and its large garden which face onto the main thoroughfare.
 4. The Council's Householder Design Guide 2014 (HDG) states that two-storey side extensions should step back at first floor level on the front elevation with the roof set down and back from the main body of the house. It also states that any such extension should not exceed more than half of the width of the original house. This is to create a subservient extension and to prevent it unbalancing a pair of semi-detached properties.
 5. The two-storey side extension would be flush with the front wall of the house and would continue the existing ridgeline of the roof. It would also exceed half the original width of the host dwelling by approximately 1.7m. The extension would not look subordinate to the host dwelling, instead appearing as a bulky and prominent addition which would substantially unbalance the symmetry of the semi-detached pair. The two-storey bay window would add to the
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- prominence of the extension as this would replicate a feature of the main elevation of the property. Furthermore the appeal site slopes down to the west with the result that the extension would have an elevated ground floor level. This would add to the bulk and massing of the extension, further increasing its overdominant appearance in relation to the host property and its immediate neighbour.
6. The appeal site is readily visible across the landscaped area to the front of the property, particularly when approached from the south along Renway Road. The prominence of this location would increase the impact of the incongruous and overdominant appearance of the proposal.
 7. I acknowledge that the HDG states that on a gabled property (such as the appeal site) it *may* be acceptable to create a flush extension i.e. one not set back from the main body of the dwelling. However, due to the scale and design of the proposal, the extension would lead to a terracing effect which would detract from the symmetrical appearance of these semi-detached properties. I saw that there are terraces of properties in the area as well as semi-detached properties which have a wider and more horizontal emphasis. However, those that I saw have a regular and symmetrical arrangement which respects adjoining dwellings, which would be lost in the case of the appeal proposal.
 8. I acknowledge that the HDG is an advisory document. However, the advice it provides on this matter is a valid approach to avoid the harm arising from overdominant extensions. I note that the HDG has also been subject to public consultation and has been adopted by the Council. It is therefore a material consideration and I have given it commensurate weight in my determination of this appeal.
 9. In support of the appeal I have been referred to a property opposite the appeal site which has a two-storey extension to the side which is flush with the front wall and continues the ridge line of the dwelling. The appellant has also referred to a property on the corner of Broom Lane and Spinneyfield which has a two-storey extension to the side. However I do not have full details of the circumstances that led to these developments being accepted and so cannot be sure that they represent a direct parallel to the appeal proposal. In any event, the properties I saw served to confirm that such significant extensions can have an overdominant effect on the host dwelling and its symmetrical relationship with its immediate neighbour, to the detriment of the character and appearance of both properties.
 10. My attention has also been drawn to an Appeal Decision¹ which granted planning permission for a 2-storey extension to the side of a semi-detached dwelling. However, I note that the extension had a lower ridgeline than the main dwelling and would be set back at first floor level. Accordingly, the circumstances of that appeal are not directly comparable with the proposal before me. In any case I have determined the appeal on its own merits.
 11. I therefore conclude that the proposal will harm the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area. The proposal would therefore conflict with policy CS28 of the Rotherham Local Plan 2014 which requires well-designed buildings which are responsive to their context. The proposal would

¹ Appeal Ref: APP/P4415/D/16/3152574

also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework with regards to securing high quality design. The proposal would also conflict with the advice of the HDG which states that the size and design of extensions should be subsidiary to the existing dwelling and should not unbalance semi-detached properties.

12. I am mindful of the personal circumstances cited by the appellant, particularly in relation to the need to accommodate his family. However, this matter does not outweigh the harm I have identified above.
13. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Cross

INSPECTOR