
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 July 2017

by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 4 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/D/17/3178092

8 Mount Crescent, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 8QG

- 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 Ms Sadia Azim against the decision of City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00345/FUL, dated 6 February 2017, was permitted in part and refused in part by notice dated 25 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is single storey extension to the front and single storey extension to the rear.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The application to which this appeal relates was for a single storey extension to both the front and a single storey extension to the rear of the property. The Council issued a split decision allowing the rear extension. This appeal therefore concerns the refused part of that decision, that is, the proposed extension to the front. I have determined the appeal on that basis.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are:
 1. The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 6 Mount Crescent with particular regard to light and outlook.
 2. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the pair of semi-detached houses and the surrounding area.

Reasons

Living conditions

4. 8 Mount Crescent is a semi-detached property situated in a well-established residential area. The pair of properties is symmetrically designed with a two-storey projecting element to either end. No 8 has a porch. The pair occupies a prominent corner position at the junction of Mount Crescent and Milnes Avenue and is set at an angle to the junction.
5. The proposed extension would replace the existing porch and would occupy the space between the projecting element and the common boundary with No 6. It

would have a height of some 3.2m and would project the same distance as the gable, around 2.5m. The extension would be constructed in materials to match the existing dwelling and would have a hipped roof.

6. The neighbouring property No 6, has a living room window positioned close to the common boundary. That boundary is currently marked by planting. Outlook and light in that room is already compromised, to an extent, by the projecting gable element on the north-east side and it seems to me that the proposed extension would compound its effect. At the depth and height proposed, in such close proximity to the neighbouring window, the extension would have a solid, enclosing, appearance and as such would be overbearing. It would also make the living room gloomier, especially in the afternoon as the sun moves around.
7. Whilst I recognise that the planting may already have an effect on light in the room, the extension would be considerably higher and moreover would have a different character and appearance to the planting. I accept that it is not uncommon for boundary fences to extend to around 2m in height. However, the proposed extension would be considerably higher than that.
8. I acknowledge the appellant's point that that such extensions can be acceptable at the rear of properties and indeed the permitted rear extension would have a projection greater than 2.5m. However, extensions on front elevations are less common and it seems to me that residents expect a greater degree of openness at the front. Notwithstanding that, in this instance, the form of the building differs at the rear and the context for the development is therefore different. I have therefore considered the proposal on its own merits.
9. I therefore conclude on this issue that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the living conditions of the neighbouring residents in terms of outlook and light, contrary to Policies D9 and D10 of the Wakefield Local Development Framework Development Policies DPD which require that development should not have a significant detrimental effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents and should respect its location. Similarly the proposal would be contrary to advice in the Council's Residential Design Guide 1996 which requires development to respect the amenity of existing neighbouring uses.

Effect on character and appearance

10. The proposed extension would affect the form and symmetry of the pair and, being located in an off-centre position on the front of the dwelling would be clearly visible. As such it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the pair and have a harmful impact on the appearance of the street scene.
11. I acknowledge that the existing porch already unbalances the symmetry of the pair. However, the porch is a subservient feature that does not unduly impact on the form of the building. I recognise that the porch could be extended or replaced with a larger structure under permitted development rights. However, even if the appellant were to undertake such work as a fall-back position, that structure would still be lower and have a smaller footprint than the extension proposed.
12. Some pairs of properties in the vicinity have been altered or extended since they were originally constructed. Those examples pointed out in the appellant's appeal statement related to a different house type, with gables in the centre of

the pair and extensions to the sides. I acknowledge that there are examples where the form of the pair has been compromised. However, these did not seem to me to be good examples of development to follow.

13. I therefore conclude that for the above reasons the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the pair of properties and wider street scene, contrary to Policies D9 and D10 of the Wakefield Local Development Framework Development Policies DPD which require that development respects the character of the dwelling and its location, and the Residential Design Guide 1996 which has similar aims.
14. I acknowledge that the extension would provide additional living space for the appellant. However such benefit would not outweigh the harm I have identified to the neighbouring residents or to the character and appearance of the dwellings and surrounding area.
15. Therefore, taking into account all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

S Ashworth

INSPECTOR