
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 September 2017

by Jonathan Tudor BA (Hons), Solicitor (non-practising)

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

Decision date: 29 September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D1835/D/17/3178732
87 Astwood Road, Worcester WR3 8EP

- 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 Shiraj Miah against the decision of Worcester City Council.
 - The application Ref P17H0073, dated 3 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 5 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is porch to front and side extension and rear ground floor extension.
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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 existing property and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a two storey detached Victorian dwelling constructed of red brick with a tiled pitched roof. It has a bay window at ground floor level and decorative lintels above the door and first floor windows. It is located on a hill in a residential area and elevated well above the road with a retaining wall, steep drive and steps leading up to its front entrance.
4. Whilst is a detached property, its architectural features and materials are similar to the line of larger red brick semi-detached Victorian dwellings to the south west rising up the hill. In contrast, to its immediate north, there are two pairs of semi-detached houses from a later period, with hipped roofs and front elevations of red brick and cream render, but they are behind its building line. Therefore, whilst there are different types, ages and designs of property in the area, including detached, semi-detached and terraced houses, the appeal property is more related to and characteristic of the Victorian architecture which predominates.
5. Although set back from the road there are clear public views of the dwelling and its relationship with adjacent properties from the highway. The proposed substantial roof canopy would enclose and partially obscure the existing bay window whilst, according to the submitted plans, the existing front door with its attractive decorative arched stone lintel and fanlight would be completely enclosed by the new porch. Those existing architectural features make a positive contribution to the external appearance of the building and the bay

window, in particular, is characteristic of Victorian properties along the road. Therefore, by compromising those original features, the proposal would have an adverse effect on the host building and the area.

6. According to the Council, the front porch and canopy would extend some 2.6 metres in front of the existing façade, whilst the side extension would increase the width of the building at ground floor level by about 3.4 metres. The facades of the majority of the houses along the road appear unaltered and retain their original features. In that context, the scale, mass and design of the front porch, canopy and side extension would disturb the balance and proportions of the existing building and appear unduly prominent and incongruous in the street scene.
7. Whilst the appellant suggests that the scheme is in accord with local plan guidelines, no specific guidelines are referred to or any persuasive detailed evidence of compliance provided. The constraints and topography of the site are recognised, but they do not legitimise a design which would, for the reasons explained above, be unsympathetic to the host building and the area.
8. Overall therefore, I conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the area. It follows that it would be contrary to policy SWDP 21 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan¹, which advises that all development should be of high quality design, appropriate to the site, integrate effectively with its surroundings and complement the character of the area. It would also conflict with similar guidance within section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework.²

Other Matters

9. The rear extension element of the proposal has not been referred to in detail by either party. However, the Council advises that it gave the appellant the opportunity to consider amending the overall proposal to provide additional living accommodation to the rear, which would not be as visible from public vantage points. Although no request has been made, I have considered the possibility of issuing a split decision, with regard to the rear extension part of the proposal. However, as the roof canopy would wrap around the house and join the roof of the rear extension, I am not convinced that the relevant elements are clearly severable. Moreover, there is already a fairly sizeable existing extension to the rear. Given those factors, it would not be appropriate to issue a split decision in this case.

Conclusion

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

Jonathan Tudor

INSPECTOR

¹ Adopted February 2016

² Published March 2012