
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 October 2017

by D Guiver LLB(Hons) Solicitor

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

Decision date: 30 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/17/3180560
58 Rooms Lane, Morley, Leeds LS27 9PB

- 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 R Rodley against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref 17/03264/FU, dated 10 May 2017, was refused by notice dated 29 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side 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 host building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Rooms Lane is residential area of predominantly semi-detached properties with large gaps between each pair, although there is a row of terraced houses opposite the appeal site. The appeal site is one of a pair of semi-detached houses and sits adjacent to the entrance to Bramleigh Drive, which is a small cul-de-sac of similar properties.
4. The appeal property is a traditional style two-storey building with a hipped roof. There is a small rear garden that continues to the side of the building and joins the front garden, providing an attractive open aspect and sense of space at the appeal site. The size of gardens attached to surrounding properties varies but the sense of openness created by the predominance of semi-detached properties is an important characteristic of the area.
5. The proposed extension would be constructed on the land comprising the side garden and would occupy the majority of its area. The extension would rise to two-storeys and, at approximately five metres wide, would almost double the size of the house. The extension would have a hipped roof in common with the host building and would continue the existing ridgeline. The front elevation of the extension would sit back less than half a metre from the existing building.
6. I consider that the size of the proposed extension and the minimal setback of the front elevation would be a disproportionate addition to the existing property

- and would create a terraced appearance to the semi-detached pair. The loss of land in the side garden would reduce the open nature of the appeal site.
7. The proposal would also significantly narrow the open aspect at the entrance to Bramleigh Drive, which is already constrained by an extension to the house at 56 Rooms Lane. The loss of an open quality to both the appeal site and the entrance to Bramleigh Drive would be unduly harmful to the character of the appeal site and the surrounding area.
 8. In addition to No 56, there are a number of other properties in the area that have been extended on a scale similar to the proposed scheme, including the houses at 7 Bramleigh Drive and 62 Rooms Lane.
 9. No 7 sits close to the head of the cul-de-sac and the extension is set well back, roughly on a line with the existing roof ridge. The roof of the extension is also lower than the main roof. By reason of its location and the scale and setting of the extension, the development at No 7 is not comparable with the proposal at the appeal site and I attach little weight to it.
 10. The extensions to Nos 56 and 62 are more closely comparable with the proposal, as these properties are in close proximity to the appeal site, and No 56 also sits at the entrance to Bramleigh Drive. I therefore consider these developments to be material considerations to which I attach significant weight.
 11. The extension at No 56 has significantly impacted on the entrance to Bramleigh Drive and the surroundings more generally to an extent that is harmful to the open quality of the area. This extension has also undermined the appearance of symmetry in the properties in the area. The scheme at the appeal site would restore some symmetry to the entrance to Bramleigh Drive.
 12. However, this would be at the cost of further damaging the overall openness of the area, and the harm identified to the appeal property and the symmetry of its own semi-detached pair. I consider any positive aspects of the proposal are significantly outweighed by the harm to character and appearance that it is likely to occur.
 13. The extension at No 62 does not sit at the entrance to a cul-de-sac so is less directly comparable. The space between No 62 and the semi-detached pair including the appeal site was originally much wider than the spaces between the majority of similar semi-detached pairs. This has meant that the extension at No 62 still leaves a substantial gap between these buildings.
 14. However, despite the more limited impact on the sense of openness, I consider that the extension at No 62 has created a terraced appearance and extinguished the symmetry of its semi-detached pair. While consistency in planning decisions is an important consideration, I consider it would be significantly outweighed by the repetition of this harmful effect.
 15. Therefore, I consider that the proposed development would not be in accordance with Policy P10 of the Leeds Core Strategy 2014 and Policies GP5 and BD6 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan 2006, as informed by paragraph HDG1 of the Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2012 which together seek to ensure that developments do not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

Other Matters

16. The appellant has stated that the proposal would contribute to an improvement in the living conditions of the occupiers of the host property. Little detail is given on what this impact would be so, while this is a material consideration, it is one to which I attach limited weight. In any event, I consider that any improvement in living conditions from the proposal would be significantly outweighed by the detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, and taking into account all other matters, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D Guiver

INSPECTOR