
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 July 2019

by Karen Taylor MSC URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/C4615/D/19/3228995

8 The Houx, Amblecote DY8 4DR

- 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 P Schubert against the decision of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P19/0071, dated 15 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 March 2019.
 - 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 upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.

Reasons

3. The Houx is a residential street forming part of a wider estate characterised by a mix of semi-detached and detached two storey houses. The property forms a pair of semi-detached dwellings of similar narrow appearance in width, characterised with identical features including hipped roofs. It is facing towards the road at the end of a cul-de-sac. Despite some variation in form, the properties in the area present a discreet arrangement that appreciably contributes towards the local character.
4. The width of the proposed extension would be excessive as it would be almost the same width as the existing dwelling itself, even though it would be slightly set back from the front of the property and sit below the main roof of the house and be of materials to match. The sheer scale of the proposed extension would appear as a dominant addition to the side elevation and would not appear subservient to the host dwelling. This would result in a detrimental impact to its character and appearance.
5. In addition, the angled position of the property within the cul-de-sac would result in the proposed extension being clearly visible in the street scene towards the end of the cul-de-sac, particularly due to the open aspect of the frontage. When this is combined with its overall scale, substantial width, and excessive length of the roof ridge across the host property it would create an unbalanced and negative appearance to these symmetrical properties.

Accordingly, it would detract from the character and appearance of both properties and the street scene.

6. I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the area. Therefore, it would be contrary to Policy ENV2 of the Black Country Core Strategy (2011), and Policies S6 and L1 of the Dudley Borough Development Strategy (2017). The aims of these policies are ensuring that development is appropriately designed; responsive to the character and/or visual amenities of the local area and that extensions shall not have a detrimental impact on the character, form and design of the host dwelling.
7. I also find it would be at odds with the guidance in Planning Guidance Note 17 (House Extension Design Guide) that seeks to ensure house extensions relate to the character of the original house in terms of scale; design; and compatibility with the character of the surrounding area.

Other Matters

8. The appellant refers to the National Planning Policy Framework and that it is supportive of positive planning and ensuring that land is viable as a resource and is put to best use. Whilst this may be the case, it is not uncaveated, including that developments are sympathetic to local character.
9. Although the proposed development would not cause any harm to the living conditions of neighbouring properties including overshadowing, privacy and overlooking due to its location towards the end of the cul-de-sac, these matters do not address the character and appearance concerns I have found.
10. I have been referred to other developments, in particular to No 3. However, I do not have full details of this scheme and so cannot be certain that the circumstances are the same. In any event, those that I saw do not change the prevailing character of the area in order to justify the development before me. In any case I have considered the appeal proposal on its own merits.
11. I acknowledge the appellants' desire to enlarge the family house and that the proposal would be an affordable way to do this. Nonetheless, these are largely personal matters and do not outweigh the concerns that I have raised above.
12. The appeal site is close to the Stourbridge Branch Canal (Amblecote) conservation area, it is set at a considerable higher level from the canal and separated by a strip of extensive vegetation, therefore having a minimal relationship with the conservation area itself. I therefore find it would not harm the setting of the conservation area, although this does not address or overcome my concerns in relation to the detrimental effect on the host dwelling and area where the dwelling more readily has shared character and appearance attributes.

Conclusion

13. Having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Karen Taylor

INSPECTOR