



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 February 2020

by Jonathan Edwards BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P4605/D/19/3242264

2 Beech Avenue, Quinton, Birmingham B32 2UB

- 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 Sunil Sharma against the decision of Birmingham City Council.
 - The application Ref 2019/07897/PA, dated 19 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is erection of two storey side and rear and single storey rear extension with front porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property lies on a corner plot in a residential area. Surrounding houses tend to be 2 storeys high and set back from the tree-lined roads, resulting in a pleasant environment where buildings are visible but do not unduly dominate the street scene.
4. The proposed extension would project out to the rear and to the side towards Quinton Lane and its front elevation would face Beech Avenue. The proposal would be lower and behind the front of the existing house but would still represent a significant increase in the size of the property. The extension would lie further away from the side boundary than the existing garage, but it would be much larger and would also be above road level. As such, the extension would be markedly more visible than the garage in the street scene, clearly seen from Quinton Lane above the fence, wall and vegetation on the side and rear boundaries.
5. The proposal would be markedly closer to Quinton Lane than the nearby houses, which tend to be a uniform distance back from the pavement despite the slight curve in the road. By reason of its size and positioning in front of the Quinton Lane building line, the proposal would be an uncharacteristically prominent feature in the area. The existing garage and lean-to are relatively minor buildings that have only limited visual impact. As such, any benefit of their removal would be significantly outweighed by the prominence of the proposed extension and subsequent loss of spaciousness in the street scene.

6. The appeal property is a detached house and so is to a degree already incongruous to the predominant semi-detached properties seen in the vicinity. However, the prominence of the proposed extension would emphasise the incongruity of the appeal property and would not help assimilate it into the area. The site is large enough to ensure the proposal would not be out of scale with the plot, but nevertheless, the extension would visually erode its openness and the contribution it makes to the street scene.
7. Various 2 storey side extensions to houses in the area have been highlighted to me¹, but none of these are above road level and so are not as prominent breaches of the building line compared to the appeal proposal. As such, it would not be inconsistent with these previous decisions to find the proposed development unacceptable in respect of the main issue.
8. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, and in this regard, it would be contrary to policy PG3 of the Birmingham Development Plan 2017, saved paragraphs 3.14C and 3.14D of the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan 2005, the Council's Extending Your Home, Homes Extensions Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2007 as well as the National Planning Policy Framework. These all aim, amongst other things, to protect or enhance the character and appearance of the area and to provide attractive environments.

Other Matters

9. The proposal would be acceptable in terms of not causing flood risk or harm to highway safety, but these are neutral factors in my assessment. The development would not increase the number of dwellings and therefore would not result in a more efficient use of land. The house as it stands fails to meet the appellant's desire to provide a family home, but there is no evidence before me to demonstrate that the accommodation requirements can only be met through the proposed development. As such, I attach limited weight to this factor in my consideration of the appeal.
10. The appellant is critical of the Council's approach to dealing with the planning application, however I am charged with determining the appeal having regard to the merits of the proposed development. As such, any complaints in this respect have no effect on my consideration of the proposal. None of the other matters raised outweigh or alter my conclusion on the main issue.

Conclusion

11. For these reasons, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Jonathan Edwards

INSPECTOR

¹ Council reference numbers S/01130/02/FUL, S/05900/05/FUL, 2015/01263/PA and 2015/00525/PA