
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2020 by C McDonagh BA (Hons), MA

by Jonathan Hockley BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/D/19/3242496

22 Reevy Avenue, Bradford, BD6 3ED

- 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 Mrs Donnelly against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/04231/HOU, dated 9 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 3 December 2019.
 - The development is described as "proposed retrospective decking, outbuilding and fence and proposed dropped kerb to front."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. Notwithstanding the description of development set out above, which is taken from the planning application form, I consider that from the plans and accompanying details that the description offered by the Council on the decision notice and the appeal documents submitted by both parties of *"Decking and outbuilding to rear, fence to side. Dropped kerb to front (retrospective)"* more accurately describes the appeal.
4. It was clear from my observations on the site visit, the application form and through the Council's Officer Report that the works have already been undertaken.
5. The Council have no issues with the decking and based on all that I have seen and read I have no reason to disagree with this view.

Main Issues

6. The main issues in this case are the effects of the use of the vehicular access on highway safety and the effects of the outbuilding and fence on the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

Highway safety

7. The appeal property is located at the junction of Reevy Avenue and Beacon Grove on a corner plot. A vehicular access point with off-street parking has been added to No.22, which allows vehicles to enter and exit the property onto this junction. The previous access was at the opposite side of the property, which now hosts the outbuilding.
8. I noted on the site visit many of the dwellings on Beacon Grove have off-street parking, including the adjoining property and I noted that Beacon Grove, a cul-de-sac, is much less trafficked than Reevy Avenue, which I did observe to be busy even at the late morning time of my site visit. However, while motorists travelling down Beacon Grove towards Reevy Avenue would be doing so at low speed with clear views of egressing vehicles from the appeal site, the location of the access would be dangerous to motorists both entering Beacon Grove from either direction along Reevy Avenue and to egressing vehicles from the appeal site due to its location directly onto the corner of the junction of these two roads.
9. I note the appellant argues this new access is an improvement over the previous arrangement, whereby vehicles exiting the appeal property did so onto Reevy Avenue in reverse gear. While this may be the case, I can only assess the development before me on its own merits and based on my own observations. Vehicles reversing from the appeal site directly onto the junction pose a significant risk to highway safety, particularly to and from vehicles travelling north along Reevy Avenue along the near side of the road where they may only see each other when a vehicle on Reevy Avenue is in close proximity.
10. I therefore conclude that the use of the vehicular access is harmful to highway safety. This is contrary to Policies DS1 and DS5 of the Bradford Local Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) which seek to promote safe and inclusive streets and places.

Character and appearance

11. The appeal property is a relatively new addition to Reevy Avenue of stone and white render external finish. The street features a range of house types, including traditional stone terraces, post-war semi-detached dwellings and dormer bungalows. However, while the architectural styles and scales of these houses varies, a common feature is the generous set-back of houses from the street, which is particularly evident in the semi-detached dwellings opposite the site on Reevy Avenue, and the terraced units along Beacon Grove, as well as the dormer bungalows further down Reevy Avenue. Moreover, boundary treatments along the street generally consist of hedgerows and/or low stone walls, which in combination with this set-back creates a spacious and open feeling to the immediate area.
12. The fence installed at the appeal site is constructed of curved topped timber-panels topped with trellis panels. The wall underneath has been raised as the street descends to level the fence, before meeting the former driveway, where the wall ends, and larger panels and a gate have been erected. While the structure is somewhat permeable due to the trellising and while the fence may be fairly similar in colour to the stone work behind, its materials do not reflect

that of the predominant boundary treatment in this area and the height and nature of the fence appears stark against the host property and the local area. The fence has eroded the sense of openness created by the low-profile boundary treatments and the set-back nature of houses in the area due to its height and now reads as a stark and incongruous addition to the street scene.

13. While the appellant argues the design of the fence is ornate, which lessens its impact, from my observations during the site visit it is comprised of fairly standard panels and posts. Moreover, the panels and posts covering the former driveway differ from the main section atop the wall as they are of a different colour, causing further harm to the character and appearance of the street scene. I appreciate that the appellant seeks privacy in their garden, but I am unconvinced that this cannot be achieved by a boundary treatment more in keeping with the area in terms of its material, design and scale.
14. The appeal site is reasonably elevated in the street scene as it sits at the brow of the sloping Reevy Avenue. As a result of this, the front and parts of the side elevations of the property and the new outbuilding are clearly visible in the street scene. The outbuilding is a sizable structure and is made more noticeable by its white uPVC clad elevations, making it highly prominent in the local area despite its relative set-back nature within the plot. The use of white uPVC cladding, at odds with other more traditional building materials in the area adds to this incongruous nature. I note the suggestion of painting the structure to lessen its impact, and while this may help to a certain degree, the issue of size would remain and would not remove the harm caused by its presence.
15. I therefore conclude that the outbuilding and fence has an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the street scene contrary to Policies DS1, DS3 and SC9 of the Bradford Local Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD). Collectively, these seek to support design which responds to and complements local context and takes opportunities to improve areas and make them as good as they can be.

Recommendation

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

C McDonagh

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

17. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

J Hockley

INSPECTOR