



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 January 2020 by S Watson BA(Hons) MSc

Decision by Kenneth Stone BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P4605/D/19/3239150

20A Westfield Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 3QG

- 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 K Singh Cooner against the decision of Birmingham City Council.
 - The application Ref 2019/06904/PA, dated 13 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 7 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is first floor extension to existing free standing annex.
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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.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and host dwelling.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is located on the west side of Westfield Road, which is primarily characterised by its large properties set back within spacious plots. These are screened from the road by a near-continuous wall with mature trees forming the front boundary. The dwellings themselves, although of a variety of styles, predominantly follow a traditional design. The exception to this is the detached dwelling on the appeal site which uses a contemporary design and materials. The proposal includes the erection of a first floor extension with external supports over an existing single storey outbuilding. Those examples of outbuildings in surrounding plots visible from my observations were subservient to, and of a much smaller scale than, their host dwellings.
5. The outbuilding at the appeal site is a large building situated close to, and on higher ground than, the rear of the main dwelling. Although it is only a single storey, due to the different land levels, the outbuilding extends almost half a storey higher than the ground floor of the house. As a consequence of the land levels, while the extended outbuilding would physically be of a scale

- comparable with the main house, it would likely be perceived as being much greater. Such a substantial outbuilding, in close proximity to the main dwelling, would be an imposing building that would compete with the house and as such would be incongruously out of scale with it. This would harm the legibility of the outbuilding as being ancillary, and therefore subservient, to the house due to the substantial increase in size.
6. The proposed extension would introduce new materials which would be out of keeping with the surrounding, more traditional, buildings. However, they would be thematically similar to those on the existing main dwelling on the appeal site. The main dwelling, by way of its design and materials, already contrasts with the character and appearance of the street scene of Westfield Road, and as such I find the proposed materials would not have an unacceptably greater impact.
 7. I note that the outbuilding is currently screened from public views by mature trees, which form the boundary between the appeal site and surrounding gardens. However, as the trees could easily die or be removed, their screening carries only limited weight in the determination of this appeal.
 8. The appellant has claimed that the proposed extension would be an ingenious design which would make the best use of the existing outbuilding. However, from the information before me I consider that the design of the supports would not be so novel or ingenious as to outweigh the harm identified. Moreover, I find that the proposal would not be making the best of the existing building in line with Policy PG3 of the *Birmingham Plan 2031: Birmingham Development Plan* (BDP), as it would be a substantial extension.
 9. In light of the above I conclude that the development would be out of keeping with the existing dwelling by way of its scale. It would therefore cause an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, in conflict with the character and appearance aims of Policy PG3 of the BDP, saved Paragraphs 3.14C-D of the *Birmingham Plan: Birmingham Unitary Development Plan*, the guidance contained in the *Extending your Home* supplementary planning document, and Paragraph 127 of the *National Planning Policy Framework*. Although BDP Policy TP27 was also referred to in the Council's reason for refusal I consider that this policy is not particularly relevant to the scheme before me.

Other Matters

10. The appellant has claimed that the Council did not work positively or proactively with the appellant during the planning application. However, from the information available to me I cannot be certain that this was the case. Nevertheless, this does not affect my assessment, which is of the proposal before me.
11. The appellant has raised a personal need for additional living space in order to provide a suitable level of living accommodation for the three generations of family which live at the appeal site. Whilst I have no doubt that the provision of this accommodation may be of benefit to the appellant, this would amount to a personal benefit only, and I attach it very limited weight. As such the harm identified above would not be outweighed by this need.

12. Although from the information before me, and my observations on site, it appears that the proposal would not affect living conditions of neighbouring residents and would likely be of an environmentally friendly design. I find that a lack of harm in respect of these matters would not amount to a positive benefit that would outweigh the harm identified above.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Watson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and concur that the appeal should be dismissed.

Kenneth Stone

INSPECTOR