



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 June 2020

by K Savage BA MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N1025/D/20/3249392

309 Alfreton Road, Little Eaton, Derbyshire DE21 5AE

- 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 and Mrs Stephens against the decision of Erewash Borough Council.
 - The application Ref ERE/0120/0004, dated 23 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 3 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is a two storey extension to side elevation and new porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The site lies within an area of Green Belt; however, the Council in its consideration of the application determined that the proposal would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, and so concluded that the proposal would not amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt, having regard to the exceptions set out at Paragraph 145 of the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework). On the evidence before me, I have no reasons to find otherwise and, accordingly, there is no requirement for me to assess the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt, nor to consider if there are other considerations that amount to very special circumstances necessary to justify the development in this case.
3. Therefore, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site occupies a corner position on Alfreton Road at the junction with Westley Crescent. The boundary walls of the appeal site, and 1 Westley Crescent directly opposite, are splayed to provide visibility in both directions, with grass verges to either side lending an openness and prominence to the junction when viewed from along Alfreton Road.
5. The existing dwelling stands back from the side boundary on Westley Crescent, similar to the position of No 1 opposite. Although No 1 addresses Westley Crescent rather than Alfreton Road, and I accept there is little to indicate any formal layout has been followed, both dwellings have similar massing and provide symmetry and balance to the entrance into Westley Crescent.

- Moreover, the recess of each dwelling from the Westley Crescent boundary maintains a degree of consistency with the recessed building lines extending back from the junction on both sides of the crescent, and allows for clear views into the crescent, and out from the crescent to the open countryside opposite.
6. The proposed two storey side extension would extend the massing of the dwelling to a point close to the side boundary. The tall, blank side gable would form a dominant and overbearing structure above the boundary hedge. It would stand substantially forward of the general building line on this side of the crescent, forming a conspicuous and jarring intrusion into the street scene which would upset the largely symmetrical and spacious arrangement of the built form around the junction at the entrance to Westley Crescent and would detract from the aforementioned vistas both into and out of the crescent.
 7. For these reasons, I find that the proposed side extension would harm the character and appearance of the area, and would conflict with Policy 10 of the Erewash Core Strategy (March 2014) which requires new development to be designed to have regard to the local context and reinforce valued local characteristics; including street patterns, massing and scale. There would also be conflict with the design-related aims of Paragraph 127 of the Framework.
 8. A front porch is also proposed which the Council found to be acceptable. Given its modest size and the varied built form along Alfreton Road, I concur that this part of the proposal would not be harmful. I also agree with the Council that the extensions would not cause harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupants, in view of their degree of separation from the nearest dwellings. However, these considerations are neutral factors and would not outweigh the harm I have identified.
 9. I note the appellant's point that the proposal initially appeared to have the support of Council officers, before being refused. However, matters relating to the Council's handling of the application are for local government accountability and are not relevant to my decision on the appeal, which I have considered solely on its planning merits.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations which indicate planning permission should be granted despite this conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

K. Savage

INSPECTOR