



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 June 2020

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4625//D/20/3246091

62 Brookvale Road, Olton, Solihull B92 7HZ

- 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 Holloway against the decision of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref PL/2019/02616/MINFHO, dated 9 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is formation of habitable room in roof space with rear dormer and gable build up.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed roof extension on the character and appearance of the host property, a pair of semi-detached properties of which it forms a part and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached dwelling with a two storey side and rear extension, single storey rear extension and a front porch. It is located in a mature well-established residential area, typically characterised by semi-detached properties of a similar form with hipped roofs set back from the road. A number of the dwellings have roof extensions of varying styles and designs that generally appear as clearly subordinate to the dwellings.
4. The proposal would entail the conversion of the roof space into habitable use with the construction of a flat roof dormer extension. This extension would wrap partially around the side over the original hipped roof with a gabled build up and project from the rear of the property. The roof extension would be inset from the eaves and built up to the ridge line and the shared party wall with the adjoining property. New rooflights are proposed at the front of the property.
5. The Council's House Extensions Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document 2010 (SPD) states that extensions should harmonise with the existing dwelling in order to help maintain the character of the house and the streetscene. It states that dormer windows should be modest, well proportioned and should sit exclusively within the roof plane they are located away from the edges of the roof. The SPD also states that wrap around dormers will not be permitted.

6. The proposed roof extension would result in a material alteration to the property's hipped roof, which currently makes a positive contribution on the roofscape of the host building and the surrounding area. Whilst it would be set back, the awkward design and bulkiness of the roof extension with a gabled build up over the original hipped roof would be very much at odds with the scale and form of the host property.
7. These shortcomings are exacerbated by the proposal's position, which would be visible from a number of public vantage points along Brookvale Road. The proposed roof extension, by virtue of its scale, siting and design, would fail to achieve an appropriate degree of subordination to the host property and would detract from the architectural integrity of the host property. As such, I consider that the proposed extension would result in an incongruous and out-of-keeping addition that would cause unacceptable harm to the host property, adjoining semi-detached property and the area.
8. I have considered the appellants arguments regarding the design and layout of the dormer roof extension and that the proposal has been carefully considered in order to take into account the character of the host property and the other roof extensions in the area. Whilst the use of matching materials and fenestrations would assist in integrating the proposed extension with the host property, these aspects again do not overcome the adverse effects outlined above. I note the appellants comments regarding the context provided in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) for good design, but I find that the proposal does not achieve the standards the Framework seeks.
9. Consequently, I conclude that the development would adversely harm the character and appearance of the host property, a pair of semi-detached properties of which it forms a part and the area. It would conflict with the Policy P15 of the Solihull Local Plan 2013 and the SPD. In this case, these are the relevant policy and guidance, which I consider are broadly consistent with the design aims of the Framework. These policies and guidance, amongst other things, seek to ensure that development proposals, including extensions, will be of a good quality design that maintain the character of the property and conserve and enhance the local character and streetscape quality.
10. In addition, it would not accord with the aims of the Framework that seeks to secure developments of a high quality of design (paragraph 124); that will add to the overall quality of the area and are sympathetic to the local character (paragraph 127).

Other Matters

11. I have considered the appellants comments regarding the family's personal circumstances and the benefits to the family arising from the proposed additional accommodation. I have considerable sympathy for the appellants circumstances. I also note the appellants comments regarding the need to provide housing for different groups under the aims in the Framework and the weight attributed to the Equality Act 2010.
12. The courts have generally taken the view that planning is concerned with land use in the public interest. Although personal circumstances can sometimes justify a personal or temporary permission, that would not be appropriate here where a permanent structure is intended. There is insufficient justification for

the scale and form of the extension proposed. As such these are matters to which I can attach only moderate weight in making this decision.

13. I have noted the other developments in the area drawn to my attention by the appellants. However, the roof extensions and alterations permitted elsewhere have different development characteristics to the appeal scheme. On the basis of the limited evidence provided I am not convinced that the circumstances are compellingly similar to the appeal proposal. I therefore accord these limited weight as precedents in this case.
14. I have considered the appellants arguments regarding the type of roof extensions and loft conversions that can be built on a dwellinghouse under General Permitted Development Rights. Whilst this may be so, this does not set a precedent for such an inappropriate development in this location for the reasons set out above.
15. The appellants consider the proposal would constitute a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the Framework. I have considered the various benefits put forward by the appellants that the proposal would bring, including providing additional accommodation to meet the family's needs, the effective use of land, contributing to the local economy through additional building work and increased Council tax receipts. While I have given them some weight, these modest benefits would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified. For all these reasons, there are no other material considerations to outweigh the development plan conflicts identified.

Conclusion

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

David Troy

INSPECTOR