
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 June 2020

by M Shrigley BSc (Hons) MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/G4620/D/20/3252078

47 The Crescent, Cradley Heath B64 7JS

- 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 Christian Ditchfield against the decision of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DC/20/63962, dated 6 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 3 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is for a single storey rear and first floor extension. Replacement roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council's reason for refusal makes clear that their objection to the scheme is limited to the roof alterations including a proposed rear dormer, therefore my decision focuses on those aspects.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The application property is detached and shares a noticeable high degree of symmetry with No 48. Whilst both properties display some differences owing to alterations, they retain considerable similarity in terms of their corresponding roof profile when viewed as a pair within the street scene. They form a positive aspect of the areas character and appearance. Properties in the street have a mixture of gable and hipped roofs. There are a variety of housing designs present within the street-scene linked with consistent architectural cues such as use of similar external facing materials and fenestration proportions.
5. The development would significantly increase the height of the main dwelling and change its main roof profile from a hip to a gable design. It would also add a steeper roof pitch. As a result, the existing building symmetry and distinctive building proportions shared with No 48 would be lost. I appreciate that there is design variety evident within the street, but the two properties share an attractive matching appearance from the front. The visual effect of the height and roof form change would not be respectful to that. The change would erode the attractiveness of the street-scene.

6. Viewed from the rear the roof alterations inclusive of dormer would also appear overly dominant and out of keeping with neighbouring dwellings either side which have uncluttered roof designs. The excessive bulk and mass of the roof enlargement would be inconsistent with its surroundings and detrimental to the immediate character and appearance of the locality.
7. Whilst the use of a planning condition securing finishing materials matching the host dwelling would go some way to integrate the development with its surroundings it would not overcome my concerns. The height and mass of the proposal as well as the subsequent changes in building symmetry would still result in harm.
8. I therefore conclude the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would conflict with Policy ENV3 of the Black Country Core Strategy (2011) which seeks high quality design which reflects local identity, Policy SAD EOS9 of the Council's Site Allocations and Delivery Plan Document (2012), which supports the rejection of poor design that is out of scale or incompatible with a locality, as well as the aims of the Revised Sandwell Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2014) requiring the appearance and size of roof designs to respect the character of an area.

Other Matters

9. I acknowledge that the appellant has referred to the potential use of permitted development rights for a 'hip to gable' roof enlargement as having a similar effect to that of the proposed development. But the appeal proposal also involves raising the roof ridge height as well as the incorporation of a dormer. All the proposed changes would be physically linked, and I have found what is proposed would be harmful. Moreover, the height and pitch of the roof would be noticeably different. Therefore, I attribute little weight to what may or may not be theoretically possible using such rights. As a result, the potential notional use of permitted development rights does not outweigh the visual harm I have identified.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons I dismiss the appeal.

M Shrigley

INSPECTOR