



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 July 2020

by Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MEnvSc

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J2373/D/20/3249634

49 Webster Avenue, Blackpool FY4 3LL

- 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 Frackleton against the decision of Blackpool Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/0061, dated 25 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 27 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. No 49 is a 2 storey semi-detached property on a corner plot at the junction of Webster Avenue and Johnsville Avenue. It is one of several properties at the end of Webster Avenue that, together with properties on Johnsville Avenue, form part of a coherent group. The matching properties have distinctive 2 storey front bay and gable features, and they are finished in red brick with red clay tile hipped roofs. They are set back from the street on consistent building lines. Front gardens are enclosed by decorative low brick walls, in places supplemented by hedgerow planting. Consequently, the area has a regular and harmonious character and appearance.
4. Although large, the proposed extension would be subservient to the host property. It would be finished in materials to match and it would have a pitched roof. While the blank front elevation of the proposal would not relate well to the principal elevation of No 49, amended plans submitted with the appeal illustrate a window in this elevation. Although these plans were not before the Council, they illustrate that the scheme would respect No 49 and the neighbouring properties on Webster Avenue.
5. The 2 storey side elevation of the appeal property shares a building line with the neighbouring properties on Johnsville Avenue. Consequently, by virtue of its size and scale and protrusion beyond the established building line, the proposal would disrupt the uniformity of the street scene. Moreover, the bulky

extension with its monopitch roof would not relate well to the distinctive character of Johnsville Avenue.

6. The plans that were considered by the Council illustrate that the proposal would be in close proximity to Johnsville Avenue. However, evidence submitted with the appeal states that the original plans are not accurate and the proposal would be approximately 2.2m from the side boundary. While a greater degree of separation from the road would reduce its visual impact when viewed from the adjacent footway, nevertheless the proposal would be a prominent and incongruous feature in the context of Johnsville Avenue.
7. The appeal site is partly screened by the boundary hedgerow and garden planting. However, by virtue of the incline of the road, the proposal would be visible and conspicuous from locations towards the end of Johnsville Avenue and its junction with Highfield Road. Consequently, it would be a discordant and visually obtrusive feature that would not make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness or a sense of place.
8. Furthermore, even if the hedgerow and trees could be retained during works, it seems likely that future occupiers would seek to remove vegetation in order to avoid overshadowing and loss of light to the scheme windows. In any case, while landscape planting can help assimilate development into its surroundings, it should not be used to screen inappropriate development from view. For this reason, the hedgerow does not provide a justification for the scheme.
9. Therefore, the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with Policy CS7 of Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2012-2027) Adopted January 2016 and saved Policies LQ1, LQ2 and LQ14 of the Blackpool Local Plan Adopted June 2006 (the LP). These require, among other things, that development should respond to and enhance the character and appearance of the townscape. It would conflict with the aims of the Extending Your Home Supplementary Planning Document Adopted November 2007 in relation to avoiding harm to the street scene. It would conflict with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework that require development to add to the overall quality of the area, being sympathetic to local character and the surrounding built environment and to maintain a strong sense of place.
10. Nineteen Johnsville Avenue has a large single storey side extension close to Webster Avenue. I cannot be certain that it benefits from planning permission or that it was considered in the current policy context. However, No 19 is not part of the coherent group of properties on Webster Avenue and its 2 storey side elevation is already forward of the neighbouring building line. Therefore, it does not appear directly comparable to the appeal scheme. In any case, Policy LQ14 of the LP is clear that alterations and extensions of adjoining properties do not provide a justification for similar proposals.

Other Matters

11. I note the suggestion that the proposal would ordinarily benefit from permitted development rights. However, no detailed plans of any such development have been provided and there is little to suggest that permitted development rights would be exercised in the event that the appeal should fail. Therefore, this is not a matter that carries any weight in favour of the scheme.

12. On the basis of the evidence, the proposal would not result in adverse effects on the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers. There would be an adequate area of private outdoor amenity space. Parking arrangements would be acceptable. There would be no adverse effects on protected species or habitats. However, these are requirements of planning policy and they do not weigh in favour of the proposal.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

Sarah Manchester

INSPECTOR