



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 July 2020

by Thomas Hatfield BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6th August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/H4315/D/20/3249535

1 Sycamore Avenue, Haydock, St Helens, WA11 0JP

- 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 Rushton against the decision of St. Helens Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/2019/0835/HHFP, dated 14 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as "*small forward porch extension, two storey side extension, extension to front and rear dormer*".
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. A revised plan was submitted with the appeal that proposes alterations to the design of the front porch. These alterations are relatively minor in nature and I do not consider that any party would be prejudiced by my acceptance of them. Accordingly, I have taken the revised plan into account in my determination of this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a modern semi-detached house that has existing single storey extensions to both the side and rear. It is located in a relatively prominent position on the corner of Sycamore Avenue and Holly Road.
5. At present, there is a consistent building line along this side of Holly Road, which the main side elevation of the appeal property respects. Whilst an existing extension protrudes beyond this, it is only single storey in height, modest in scale, and partially obscured by the boundary fence. In contrast, the appeal proposal would introduce a significantly larger 2 storey side extension that would be the same height and width as the host property. This would jut out significantly beyond the established building line, and it would be a dominant feature that would draw the eye. It would be prominent in longer views along Holly Road and would be a discordant feature within the street.

6. The development also proposes to relocate the entrance to the property and to introduce a dual-pitch porch feature. In this regard, the proposed roof profile would contrast sharply with other porches in the immediate vicinity, which have either mono-pitched or hipped roofs. Its position and height would also visually unbalance the semi-detached pair to a far greater extent than at present, and it would have an incongruous appearance in my view.
7. For the above reasons, I conclude that the development would significantly harm the character and appearance of both the host property and the surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to Policy CP 1 of the St Helens Local Plan Core Strategy (2012), saved Policy GEN 8 of the St Helens Unitary Development Plan (1997), and guidance contained in the Supplementary Planning Document Householder Development ('SPD') (2011). These policies and guidance seek to ensure, amongst other things, that domestic extensions respect the scale, design, and appearance of the host dwelling, and maintain the overall character and appearance of the locality.
8. It is asserted that little weight should be given to the Council's Local Plan Core Strategy, Unitary Development Plan, and SPD given their age relative to the current version of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework'). However, paragraph 213 of the Framework states that existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted prior to its publication. Moreover, no specific inconsistencies between the above policies and the Framework have been drawn to my attention. In my view, these policies are broadly consistent with the Framework, which seeks to achieve well-designed places. I therefore attach significant weight to them.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Hatfield

INSPECTOR