



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 August 2020

by P Mileham BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R3515/D/20/3249980

1 Melplash Road, Ipswich IP3 8QL

- 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 Charlie Lovlee against the decision of Ipswich Borough Council.
 - The application Ref IP/20/00095/FUL, dated 31 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 27 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two-storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a two storey detached dwelling located on the corner of Melplash Road and Wimborne Avenue. On the opposite corner is a detached dwelling which is broadly symmetrical to the appeal site whilst the majority of dwellings in Melplash Road are two storey semi-detached properties which create a regular rhythm to the character of the area. Due to the position of the appeal site on the corner plot, it also relates closely to the dwellings in Wimborne Avenue which are detached two-storey dwellings set back from the road with a broadly uniform building line.
4. The appellants have indicated that the appeal site has been designed to be broadly symmetrical in order to appear as if it a pair of semi-detached dwellings that had been converted into one. As such, the side extension mirrors the existing front gable of the existing dwelling in scale and proportion. In addition, the development would continue the projection of the existing roofline without any step down. Paragraph 5.11 of the Space and Design Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document (2015) (the SDGSPD) indicates that setting extensions back from main front elevations can help them to appear subordinate and less dominating. As a result of the symmetry of the proposal the design of the extension would not express any subservience to the dwelling. As a result, it would therefore fail to have regard to the legibility of the dwelling through its design and proportions.

5. The proposed side extension would project the dwelling significantly closer to its side boundary as well as much closer to the adjacent footpath. The appeal site has a reasonably large garden and although there would still be a gap between the edge of the extension and the property boundary, due to the two storey gable, the scale of the extension would significantly erode the sense of set back of the existing dwelling and appear cramped on the plot. The Ipswich Urban Characterisation Study Supplementary Planning Document (2019) (IUCSSPD) notes that the development in the Heaths Character area as having spacious corner plots laid to gardens. Due to the appeal site being a corner plot, this would increase the sense of prominence of the scheme, and as a result, would be out of keeping with the prevailing character of the area.
6. The proposal's siting and design which seeks to mirror a pair of semi-detached properties is such that it would no longer be seen in its surroundings as originating as a detached dwelling. I consider this would result in a degree of terracing effect by altering the perception of a detached dwelling at the entrance to Melplash Road to a pair of semi-detached dwellings. This is particularly important in this part of the street scene in light of the fact that the appeal site and the detached dwelling on the opposite side of the street provide a distinct gateway into Melplash Road. The proposed development would result in the loss of the sense of gateway resulting in a detrimental effect on the character of the area.
7. The appellant has indicated that the proposed development would not result in harm to the living conditions of adjoining occupiers. All development should avoid such harm and would therefore have a neutral effect on the proposals.
8. In light of the above, I conclude that the proposed development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would be contrary to Policies DM5 and DM12 of the Ipswich Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document (2017) which state that all new development should be well designed and sustainable, and amongst other things, helping to reinforce the attractive physical characteristics of local neighbourhoods and the visual appearance of the immediate street scene, and an extension to a dwellinghouse will be permitted providing that it is designed to be inkeeping with the original dwellinghouse and does not have an adverse visual impact within the immediate street scene. The proposal would also fail to comply with the SDGSPD (2015) and IUCSSPD (2019) which seek to ensure that extensions are set back from main front elevations which can help them to appear subordinate and less dominating and seek to retain the character of the Heaths Urban Character area.
9. The proposed development would also fail to accord with paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') which states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Conclusion

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

P Mileham

INSPECTOR