
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 July 2020

by M Shrigley BSc (Hons) MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P4605/D/20/3251724

77 Wentworth Way, Harborne B32 2UX

- 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 D K Sangha against the decision of Birmingham City Council.
 - The application Ref 2020/00360/PA, dated 13 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I note that the Council only object to the two-storey extension proposed therefore my decision focuses on that aspect.

Main Issues

3. The effect of the side extension on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling house and street-scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is detached. It has been previously extended to the side and as a result of that its front elevation is partially recessed at first-floor level. The property is situated within a row of other detached dwellings largely similar in appearance with similar frontage widths and gable roofs. Properties forming the street-scene are uniformly separated from each other, and in the vicinity of the appeal dwelling have staggered footprints reflecting a bend in the road.
5. The two-storey extension proposed within the appeal scheme would sit flush with the front of the main dwelling house at first floor level. In doing so, the absence of a significant setback would unduly exacerbate the prominence of the overall first-floor frontage width of the dwelling. This would be a noticeable change to the dwelling's exterior, where the existing recess at first floor level provides important elevational relief relative to the frontage. The loss of the recess and its replacement with a continuous wall would erode from the character and appearance of the appeal property.
6. Owing to the narrow separation distance between the host dwelling and the neighbouring dwelling closet to the extension the absence of a first-floor recess would lead to a harmful terracing effect within the street-scene. The change would be out of kilter with the largely uniform frontages prevailing in the

street, where such an effect is generally avoided by either regular gaps between dwellings or through an appropriate set back at first-floor level for properties with side extensions. The terracing effect created would erode from the uniform and detached layout of this part of the estate. Although I acknowledge that the roof ridge height of the two-storey extension would be lower than that of the main dwelling house that design provision would not successfully overcome any of my concerns about the effects of the proposal.

7. I appreciate there are existing historic side extensions at No's 93 and 63 Wentworth Way that sit flush with the front elevation at first-floor level. However, I note the Council advises that those extensions were undertaken prior to the adoption of the Council's 'Extending Your Home, Home extensions Design Guide' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2007. In the case of 63 there is also intervening landscaping and a bend in the road relative to the host dwelling and therefore the historic extension is not conspicuous within the immediate street scene of the appeal property. For those reasons the presence of those existing extensions does not justify allowing the harm I have identified.
8. I note that the appellant also refers to other examples of two-storey side extensions apparent within the street-scene at No's 93, 95, 97 and 99 which display varying degrees of recesses. But this reinforces my point that a first-floor level recess is an established characteristic of the estate.
9. Therefore, I conclude the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the main dwelling house and the street-scene. It would conflict with Policy PG3 of the Birmingham Development Plan 2017 which requires new development to reinforce a positive sense of place and local distinctiveness. It would also conflict with saved Paragraphs 3.14C-D of the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan 2005 and the provisions of the 'Extending Your Home, Home Extensions Design Guide 2007 SPD which encourage development that is respectful to its surroundings and that home extensions that fit comfortably with the character of the area, as well as the aims Paragraph 127 a) of the National Planning Policy Framework which requires that development adds to the quality of an area.

Other Matters

10. The appellant has drawn my attention to inconsistencies in the depth of the elevation recesses the Council has allowed in other permitted examples of side extensions in the area. However, I do not have the full background details to all those examples and in any event the issue holds no significant weight in my assessment of the appeal proposal where I have identified substantive harm.
11. I also acknowledge that there is an extant permission for a two-storey side and rear extension to the property (Council reference 2019/08387/PA) and that scheme would retain a significant elevational recess at first-floor level.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons I dismiss the appeal.

M Shrigley

INSPECTOR

