
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 August 2020

by William Cooper BA (Hons) MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/K3415/D/20/3254733

2 Netherbridge Avenue, Lichfield WS14 9UF

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Martin Bayley against the decision of the Lichfield District Council.
 - The application Ref: 20/00370/FUH, dated 8 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as two storey side and rear extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, including the host building.

Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling is located within a residential area. It is part of a pair of semi-detached dwellings, which is located on the corner of Cornfield Drive and Netherbridge Avenue.
4. The above streets comprise a variety of mainly two storey houses and semi-detached bungalows. Pairings of properties and spacing between and around buildings are noticeable characteristics of the host cluster of dwellings among which the appeal property is located, which runs from No 11 Cornfield Drive to No 8 Netherbridge Avenue. These characteristics pertain to the appeal property, which is part of a pair of houses, with a similar pair located to the south-eastern side and a pair of bungalows to the rear.
5. The host pair of properties is positioned with approximately rectangular rear gardens running parallel to Cornfield Drive, which slopes down in a north-easterly direction. The sweep and topography of the street, together with the host pair's corner location, make the upper storey of the rear elevation of the host dwelling clearly visible from the brow of Cornfield Drive. The curve of Netherbridge Avenue and the open plan character of front gardens in the vicinity contribute to the visibility of the south-eastern side and front elevations of the host building, from the street. Together, the above factors contribute to the appeal site's prominence within the streetscene.

6. The proposed extensions would wrap around two of the three elevations of the building in an approximately 'L' shaped mass. The proposal would more than double the two-storey footprint of the building. Furthermore, it would increase the depth of the building by almost half. The proposal would also add a single storey chamfered corner element to the rear, facing towards Cornfield Drive.
7. The extent of the proposed increase in scale and bulk of the building would unbalance the semi-detached pair of dwellings and disrupt the rhythm of pairing and spacing which is a distinctive characteristic of the host cluster of dwellings. This would result in a disproportionate mass which would over-dominate the host dwelling, and visually jar with the building and its setting. The additional roofscape to first and second storeys, and mainly blank brick expanse of the enlarged two-storey side elevation would exacerbate the discordance.
8. The above effects would be noticeable to various extents from viewpoints in the public domain on Netherbridge Avenue and Cornfield Drive, gardens of neighbouring properties, and the appeal property.
9. There is some variety of extensions in the area. My attention is drawn to other apparently extended dwellings, including three on the opposite side of Netherbridge Avenue. However, these three properties differ in that they are not within a cluster of pairs of semi-detached dwellings. This limits the extent to which they are analogous to the appeal proposal. Moreover, the full details of the other cases are not before me, and the appeal site has its own setting and circumstances. As such I assess the proposal on its own merits.
10. I acknowledge the appellant's efforts to refine the design of the proposed extensions. However, for the reasons described above, I conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area, including the host building. As such, it would conflict with Core Policy 3 and Policy BE1 of the Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008-2029 (2015). Together, the policies seek to ensure that development, including extensions, complements local character and distinctiveness.

Other Matters

11. The proposal would provide additional living space at the property. However, this would be contained to a private benefit to existing occupiers. As such, the proposal would not provide a significant public benefit that outweighs the harm identified.

Conclusion

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

William Cooper

INSPECTOR