

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 August 2020 by G Sibley MPLAN MRTPI

Decision by Sarah Housden BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/D/20/3248805

24 Skipworth Road, Coventry CV3 2XA

- 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 Ms Lisa Williams against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref: HH/2019/2922, dated 19 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is first floor side extension over existing single storey side outrigger.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are:
 - The effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene; and
 - The impact of the proposed development upon the living conditions of the occupiers of No.2 and No.6 Braddock Close (No.2 and No.6) with specific regard to outlook and privacy.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and appearance

4. No.24 is a detached dwelling with a single storey side outrigger and a connected garage in front of the outrigger. The dwelling has a two-storey gable projection in the centre of the front elevation with windows to either side, creating a degree of symmetry in the front elevation. To the south and south-west of the dwelling is Braddock Close which is a cul-de-sac that wraps behind the property. No.24, as well as the dwellings on Braddock Close, appear to have been constructed at around the same time as part of

the wider modern estate. The appearance of the dwellings within the street scene varies and there are a several dwelling types that have been used across the wider estate.

5. The proposed extension would create a first floor above the single storey side outrigger with windows to match the existing windows on the first floor of the host dwelling. This would add a third window to one side of the central gable extension. As such, the symmetry of the host dwelling's front elevation would be partially lost. Nevertheless, whilst the symmetry of the building is attractive, because there is such a wide variety in the appearance of the dwellings within the street scene, the proposed extension would not appear incongruous or out of character. Furthermore, because similar materials and architectural detailing would be used in its construction, the extension would not appear noticeable or prominent in the street scene.
6. The extension would not be set back from the front elevation nor would the roof be set down from the roof of the host dwelling. This would be contrary to the guidance in the 'Extending Your Homes – A Design Guide' Supplementary Planning Guidance (adopted 2003) (SPG). Nevertheless, the extension would be less than half the width of the host dwelling and would not extend out further than the side elevation of the garage and would be subordinate in scale and appearance to the dwelling.
7. Therefore, the proposed extension would be an appropriate addition to the dwelling and would retain the existing character of both the host dwelling and the street scene. Accordingly, the proposed development would be in accordance with Policies H5 and DE1 of the Coventry City Council Local Plan (LP) (adopted 2017) in so far as they seek to support the improvement of the existing housing stock and require development proposals to respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of an area. The proposal would also accord with the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which identifies the 10 characteristics of good design which is further expanded upon in the National Design Guide (NDG) which states that well designed new development should be influenced by the character of the existing built form.

Living conditions

8. The host dwelling's single storey garage and linking building are located on the common boundary between the appeal property and the rear garden of No.2. Whilst the extension would be visible from the rear windows and garden of No.2, an adequate separation distance of approximately 12 metres would be retained and it would not appear unduly overbearing or oppressive to the occupiers of No.2. The first-floor window on the front elevation of the proposed extension would be at an oblique angle to the garden of No.2 which would limit opportunities for overlooking. I am satisfied that had the appeal been allowed, details of obscure glazing and fixing could have been required by means of a planning condition to ensure that the privacy of No.2's occupiers would be protected.
9. The existing side wall of the appeal property will already have some impact on the outlook from the rear windows and garden of No.6 and there is some existing planting along the boundary. However, the two-storey side gable of the proposed extension would be directly alongside the side boundary of the

rear garden of No.6. Notwithstanding that views from the rear windows of No.6 would be oblique, due to its additional height and bulk, the proposed side extension would appear unduly overbearing and oppressive when viewed from the rear windows of No.6 and the outlook from those rooms would be materially reduced.

10. Since the proposed extension would be to the north of No.6, it would not cast additional shadow over No.6's rear garden as confirmed in the shadow study (DWG No. (20)A002). Notwithstanding that there would be no increase in shadowing, when viewed from the rear garden of No.6, the bulk and visual dominance of the two-storey side wall at a very close distance would appear overbearing and would increase the sense of enclosure, making the garden much less pleasant to use. The existing planting would not mitigate that effect due to the two-storey height of the proposal.
11. The first-floor window on the rear elevation of the extension would potentially overlook the patio area next to the rear elevation of No.6. I am satisfied that had the appeal been allowed, details of obscure glazing and fixing could have been required by means of a planning condition to safeguard the privacy of No.6's occupiers. However, this would not overcome the harm to living conditions arising from the loss of outlook identified above.
12. I have assessed the proposed development based on the circumstances of the appeal site and the effect of the proposal before me and I cannot be certain that the circumstances of the other cases referred to me by the appellant are comparable with the appeal scheme. Furthermore, there is nothing in the evidence to suggest that the Council's reasons for refusal are based on the refusal of a previous planning application at the appeal property.
13. In conclusion, the proposal would not cause material harm to the outlook from No.2 and had the appeal been allowed, conditions could have been imposed to prevent overlooking from the proposed first floor windows towards the rear windows and gardens of Nos 2 and 6. However, the proposed side extension would have an unacceptable effect on the outlook from the rear windows and garden of No.6, which would be materially harmful to the occupier's living conditions. This aspect of the proposal would conflict with Policy DE1 of the LP in so far as it seeks attention to detail in the layout of developments in terms of function and impact. There would be further conflict with the general advice in the SPG to minimise the impact of extensions on neighbouring properties.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. Whilst I have found that the proposed extension would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene, this would not outweigh the harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No.6 and the conflict with the development plan, read as a whole. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Sibley

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and, on that basis, I too agree that the appeal should be dismissed.

Sarah Housden

INSPECTOR