The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 August 2020

by M Shrigley BSc (Hons) MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J1860/D/20/3249329
Old Orchard House, Frith Common, Eardiston WR15 8JX

- 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 Simon Douglass against the decision of Malvern Hills District Council.
- The application Ref 19/01921/HP, dated 16 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 February 2020.
- The development proposed is a two-storey side extension and porch.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Simon Douglass against Malvern Hills District Council. This application will be the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issues

3. The effect of the development on (i) the character and appearance of the dwelling and local area; (ii) the living conditions of the occupiers of Pryory Meadow with regard to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is located at the edge of a rural settlement. It is a large detached red brick dwelling with a distinctive partially hipped and gable roof which features a ridge height that is set down on one side. The dwelling occupies an elevated position relative to the public highway and is situated in a small enclave of detached residential properties of varying designs and proportions. Properties in the vicinity generally have substantial amounts of landscaped separation space between them.

5. The side extension would substantially increase the overall frontage width of the appeal property. In doing so, the size and mass of the extension would unduly accentuate the existing section of the dwelling which features a lower roof ridge leading to a more noticeable stepped appearance which would be discordant with its existing proportions and design. The extension would appear as an overly large incongruous addition comparative to the main dwelling house and other properties in the vicinity which would take up significant separation space. Furthermore, the elevated position of the dwelling relative to

the highway is such that the size and mass of the extension would be prominent. I have considered that the extension would have a lowered ridge height and that it is set back from the highway, but its incongruousness would still be detrimental to the appearance of the street-scene from public vantage points.

6. I also appreciate that the design of the extension would incorporate some architectural cues from the host property with respect to its roof, fenestration detailing and facing bricks along with the use of timber cladding to break up its mass. However, those design elements do not override the visual harm I have described.

7. I therefore conclude that the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the dwelling and area. It would conflict with Policy SWDP21 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (2016) which requires that development integrates effectively with its surroundings, the principles of the South Worcestershire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, Overarching Design Principles (2018) which encourages high quality design and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which states that the planning system should improve the character and quality of an area.

Living conditions

8. Much of the garden serving Pryory Meadow is predominantly to the side of the property rather than to the rear. The development would take up a position very close to the shared boundary.

9. The roof and eaves of the extension alongside several high-level windows featured on its side elevation would be a noticeable change when viewed from the garden and windows of Pryory Meadow. The proposal would introduce a substantial amount of built bulk and mass along the shared boundary. I find that the effect of the extension would be unduly dominant and intrusive when adjoining occupiers are using their garden area, significantly eroding their existing outlook.

10. I acknowledge there is a line of tall ferns present along the boundary, but their overall height and continued presence is open to potential change. Consequently, the presence of the ferns would not provide adequate or successful long-term screening.

11. I therefore conclude that the development would be harmful to neighbouring living conditions in respect to outlook. It would conflict with Policy SWDP21 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan which requires that development maintains adequate outlook and Paragraph 127 of the Framework which requires that development adds to the quality of an area.

Other Matters

12. I note the status of a section of land indicated within the red edge on the appeal site plan drawing is disputed by parties. However, the issue is not significant to the main issues of the case before me.

13. I have also had regard to the appellant's family occupation requirements for the extension, but those current personal needs do not outweigh the overall long-term harm identified.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

M Shrigley

INSPECTOR