



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 September 2020

by Conor Rafferty LLB (Hons), AIEMA, Solicitor

Decision by Chris Preston BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/K3415/D/20/3255642

4 Gorsey Close, Handsacre, Rugeley, Staffordshire WS15 4FB

- 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 Sarah Cunningham against the decision of Lichfield District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00487/FUH, dated 1 April 2020 was refused by notice dated 1 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is a porch to the front of the house.
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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 Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site comprises a two storey house with recessed integral garage which forms part of a row of ten terraced properties along Gorsey Close. Due to the presence of the garages at the side of each house, the properties are visually split into pairs with a single, mono-pitched canopy spanning across the front doors of each pair. The appeal site is an exception to this. Due to its location at the curve of the road it shares a slightly angled building line with the neighbouring, attached dwelling such that these properties benefit from single canopies.
5. Whilst the wider village may have a varied character this group of properties shares a noticeably intentional consistency in terms of style and scale. The estate has an open feel, with dwellings set slightly back from the footpath. The front elevations have a flush, straightforward design and properties are constructed from matching red brick with windows framed in a lighter colour. This coherence is a clear design characteristic of the street and the rhythm and consistency provide an attractive, yet simple, row of properties.

6. The proposed development relates to the installation of a porch along the front elevation of the appeal property, removing the canopy. It would be constructed from materials to match the dwelling.
7. However, the porch would protrude from the property by a significantly greater distance than the existing canopy, introducing a comparatively bulky element that would be at odds with the straightforward design and proportions of the building. The pitched roof would be at odds with the simple lean-to roof of the existing canopies and the ridgeline would terminate in line with the cill level of the upper floor window, emphasising the height of the structure in comparison to existing ground floor projections. It is acknowledged that the appellant is willing to use a window style with glazing bars to match those at the property, and to provide header and windowsill detailing. While this would go some way to addressing the Council's concerns, the porch would nonetheless remain a visually intrusive feature at the property due to its protruding nature and overall size.
9. With regards to the surrounding area, the proposal would erode the consistency in design present in Gorsey Close by removing the canopy present at the property. It would represent the first addition of its kind in the street, adding bulk to the host dwelling and lessening the separation distance between the property and the footpath which would serve to distinguish the dwelling from the other houses. As a result the proposal would appear as out of place in the immediate context, failing to respect the carefully planned coherence along the street. Due to prominent position of the site at the curve of the road, the proposed porch would be a dominant addition to the streetscape, which would serve to further highlight its incongruous nature. Whilst it may be possible to plan a modest front addition having regard to the character of the street, the scale, height, degree of projection and roof form of the current proposal would cause harm for the reasons given.
10. For all of those reasons I find that the development would have a significantly adverse visual effect on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area. Accordingly, it would fail to comply with Core Policy 3 and Policy BE1 of the Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy 2008 – 2029, February 2015 and the Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document, December 2015.

Other matters

11. Reference has been made to other examples of front porches in the surrounding area. However, the symmetry and specific nature of the layout at Gorsey Close has been a key element of my recommendation and I am not satisfied that those specific circumstances are replicated in the other examples. While consistency in decision making is important, this appeal is decided on its own site-specific circumstances and reference to other development nearby does not outweigh the harm identified above.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. Having had regard to all matters raised, I find that the development would have a significantly adverse visual effect on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Rafferty

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

C Preston

INSPECTOR