



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 01 June 2021

by James Blackwell LLB (Hons)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C4615/D/21/3267708

6 Brambling Walk, Amblecote, Brierley Hill, DY5 2QA

- 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 Anthony & Mrs Lesley Faulkner against the decision of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P20/1253, dated 26 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 2 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is a single storey front and side extension with canopy.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the description of development from the Council's decision notice as this more accurately and succinctly describes the physical elements of the appeal proposal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling which is sited in a Radburn style development along Brambling Walk, which is characterised by a shared common path running centrally between two rows of houses facing one another. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature.
5. The dwellings are mainly semi-detached and are sited either side of the central footpath, which runs on an upwards gradient from Stamford Road. All of the properties along Brambling Walk have large open front gardens, which creates an expanse of green openness between the two rows of houses which contributes positively to the character of the road and the surrounding area.
6. None of the properties along the eastern side of the footpath on Brambling Walk have been altered at the front, so the frontage of the appeal property is generally consistent in terms of design and style with the other dwellings along this side of the path. There is also strong symmetry between the appeal property and its adjoining neighbour, which is reflective of the other pairs of semi-detached dwellings along the road. The consistency in design between the appeal property and the neighbouring dwellings helps the appeal property integrate with the street scene, lessening the impact of the prominence which results from its projection forward of the established building line.

7. Whilst I appreciate 2 of the properties on the opposite side of the footpath have front porches projecting forward and one property has a side extension which extends forward of the general building line, the design and style of the dwellings opposite remains predominantly consistent with those along the eastern side of the path. The overarching symmetry between properties either side of the footpath and the general uniformity in the design of all properties along Brambling Walk is a key feature of its street scene, which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the wider area.
8. The proposed front extension would extend along the width of the front elevation of the property, projecting out by approximately 1.55m. The extension would be single storey only with a mono-pitched roof to the front, the height of which would partly extend into the first floor of the property. At the side, the extension would project out by 1.15m to create a front porch, again with a mono-pitched roof which is consistent in height with the front. The front and side extensions would be connected by a continuation of the two mono-pitched roofs, creating a canopy over the front entrance to the property.
9. In terms of size and scale, the extensions proposed are modest, as they are single storey only and the projection out from both the front and side is not substantial when considered in the context of the existing size of the host property. The materials proposed would also match those used on the existing dwelling, so the design is in-keeping. If the appeal property were to be considered in isolation, I am satisfied that the proposed extensions would be of a size, scale and design which would complement the existing dwelling.
10. However, the impact of the proposed development on the wider street scene would be felt differently. The two rows of dwellings along Brambling Walk mostly share a similar front building line. The appeal property and its adjoining neighbour are exceptions to this, as they project out from this building line by approximately 2m. Due to this projection out, these two dwellings are already prominent in the street scene, especially when viewed from Stamford Road to the south. Due to the upwards gradient of Brambling Walk and the stepped height of each of the properties, this prominence is even more notable. The additional projection forward that would arise from the proposed front extension would further exacerbate its prominence within the wider street scene. In turn, this would lead to the appeal property appearing dominant and incongruous with its neighbouring dwellings, which would be harmful to the street scene.
11. Furthermore, given the level of uniformity along Brambling Walk, the proposed alterations to the property's frontage would be in stark contrast to the other dwellings along the road. Whilst the materials used would match the existing dwelling, the proposed extensions would lead to a stepped frontage which varies in depth between ground and first floor level. The extensions would also introduce 2 mono-pitched roofs at first floor level, which run the width of the front extension and the depth of the side extension. These changes would imbalance the symmetry between the appeal property and its adjoining neighbour, and more generally would undermine the level of consistency between the dwellings throughout Brambling Walk. This reduction in uniformity, which is such an important feature of the street scene, would be harmful to the overriding character and appearance of the area.

12. I acknowledge that there are numerous examples of front extensions similar to the development proposed on dwellings of a similar design and style to the appeal property along nearby streets. However, the dwellings along Brambling Walk are atypical of the dwellings along nearby roads, due to the Rayburn formation of development in which they're located. Given the dwellings along Brambling Walk are also largely unaltered, Brambling Walk is unique within the surrounding area in terms of the level of consistency and uniformity of frontages of the dwellings along the road. For these reasons, the examples which have been provided by the appellant to highlight similar extensions to the one proposed, do not persuade me that such a development would be acceptable in this instance.
13. The proposed development would lead to the appeal property projecting even further forward of the building line on the eastern side of Brambling Walk. The design of the proposals would also reduce the level of consistency and uniformity between the dwellings along the road. Therefore, the proposal would be significantly harmful to the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area. For these reasons, the development would be contrary to Policy ENV2 of the Black Country Core Strategy (2011), Policies L1 and S6 of the Dudley Borough Development Strategy (2017) and Planning Guidance Note No. 17, House Extension Design Guide. Together, these policies and guidance require development proposals to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding area, through high-quality design which is responsive to the context of the wider area.

Conclusion

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

James Blackwell

INSPECTOR