
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 May 2021

by J P Longmuir BA (Hons) DipUD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W1850/D/21/3268932
28 Mount Crescent, Hereford, HR1 1NQ

- 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 Miss Elisabeth Laughland against the decision of Herefordshire Council.
 - The application Ref 202406, dated 15 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 2 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is a proposed extension and alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Miss Elisabeth Laughland against Herefordshire Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Procedural Matter

3. The appellant's name is taken from the appeal form.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and;
 - the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupant(s) of No. 30 Mount Crescent.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal site is within a suburb of Hereford, typically consisting of houses in the style of the 1920/30s. Mount Crescent is notable for a curving street whereby the houses follow and address it accordingly.
6. The appeal site includes a house typically of the above era, particularly derived from a two storey front gable bay projection, curved arch doorway and a hipped end. The house is semi-detached, with reasonable symmetry to its other half of the pair, sharing similar elevational detailing and form. The appeal

site has a largely open frontage and is prominent from the pavements on both sides of the Crescent.

7. The proposal involves an extension to the side and rear of the house. The roof of the extension would join the hipped end of the dwelling and protrude outwards thereafter. This would disrupt the continuity and significance of the hipped end, spoiling a main feature of the house.
8. Furthermore, the extension due to its siting would also look awkward and overly complex compared to the otherwise simple form of the original dwelling. The roofscape would look fussy and would look incongruous from the prominent views along the Crescent.
9. I note the submitted pictures and comments about the other extensions that have been allowed in the area. However, the impacts will vary, depending upon the particular characteristics of the site and the particular detailed proposal; they do not mean that this proposed extension would be in keeping. Whilst No. 24a is a relatively modern dwelling, the overall character of the Crescent is evident and warrants retention.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area.
11. Policies SD1, SS6 and LD1 of the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) require a positive response to the townscape and the maintenance of the distinctiveness of the area. Paragraphs 124, 127 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework promote high quality design, response to context and improvement of the quality of the area. Similarly, the National Design Guide provides detailed criteria for sympathetic extensions. The proposal would be in conflict with these policies and guidance.

Living conditions

12. The adjacent neighbour to the appeal site is No.30 and its kitchen window is side facing. There is a boundary fence, but this does not obscure much of the outlook from the window. This is the only window to this room and is positioned above the sink and worktop.
13. The proposed extension would encroach into the intervening gap between the two properties. It would be two storeys, close to and in near direct alignment to this kitchen window. The outlook from the window would be of the extension and due to its proximity, shadowing and overbearing enclosure would result, undermining the quality of the room.
14. I note there is some contention over the significance of the aspect of the window. However, this is broadly south west orientated and benefits from sunlight towards the latter daytime hours as well as having reasonable daylighting.
15. Whilst I note the appellant's point that a kitchen is not classed as a habitable room, however, it nonetheless would be used for considerable time, on an everyday basis, for the essential functioning of the house. Consequently, the room has significance to the living conditions of the dwelling, albeit less so than the principal rooms.

16. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the living conditions of the occupant(s) of No. 30 Mount Crescent, although I would ascribe this impact as only limited due to the status of the room.
17. Policies SD1, and SS6 of the LPCS seek to avoid loss of light and protect amenity. The proposal would be in conflict.

Other matters

18. The extension is intended to adapt the house to the needs for modern living and the need for working from home. Whilst such changes may well be necessary particularly considering the pressures during the pandemic, this benefit does not outweigh the harm that I have found above.

Conclusion

19. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

John Longmuir

INSPECTOR