



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 28 September 2021

by A Caines BSc (Hons) MSc TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/21/3279918

Rushgreen, The Ridge, Linton, Wetherby LS22 4HJ

- 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 Lesley Archer against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00714/FU, dated 27 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 18 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is front, rear & first floor extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. On 20 July 2021, the Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Accordingly, my decision is made in this context.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The Ridge is a residential cul-de-sac street characterised by large detached two-storey houses and bungalows that are set within spacious plots with mature trees and garden planting. Most houses are constructed in stone, but some incorporate rendered elements. Although lying outside the Linton Conservation Area, it is nevertheless an attractive residential setting with an established, verdant character.
5. Rushgreen is a bungalow located at the end of the cul-de-sac. Due to the narrow plot frontage and tall boundary hedges it is a discrete feature in the street, despite the elevated nature of the plot.
6. The proposal is for a predominantly upward extension to create a two-storey house. In doing so, it would not be located any closer to the plot boundaries or the street. However, as a result of the additional height and massing, the house would be more noticeable in the street. This could be increased further if the screening currently provided by the boundary hedges were to be reduced in height through normal maintenance, or even removed.
7. The increased height and prominence would not in and of itself be fatal given the varied size and appearance of houses in the street. Some of the two-storey houses are substantial and prominent. However, in most cases the massing of the larger houses is broken up by the arrangement of well-designed

subordinate projections and the interest arising from use of architectural detailing and materials. Although large, these unique, but attractive houses, add positively and distinctively to the character and appearance of the area.

8. The projecting elements of the proposal would display some subordination in respect of their lower ridge height. However, this would not sufficiently mitigate the overall bulk and massing of the development in this case. In addition, the wide gables with shallow roof pitches would appear disproportionate, and in the case of the front elevations, there would be an awkward mismatch of gable widths, roof pitches and fenestration design. The limited architectural articulation and interest, as well as minimal use of stone, would further undermine the overall design quality and distinctiveness of the proposal. Indeed, it is telling that the appellant even describes the proposal as a standard, generic detached two-storey dwelling. Such dwellings are not characteristic of the Ridge, or its wider surroundings.
9. Overall, through its bulk, massing, and design, the development would detract from rather than contribute positively to the distinctive character which makes this a high quality place. Whilst the house is currently vacant and in a condition awaiting improvement, I have not been given any reason to believe that it could not be altered or redeveloped in other ways that would make a positive contribution to the locality.
10. I conclude that the development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such, the proposal conflicts with Policy P10 of the Leeds City Council Core Strategy (as amended by the Core Strategy Selective Review 2019), saved Policies GP5 and BD6 of the Leeds City Council Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006), policy HDG1 of the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Householder Design Guide 2012', and Policy A1 of the Linton Neighbourhood Plan. Among other things, these require development to be well designed and to respect and enhance the distinctiveness and character of the locality with the intention of contributing positively to it.
11. Furthermore, it does not accord with Chapter 12 of the Framework, which seeks the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places; good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

Other Matters

12. The effect on neighbours has not been raised as a concern by the Council and I can see no reason to reach a different view to the Council on this matter. However, this does not outweigh the harm I have identified above.

Conclusion

13. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and Framework as a whole and there are no other considerations that outweigh this conflict. Therefore, for the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A Caines

INSPECTOR