

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 October 2021

by K Stephens BSc (Hons) MTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th November 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/P4605/D/21/3277205

48 Forest Hill Road, Birmingham B26 3TA

- 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 Ani Garcia against the decision of Birmingham City Council.
 - The application Ref 2021/02586/PA, dated 22 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 25 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Two-storey side extension and single storey rear extension'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached hipped roof property with attached single garage to the side. There is a gable feature over the first floor bay window. The property is located in a predominantly residential area of mainly semi-detached properties of similar design, with some variety of detailing, including decorative upstanding parapet features.
4. The proposal would involve a two-storey side extension and a single storey rear extension. The roof of the two-storey extension would have a false pitched roof at the front, which would present a roof slope to the street. This roof would be lower than the main roof. The remainder of the roof would be flat and extend along the side of the dwelling. The Council's concern is that this long section of roof is not hipped like the main house. The Council raises no concerns about the single storey rear extension, which has been amended to comply with the 45 Degree Code. I have no reason to take a different view.
5. I saw that a number of properties have been extended with a mixture of roof designs and shapes, some of which have been unsympathetically designed with oversized two-storey or first floor extensions. I also saw a number of extensions similar to the appeal proposal. As a result, some of the design cohesion of this suburban residential road has been eroded.
6. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Extending Your Home' (the 'SPD') advises that two-storey extensions, including rooms over garages, can have a significant effect on the street scene, and that generally the roof of the

side extension should match that on the existing property. Whilst the design of the false front-facing roof would not be dissimilar to some others in the street, the extent of visible flat roof extension would be an inappropriate addition to a property with a hipped roof. Furthermore, it would sit immediately adjacent to a conspicuous flat roof two-storey extension at the next door property (No.50). The juxtaposition of two very different designs of extensions would be visually discordant in the street scene. In addition, the property's location close to the junction with, and facing towards, Mardon Road, would make this and the proposed extension more prominent. Overall, I find the proposed two-storey side extension would be visually discordant and would detract from the character and appearance of the area.

7. I accept there are some nearby extensions similar to the appeal proposal. The Council advises that these may have been approved under a different policy regime or do not have formal consent. I noticed that the other similar extensions opposite and in the cul-de-sac head are located in different and shorter sections of the street and neighbouring properties have not generally been extended as much, giving these extensions a different context to the proposed extension.
8. Whilst there are examples of poorly designed extensions in Forest Hill Road, this should not set a precedent to justify more inappropriately designed development. The use of matching brick and roof materials would not overcome the harm I have identified.
9. For the reasons above, I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Accordingly it would be in conflict with Policy PG3 of the Birmingham Development Plan and saved paragraphs 3.14C-D of the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan. These collectively seek, amongst other things, to reinforce a positive sense of place by ensuring design responds to site conditions and the local area. It would also be in conflict with the Council's SPD. Furthermore, the government's revised National Planning Policy Guidance elevates the pursuit of good design in place making.

Conclusion

10. The proposed development would not accord with the development plan and there are no other considerations which outweigh this finding. Accordingly, for the reasons given, the appeal should not succeed.

K. Stephens
INSPECTOR