



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 February 2022

by M Russell BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/21/3288376

4 Croft Road, Bramham, Wetherby LS23 6RL

- 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 and Mrs Robin and Lauren Lewis against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref 21/04624/FU, dated 23 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as 'first-floor side extension to two-storey semi-detached dwelling and built over part of existing ground floor extension footprint'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. Croft Road is predominantly characterised by two-storey semi-detached dwellings. There is some variation in dwelling styles on the road. However, even where extensions have taken place, individual pairs of semis more often retain their general symmetry with their original form clearly legible. This is the case for the appeal dwelling and the attached semi-detached dwelling at No 2 Croft Road which have both previously been extended to the front and side. The extensions at No 2 include a first-floor side element which is set well back from the original front elevation. As a result, the dwellings retain an overriding cohesive appearance which positively contributes to the street scene.
4. The width of the first-floor side extension would be less than two-thirds of the main house and its ridge would be set down from the main roofline. The extension would also incorporate matching materials and the front window proportions would be similar to others on the front elevation. Therefore, the proposal would accord with some of the guidance in the Leeds City Council Householder Design Guide (2012) (the HDG).
5. However, the development would only be marginally set back from the first-floor front elevation of the host dwelling. In this regard it would fall significantly short of the 2.0 metre (m) requirement in the HDG. This would mean that when facing the site at street level, the proposal would be unduly prominent and would be seen to elongate the first-floor front elevation. This would unacceptably reduce legibility of the dwelling's original form. It would

also unbalance the appearance of the pair of semis that the appeal dwelling forms part of.

6. I acknowledge that the requirement for a 2.0m set-back in the HDG is guidance and a degree of flexibility can be applied. However, the first-floor side extensions on the similar semi-detached dwellings at Nos 2 and 3 Croft Road have set-backs close to the HDG requirement and are therefore not comparable to the appeal proposal.
7. I accept that the extensions to the dwellings referred to by the appellant as Nos 5 and 23 both fall well short of the HDG set-back requirement. However, the evidence before me suggests No 5 was not built in accordance with the approved plans which had proposed a greater set-back. The dwelling at No 23 is set further away from the street frontage on Croft Road than the appeal dwelling, helping to reduce the prominence of that particular extension. In any case, these examples do not persuade me that the specific harm that would result to the appearance of the appeal dwelling and the cohesiveness of the wider street scene would be justified in this instance.
8. I conclude, the development would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. In that regard, it would conflict with the design and context requirements of Policy P10 (Design) of the Leeds City Council Core Strategy (as amended) (2019) (the CS), Policy H4 (Development outside the Conservation Area) of the Bramham Cum Oglethorpe Neighbourhood Development Plan (made 2019) and Saved Policy BD6 of the Leeds City Council Unitary Development Plan Volume 1: Written Statement (Review 2006) (the UDP). For the same reasons, it would also conflict with the overall objectives of Policy HDG1 (Design and appearance) of the HDG.
9. Policy GP5, which is referred to in the Council's decision notice, is not amongst the saved policies listed in the directions provided by the Council. Even so, this does not diminish the conflict with the other policies of the development plan identified above.

Other Matter

10. Even if the proposal is the only way to provide a first-floor side extension with a functional internal layout, this does not justify the harm identified under the main issue.

Conclusion

11. The proposal would have a significantly harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Russell

INSPECTOR