The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 July 2022

by D J Barnes MBA BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 17 August 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3425/D/22/3300128
55 Porlock Avenue, Weeping Cross, Stafford ST17 0HS

- 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 Peter Harman against the decision of Stafford Borough Council.
- The application Ref 21/35123/HOU, dated 21 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 March 2022.
- The development proposed is the erection of a two storey side domestic extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. It is considered that the main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the streetscene.

Reasons

3. The proposed development includes the erection of a 2-storey side extension to a 2-storey semi-detached dwelling located within a primarily residential area. The streetscene along Porlock Avenue is predominantly pairs of 2-storey semi-detached dwellings which are set back from the footways to the rear of front gardens which are landscaped and used for off-street parking. This siting of the pairs of semi-detached dwellings provides a distinctive rhythm to the character and appearance of the streetscene.

4. Originally, there would have been gaps between the 2-storey side elevations of the pairs of semi-detached dwellings. However, some of these gaps have been eroded whether by single storey garages at ground floor level or by 2-storey side extensions. This situation applies between the appeal property and the 2-storey extension erected to the side of No. 57. However, a physical gap is generally still retained, even if it is only at first floor level, between the pairs of semi-detached dwellings. These full or partial gaps contribute positively to the character and appearance of the streetscene.

5. As identified by the appellant, an exception is the absence of a gap between Nos. 27 and 29 where 2-storey side extensions abut one another. No detailed planning history of these side extensions has been provided. However, the lack of a physical and visual gap causes a physical and visual terracing effect between these 2 pairs of semi-detached dwellings. This terracing effect has a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene of the

type referred to in the Council's *Design Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD).

6. The proposed development includes the erection of a 2-storey side extension which would occupy the remaining gap between the property and No. 57. Although its height would be lower than the ridge of the host property and the front elevation at first floor level would be set back from the host property's front elevation, in combination with the side addition to No. 57 the appeal scheme would result in a harmful terracing effect contrary to the SPD's design guidance contained.

7. This terracing effect would not be sufficiently mitigated by the proposed extension's ground floor front elevation being set back from the front elevation of the 2-storey addition to the side of No. 57 which projects forward of this neighbouring property's original elevation. Accordingly, the appeal scheme would not make a positive contribution to the rhythm, character and appearance of the streetscene.

8. For the reasons given, it is concluded that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene and, as such, it would conflict with Policy N1(g) and (h) of The Plan for Stafford Borough. Amongst other matters, these policy criteria require development to be of high design quality which respects local context and character. Accordingly, it is concluded that this appeal should be dismissed.

D J Barnes

INSPECTOR