



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 January 2023

by Sarah Colebourne MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3425/D/22/3307464

Thyon, Bradley Lane, Bradley, Stafford, ST18 9DP

- 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 M Owens against the decision of Stafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/34415/HOU, dated 25 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 12 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'front and side extension'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for an increase in ridge height to existing dwelling to take dormer bungalow to a two storey dwelling with two storey side extension and front extensions at Thyon, Bradley Lane, Bradley, Stafford, ST18 9DP in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 21/34415/HOU, dated 25 May 2021, subject to the conditions below:-
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: P01 Rev B, P03 Rev B.
 - 3) No development shall commence above slab level until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
 - 4) The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the parking layout has been carried out in accordance with plan no P01 Rev B (Block & Location Plans) and shall thereafter be retained as such for the lifetime of the development.

Preliminary matter

2. The Council's decision notice refers to the proposed development as an 'increase in ridge height to existing dwelling to take dormer bungalow to a two storey dwelling with two storey side extension and front extensions'. As this describes the proposal in more detail than the description given in the application, I have used this as the basis for my decision and in the formal decision above.

Reasons

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character of the dwelling and the area. The development plan includes policy C5(C) of The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 (2014) which sets out a limit for extensions of no more than 70% of the dwelling as originally built in areas outside identified settlements unless the design and appearance of the proposed extension is proportionate to the type and character of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. Policies N1g and N1h of The Plan require that proposals are of a high standard of design and have regard to the local context. The National Planning Policy Framework also places great emphasis on high quality design and requires that developments add to the overall quality of the area.
4. The appeal site comprises a small gable fronted, detached bungalow that has been previously extended with a side roof dormer. It sits within a row of detached dwellings on the edge of the village of Bradley that are set well back from and raised above the road, overlooking fields to the front. The dwellings in the row are very varied in style and design, but are all of one and a half or two storeys (two are dormer bungalows) with higher ridges and of significantly greater size than Thyon. There is a sense of openness with generally a gap of a similar width to a single driveway between dwellings. Thyon appears out of scale and disproportionately small in the street scene and somewhat dwarfed by the larger dwellings on either side. It provides little contribution to the character of Bradley Lane.
5. The proposed development would increase the ridge height and would add two storey side and front extensions to the building. Its form would be substantially remodelled from that of a gable fronted bungalow to a two storey house with a roof described by the appellant of 'half dutch gable ends'. Each elevation would be significantly altered. The resultant dwelling would be a two storey house with a half hipped roof with a lower projecting central gable on its front elevation and two small gabled dormer windows either side of that. Materials would be mainly coloured render with brickwork detailing and interlocking concrete roof tiles.
6. As such, the dwelling would have a cottage-style appearance and would be more rustic in character than the more suburban character of the existing bungalow and the other dwellings in the row. I noted at my visit that there are more traditional, vernacular style dwellings in the village further to the south on Holly Lane. This approach is therefore appropriate given the edge of village location, proximity to open countryside, the wide variety of designs in the row and the wider village context.
7. In terms of size and scale, the proposal would be clearly above the 70% threshold in policy C5C with an increased floor area of some 136%. However, the increased height of the dwelling would bring it broadly in scale with its neighbours and would represent a positive enhancement to the street scene. The resulting dwelling would not project significantly beyond the front or rear elevations of the existing or neighbouring dwellings and would respect the established building line along Bradley Lane. The existing gap with Sky View to the north would be retained and although the gap between Thyon and Elmwood to the south would be reduced by reason of the side extension, an adequate gap would be maintained and assisted by the half-hipped roof of the proposal

and the gap at first floor level by reason of the attached neighbouring garage. The proposal would therefore retain a sense of openness between the dwelling and its neighbours. Its size and scale would therefore be acceptable.

8. The plans show a mix of materials, with coloured render for the main walls but brickwork for the projecting gable, plinth and chimney. Although most of the dwellings in the row are built of brick, the projecting gable of the adjacent dwelling 'Sky View' is of white render. The mix of materials proposed would therefore be appropriate. A subtly coloured render would help the proposal blend into the street scene but further details are necessary and would require approval through a materials condition.
9. The replacement of an outdated, suburban style bungalow with this well considered vernacular style house would be a positive addition in this location and the proposal would significantly enhance the street scene. This is an important material consideration that outweighs the conflict with the 70% requirement in policy C5C and the proposal is clearly proportionate to the type and character of dwellings in the surrounding area.
10. As I have not found that any harm would occur, I have not taken into account the fallback position submitted by the appellant that an alternative scheme could be built under the prior approval process.
11. I conclude then that the proposal is of a high standard of design that has regard to its local context. It would add to the overall quality of the area and would not result in significant harm to its character or appearance. It would accord therefore accord with development plan policies N1g and N1h. Whilst there is some conflict with policy C5C in regard to the existing dwelling, this is outweighed by the significant benefit in terms of overall design quality.

Conditions

12. In addition to the standard commencement condition, a condition is necessary requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, in order to provide certainty. A condition requiring the approval of details of external materials is necessary because the plans do not specify full details. To ensure the provision of adequate off-street parking facilities in the interests of the convenience and safety of users of the highway as referenced in policy T2d of The Plan for Stafford Borough, a condition requiring the implementation of parking provision is necessary.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Sarah Colebourne

Inspector