

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 March 2023

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

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

Decision date: 30th March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C4615/D/22/3312716

1 Walker Avenue, Wollescote, Stourbridge, DY9 9EA

- 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 R Masters against the decision of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P22/0799, dated 30 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 15 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is a front porch and hall extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a front porch and hall extension at 1 Walker Avenue, Wollescote, Stourbridge, DY9 9EA in accordance with the terms of the application Ref P22/0799, dated 30 May 2022, subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule to this decision.

Procedural matters

2. For the reasons set out in the officer report the Council altered the description of the proposed development, although this was seemingly done without the appellants agreement. Having regard to that depicted in the submitted plans, I consider the description provided in the application form accurately describes the proposal, so I shall utilise that.
3. The Council did not produce a list of the plans subject of the determination and, in the original appeal documentation, the Council and appellant produced different plans showing two versions of the proposals. The Council has since confirmed which plans were subject of its formal determination.

Main issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings.

Reasons

5. Most of the dwellings in the locality are of a typical suburban appearance, and in this context the appeal property is of an unusual design. It stands at the busy junction of Walker Road with Wollescote Road, with two steeply angled high gables facing each of the roads. Its roof and imposing gables are the property's dominant and characteristic features. It is brick-built, with a red tiled roof and prominent chimneys.

6. So as to enhance the existing entrance hall, in terms of space and natural light, the applicant proposes an extension which would effectively link the gables. The Council considers the approach mistaken and comments in the officer report that:

'The proposed extension when viewed from the front of the property does not assimilate with the host dwelling, due to the proposed gable design, that is a forced juxtaposition with the existing characteristic forward facing gable feature, essentially creating a duality of features. The proposed elevation would have a disconnected finish with no overriding design approach, rather the mix of gables that would compete with each other and therefore not have a harmonious relationship.'

7. Consequently, the Council considers the proposal would be a discordant and incongruous addition, detracting from the appearance of the host property and the street scene. The Council also considers the proposed materials of construction to be inappropriate.
8. I do not share the Council's view of the proposed design. Rather, I perceive this as an imaginative, modern design solution to achieve a more imposing but nevertheless suiting entrance to the dwelling. The extension's design reflects the gabling, the main striking characteristic of the dwelling, and is subordinate and entirely proportionate in scale in relation to the existing dwelling.
9. The specified external materials appear to be of high quality and the use of some contrasting materials is not inappropriate in my view. The glazing proposed would ensure that the newly created entrance hall would appear light and airy from the outside, and would also have that effect internally, as intended.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposal, notwithstanding the appeal building's prominent position at a busy junction, would sit acceptably in its spatial and visual context in harmony with the form and appearance of the host property and its surroundings.
11. Accordingly, I find no conflict with those provisions of policy ENV3 of the Black Country Core Strategy and policy L1 of the Dudley Borough Development Strategy relating to the requirement for high quality design and that house extensions should be of an appropriate form, scale and mass, using appropriate materials and responsive to the context and character of the surrounding area.

Conditions

12. I have considered the Council's suggested conditions and agree that, in the interests of visual amenity, a condition in respect of external materials is necessary. However, the condition imposed is different to that proposed by the Council to reflect the materials specified by the appellant.
13. It is also necessary, in the interests of certainty, that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

Other matters

14. I note the references to other development plan policies, but those to which I have referred are considered the most relevant in this case. I have also noted the references to the *National Planning Policy Framework*.

15. No other matter raised is of such strength or significance as to outweigh those considerations that led me to my conclusions.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 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: Ref 961-01; 961-04; 961-07 & 961-08.
- 3). The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be those specified in the original application form dated 30 May 2022.