



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 March 2023

by Ryan Cowley MPlan (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N3020/D/22/3313377

43 Castleton Avenue, Arnold NG5 6NH

- 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 David Holmes against the decision of Gedling Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2022/0947, dated 8 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 31 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is extension & alterations to ground floor to form open plan kitchen, utility and store with extension to first floor to form bedroom and bathroom and alterations to form en-suite.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Applications for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr David Holmes against Gedling Borough Council. This is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal site and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a 2-storey traditional detached dwelling, with a hipped roof. The dwelling is finished in red brick with red roof tiles and sits along a row of similar detached dwellings. The plot features a driveway running along its side boundary, providing a gap to 45 Castleton Avenue (No 45). On the opposite side, 41 Castleton Avenue (No 41) similarly retains a gap along its side, separating it from the appeal site, albeit this is somewhat narrower.
5. The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of primarily detached and semi-detached traditional dwellings of similar forms and finishes, arranged in rows along Castleton Avenue, Kingswell Road and Langley Avenue. Plots typically feature a gap to at least one side, providing an element of separation between dwellings and some respite from the otherwise relatively dense suburban layout. Hipped roof designs are prevalent throughout the area and assist in maintaining an element of space. A variety of architectural features such as projecting bay windows and front facing gables add interest to the street scene and further distinguish dwellings from one another.

6. The appeal proposal would include a 2-storey side extension, infilling most of the gap between the existing dwelling and No 45. The roof form of the extension would have a considerably lower ridge height than the main roof, and a side facing gable design with a flat element across its central section.
7. The proposed side extension would feature a modest set back from the front elevation of the existing dwelling at both ground and first floor. This would assist in breaking up the front elevation to some extent. I also recognise a very small gap would be retained between the two dwellings due to the chimney structure of No 45. However, neither would be sufficient to mitigate the visual coalescence between the two dwellings and the considerable erosion in the sense of space that would result.
8. While the roof of the proposed side extension would be relatively low, it does not slope away from the boundary. It would therefore also degrade the space between it and No 45. The design is also noticeably at odds with that of the traditional hipped roof of the host dwelling and neighbouring properties.
9. This relationship would appear incongruous and give the appeal site a somewhat cramped appearance when viewed from the front. The proposal would therefore detract from the prevailing character and appearance of the appeal site and surrounding area.
10. My attention has been drawn to 35 and 37 Langley Avenue, two semi-detached dwellings local to the appeal site which feature two storey side extensions. Full details of the circumstances in which these extensions were permitted are not before me. However, I observed during my site visit that, despite the minimal gap between the two dwellings, there are several mitigating factors in these examples that distinguish them from the appeal proposal.
11. Notably, both are on a different street to the appeal site, which is predominantly characterised by semi-detached, rather than detached, dwellings. Due to its topography, No 37 sits at a noticeably higher land level than No 35, and is sited further forward toward the footpath. Both examples also feature characteristic hipped roof designs sloping away from the shared boundary. Combined, these factors assist in breaking up the continuity in their front elevations and roof forms that can contribute to a 'terracing effect'.
12. Notwithstanding these examples, I do not find this type of relationship to be a prevailing characteristic of the area and, ultimately, each case must be considered on its individual merits. This therefore does not lead me to a different conclusion with respect to the proposal that is before me.
13. I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the appeal site and surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to Policy 10 of the Aligned Core Strategies Part 1 Local Plan Adopted September 2014 and Policy LPD43 of the Local Planning Document Part 2 Local Plan Adopted July 2018. These policies, among other provisions, seek to ensure all new development has regard to local context and reinforces local characteristics, and extensions to dwellings are in keeping with surrounding character in terms of built form and general design. It would also conflict with Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in respect of its aim of achieving well-designed places.

Other Matters

14. The Planning Practice Guidance and the Framework encourage local planning authorities to take a positive approach and work proactively with applicants. I recognise the appellant's frustrations regarding the time taken to determine the planning application, and previous application, and the level of engagement offered by the Council throughout the process. However, these matters do not lead me to a different conclusion on the main issue.

Conclusion

15. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan, taken as a whole, and I have found no material considerations that indicate the proposal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. Consequently, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Ryan Cowley

INSPECTOR