



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 March 2023

by N Perrins BSc (hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1110/D/23/3314145

32 Hawthorn Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 6DZ

- 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 Darren Pike against the decision of Exeter City Council.
 - The application Ref: 22/0928/FUL, dated 07/07/2022, was refused by notice dated 22 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is to construct a two-storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effects of the proposal on:
 - The character and appearance of the streetscene; and
 - The effect of the living conditions of the occupiers of No. 3 Laurel Road with regard to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance of the streetscene

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling within a large residential area comprising low-density post-war housing. The properties in the area are nearly all semi-detached and arranged in a grid and uniform pattern. Properties within this residential area, including the appeal site, are characterised by having mainly open amenity areas on the corners of the street grid layout that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area.
4. The appeal proposal is to construct a two-storey extension within the appeal property's existing garden area. Amended plans were submitted during the processing of the planning application that reduced the size of the extension from that originally submitted. For the avoidance of doubt, I have assessed this appeal using the amended plans that show the depth of the extension to be 6 metres by 3 metres wide at the front, and angled inwards as it approaches the boundary of No. 3 Laurel Road. Materials would be brick and slate tiles to match the existing house.
5. Whilst the prevailing character of the area comprises corner properties with mainly spacious and open amenity areas, I note that there are some examples

of single and two storey extensions on corner plots within the wider area, some of which the appellant has highlighted in their submissions. However, I do not have the details of those other proposals before me, and I need to assess the appeal proposal on its own merits and specific impact on the streetscene.

6. In this case, the proposal at two storeys will be highly visible within the streetscene along Hawthorn Road and Laurel Road. I note that the appeal property's garden area is already partially screened by the presence of existing boundary treatment that somewhat reduces the look and feel of spaciousness in this part of the streetscene. The addition therefore of the proposed two storey extension would further erode and disrupt the spaciousness of this part of the streetscene along Hawthorn Road, and as it turns the corner to Laurel Road. As has been identified, the openness and spaciousness of corner amenity areas is a key part of the character of the area, which would be eroded and disrupted by the appeal proposal.
7. Accordingly, I conclude that the appeal proposal would have an unacceptable impact on the streetscene along Hawthorn Road and Laurel Road. As such the proposal conflicts with Policy CP17 of the Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2012, Policy DG1 and Policy DG4 of the Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011 and Principle 2 of the Householder's Guide to Extension Design 2008 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Living conditions of the occupiers of No. 3 Laurel Road with regard to outlook

8. I note that objections were submitted to the application that set out concerns regarding impacts arising from loss of light and impacts on ground conditions and boundary treatments. I do not agree that there would be harmful impacts to ground conditions or boundary treatments, but I do consider there would be adverse impacts on the outlook from 3 Laurel Road arising from the overall size, height and scale of the extension. At two storeys in height, the proposal would in my view create an oppressive form of development when experienced from 3 Laurel Road.
9. I note that there the affected rooms would not appear to be primary rooms. However, I do not consider this to be justification to allow the scheme as it would still be visible from other vistas such as the private garden and would appear as an overbearing addition that would result in harmful impacts by virtue of the loss of outlook from 3 Laurel Road.
10. I therefore find that there would be harm arising from the proposal to the amenity of the neighbouring property at 3 Laurel Road that would conflict with Policy CP17 of the Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2012, Policy DG1 and Policy DG4 of the Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011 and Principle 3 of the Householder's Guide to Extension Design 2008 SPD.

Other Matters

11. The National Planning Policy Framework advocates that development should be of good design and promote a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. As I found that there would be harm to the streetscene and amenity of the occupants of 3 Laurel Road, there are no material considerations within national planning policy that would override the identified conflict with the development plan.

Conclusion

12. To conclude, the development would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene of Hawthorn Road and Laurel Road. The proposal would also harm the amenity of 3 Laurel Road. There are no material considerations that would outweigh the conflict with the Development Plan and therefore the appeal is dismissed.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR