



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 May 2023

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/P4605/D/23/3315857

239 Alexander Road, Birmingham, B27 6EU

- 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 Wasim Mahmood against the decision of Birmingham City Council.
 - The application Ref 2022/08354/PA, dated 9 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Proposed Rear one storey 8m extension and second floor front dormer.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey end of terrace property located towards the junction of Alexander Road and Douglas Road / Fenton Way. It has a lower two storey wing to the rear which is characteristic of other dwellings in the surrounding area. Alexander Road comprises mainly of terraced dwellings, of varying design and appearance. To the north of the appeal property is a further terrace comprising five dwellings.
4. The appeal proposal is for a dormer window on the front elevation and a single storey extension to the rear.
5. The Birmingham Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2022) (SPD) whilst non statutory, provide useful design guidance. It advises that the design of an extension must consider the architectural style of the house being extended and character of the surrounding area; leading to a design that complements the scale and style of the house and its surroundings. With regard to dormer windows, it states that dormer extensions must not dominate the roof. The designs and proportions of any proposal must be in keeping with the house, with details such as the roof and windows aligning with lower floors.

6. The proposed dormer window would be set down from the ridge of the existing dwelling and would also be set in from the eaves. However, I find that the proposed dormer with its width of about 3 metres and its unusual gable end design would be a highly dominant feature of the roof of the host dwelling and would represent an incongruous addition to the roofscape of the property, and the wider terrace, where no other front dormers are displayed. Furthermore, I note that the roof of No 239 is pitched at a steeper angle than the remainder of the terrace, thus adding to the overall prominence of the dormer. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the design guidance set out in the SPD and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area.
7. I acknowledge that there is a roof extension being built on a property opposite the appeal site, however this relates to a rear elevation and is not comparable with the appeal proposal. I also note that there are several examples of front dormers on dwellings in Alexander Road, although these are not viewed in the same context as the appeal site. Moreover, some of the existing dormers appear to be part of the original design whilst others are of a more traditional size and appearance.
8. The proposed single storey rear extension would extend across the full width of the dwelling and would have a depth of 8 metres. I acknowledge that the dwelling is located within a larger than average plot and that other dwellings in the area benefit from large extensions. However, the proposed extension would extend across the full width of the dwelling and together with its disproportionate depth, would not appear as a subordinate addition. In my view, the proposed extension would detract from the architectural composition of the existing dwelling and would overwhelm and fail to respect its scale, character and appearance.
9. I note that the extension would be adjacent to a poorly constructed high wall along the boundary with No 237 which appears to have a modest extension and lean-to building attached to it. Whilst I am satisfied that the proposed extension would not result in any harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjacent dwelling, the presence of the party wall does not provide sufficient justification for an extension of the size and scale proposed.
10. For the reasons set out above, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Thus, it would conflict with Policy PG3 of the Birmingham Development Plan (2017) and Policy DM2 of the Development Management in Birmingham Development Plan Document (2021) which when taken together, seek good design which safeguards the character and appearance of the area. For the same reasons it would also be in conflict with the SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

Conclusion

11. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR