



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 August 2023

by M Ollerenshaw BSc (Hons) MTPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/23/3321703

3 Barnsdale Road, Allerton Bywater, Castleford WF10 2AW

- 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 Georgie Swinson against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref 23/00893/FU, dated 11 February 2023, was refused by notice dated 12 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is part two storey, part single storey side extension with hipped roof; new first floor window to front; alterations to roof including rear dormer to create habitable rooms, existing hipped roof altered to a gable and new rooflights to front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have taken the description of development in the banner heading above from the Council's decision notice as it more succinctly and accurately describes the proposal than that contained in the application form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development proposed on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is one half of a two storey semi-detached pair of dwellings situated on a private access road to the western side of Barnsdale Road within a predominantly residential area. The property is located within a linear row of mainly semi-detached properties which are set well back from Barnsdale Road. In common with many of the other properties in this row, the appeal site has a front driveway and garden with a low boundary wall, and a larger rear garden.
5. Although some of the properties in the row have been extended, there is a strong sense of uniformity largely due to the consistent building line, the gaps between the semi-detached pairs of properties, their hipped roofs, bay windows and commonality of external materials comprising brick and tiled roofs. The area therefore has a pleasant spacious and well-ordered appearance which contributes positively to its character.
6. The proposal includes a two storey side extension which would be set back a small distance from the original front elevation of the property at ground floor level with a greater set back at first floor level. It would have a hipped roof which would tie into the proposed new gable end.

7. The neighbouring property to the south, 2 Barnsdale Road, includes a single storey side extension which is set forward of the original front elevation and extends up to the common boundary with the appeal site. The proposed two storey side extension would extend up to the side boundary with No 2. Whilst I acknowledge that the design of this extension has been amended to include a two metre set back at first floor level, the roof design changed to a hip and that matching materials would be used, the lack of relief from the side boundary would result in the loss of the visual gap between the two properties at ground level. This would create a cramped appearance and a potential terracing effect with No 2, should the latter ever be extended above the existing side extension in the future. Therefore, the proximity of the proposed side extension to the boundary would result in an unacceptable loss of openness between the properties which would be harmful to the street scene.
8. The proposed hip to gable extension over the original roof of the property would create an unbalanced appearance with 4 Barnsdale Road by increasing the bulk of the roof structure on one side of the semi-detached pair. The roof extension would also disrupt the largely uniform roofscape of this row which is characterised by hipped roofs. The adverse visual effects of the proposal would be exacerbated by the hipped roof above the side extension being set against the new gable end, which would result in a disjointed and awkward arrangement that would fail to reflect the simple roof structure of the existing building. The appellant indicates that they would be willing to amend the design of the proposal by reverting to a gable end on the side extension. However, I have no details of an alternative scheme before me and the appeal process should not be used to evolve a scheme. I have therefore considered the appeal on the basis of the plans that were before the Council.
9. Although the established hedge on the western side of Barnsdale Road provides some screening of the appeal property, the proposed extensions would still be visible from the main road, particularly at first floor and roof level, and from the private access road serving the properties. From these vantage points the two storey side extension and hip to gable enlargement would appear as an incongruous form of development which would not reflect the character of the property or the street scene.
10. I have had regard to the examples of the other extensions that have been approved elsewhere in the area, as referred to by the appellant. However, I do not know the precise circumstances which led to the approval of any of these and they have different surrounding contexts to the appeal site to varying degrees. Moreover, none of the examples referred to included both a two storey side extension and a hip to gable enlargement. Therefore, they are not directly comparable to the appeal proposal.
11. In the case of the two storey side extensions at 1 Barnsdale Road and 8 Park Avenue, these are situated at the end of a row of properties rather than within the middle of a row. The two storey extension at 10 Barnsdale Road extends up to the shared boundary. However, the details provided indicate that this development was approved prior to the adoption of the policies and guidance contained in the current development plan. Given its lack of relief from the side boundary and from the original front elevation, that extension is not a good example to follow in my view. The appeal proposal is not comparable to the large-scale residential development on the former building yard to the south, which has a differing context and layout to the appeal site. Accordingly, I have

given this limited weight in my consideration of the appeal proposal. As a result, the other examples referred to do not justify the harm that would be caused in this case. In any event, I have assessed the appeal scheme on its own merits.

12. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. It would conflict with saved Policies GP5 and BD6 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan 2006, Policy P10 of the Leeds City Council Core Strategy 2019, and Policy HDG1 of the Leeds City Council Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2012. Amongst other things, these policies and guidance seek to ensure that extensions and alterations are of an appropriate scale, form and design to the existing building and the wider context. The proposal would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks to ensure that development is well-designed and sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

13. The Council have raised no concerns with the proposal in terms of its effects on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers or highway safety. I see no reason to disagree with this assessment on the basis of the evidence before me and my observations on site, though these are neutral matters that do not weigh in favour of the proposal. The neighbour's concerns relating to repairs and maintenance of the side wall of their extension and possible property devaluation are not material planning considerations within this appeal.
14. The appellant refers to the potential to extend the property with a single storey side extension and a hip to gable extension using permitted development rights. Be that as it may, such a side extension would be significantly lower than the appeal proposal. Therefore, the resultant visual impact of this fallback scheme would be less than the proposal before me. Moreover, I cannot be sure that such an alternative scheme would be carried out, particularly because the resultant extension would not seem to satisfy the appellant's requirements due to the lack of a first floor. Accordingly, I give this matter limited weight.
15. Whilst I appreciate that the proposal would provide enlarged accommodation for the appellant's growing family and that it would be cheaper than moving to a larger home, these personal circumstances do not outweigh the visual harm that I have identified. I also note the appellant's concerns regarding lack of engagement by the Council at the pre-application stage, and the frustration that this has caused to the appellant. However, that is a procedural matter which does not impact on my assessment of the planning merits of the case.

Conclusion

16. The proposal does not accord with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the Framework, that indicate that I should take a different decision other than in accordance with this. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Ollerenshaw

INSPECTOR