The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 October 2023

by A Caines BSc (Hons) MSc TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 October 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/23/3329924
45 Gledhow Wood Grove, Gledhow, Leeds LS8 1PA

- 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 Joe Wearing against the decision of Leeds City Council.
- The application Ref 23/02508/FU, dated 21 April 2023, was refused by notice dated 13 July 2023.
- The development proposed is single-storey wrap-around extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is situated within an established residential area, at the corner of Gledhow Wood Grove with Lidgett Avenue. It comprises one half of a pair of two-storey, semi-detached houses with a painted render finish. The dwelling faces towards Gledhow Wood Grove and together with its adjoining neighbour, has been subjected to a hip-to-gable alteration with a large box dormer at the rear. The site boundaries are formed by a low wall to the front, hedge to the side, and timber fence at the rear.

4. The houses in this part of Gledhow Wood Grove are varied in age, style, and materials, while the wider surrounding area, particularly on the south side of Lidgett Avenue, contains mainly traditional houses constructed in brick with pitched slate roofs. A number of nearby properties have been altered and extended over time, but these generally take their cue from the host dwellings in terms of design and materials, and therefore integrate unobtrusively with the established built form.

5. The appellant has taken a contemporary design approach to the proposed extension. I am not fundamentally opposed to the principle of such an approach at this site. However, I am not convinced that it has been successfully achieved in this case. Whilst the extension would be subservient in terms of its height and set back from the front elevation, its boxy, flat-roofed form, combined with an incoherent pattern of fenestration and the awkward manner in which it would wrap around the rear of the building, would result in a visually jarring and discordant addition. The use of contrasting materials would only add to its overall conspicuousness. As such, the proposal would neither respect, nor compliment the host building. I am mindful that the

dwelling already has a large boxy addition on its roof, but this does not justify further insensitive alterations and the cumulative degradation of the character and appearance of the dwelling and street scene.

6. It has been suggested by the appellant that the extension would be obscured from view by the existing boundary treatment, particularly the boundary hedge. While that may be the case currently, there is no guarantee that the hedge would be maintained at the current height. The hedge could also die or be removed for other reasons, and an alternative form of enclosure would most likely not be capable of screening the 3.3 metre high extension. In any event, new development should be well designed and contribute positively to an area, not hidden because it is poor.

7. The Council has also raised a concern in relation to the return building line along Lidgett Avenue. However, whilst the distinctive group comprising of 1, 3, and 9 Lidgett Avenue has a uniform front building line, that is not the case for the wider street scene context where most properties are located side-on to Lidgett Avenue and the gaps between the buildings and the street varies considerably, as clearly shown in the appellant's Statement. In this specific site context, I am satisfied that the proposed single-storey extension would not harmfully prejudice any significant building line consideration.

8. Nonetheless, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and its immediate surroundings for other reasons identified above. Thus, the proposal conflicts with Policies P10 and P12 of the Leeds Core Strategy (Selective Review 2019); Saved Policies GP5 and BD6 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006); and Policy HDG1 of the Council's Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2012), which collectively seek to secure high quality design and ensure that alterations and extensions respect the form, proportions and character and appearance of the original building and the locality. It is also contrary to Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework with regards to achieving well designed places.

Conclusion

9. The proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area, and is therefore in conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations which indicate that the decision should be taken other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

A Caines

INSPECTOR