



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 October 2023

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06.11.2023

Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/D/23/3324723

10 Durham Crescent, Coventry, CV5 9GA

- 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 Richard Bufton against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref PL/2023/0000768/HHA, dated 15 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 June 2023.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single-storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effects of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached bungalow occupying a corner plot with a frontage to Durham Crescent and side return boundary to Anglesey Close. The area is entirely residential in character comprising principally a mix of detached and semi-detached bungalows and two-storey dwellings all of a similar age and with many pockets of repeat property designs throughout the area. The proposal would include a sideways projection of the building's existing hipped roof form with a single-storey extension to the rear spanning the full width of the extended property and with a hipped roof and central valley over.
4. The *Coventry City Council Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD) advises that side extensions should normally be subservient to the main building with a lower ridge. I saw that most semi-detached properties within the area would have been originally built symmetrical, mirroring each other in form and detailing. Many have been altered in a variety of ways over time. However, these were principally cosmetic changes and symmetry of form remains a visually dominant and important feature of the area's character. The absence of a recess to the extension and lower ridge would mean that the extension would fail to display any degree of subservience, which would be contrary to the SPD guidance. Moreover, I find that the building overall would appear unbalanced and disproportionately wide without any ability to distinguish the symmetry of its original form. This would

stand out as an incongruous and inharmonious change within the building's wider setting.

5. The SPD recognises the contribution corner plots can often make to the open and spacious characteristics of suburban areas. As a key principle it advises that side extensions on corner plots should not infringe upon any established relevant building lines in the immediate vicinity.
6. In this instance there is a significant gap between the side elevation of No 10 and the return boundary along Anglesey Close. This is generally reflective of the front garden depths of properties facing Anglesey Close on either side of the appeal property. Those to the west, beyond the junction with Durham Crescent, display a consistent forward building line commensurate with the side elevation of No 10, and with principally open plan frontages and only very low enclosures to the back edges of the pavement. A similar scene is presented on the opposite side of Anglesey Close. To the east, Anglesey Close terminates as a cul-de-sac with a group of three semi-detached pairs of two-storey dwellings immediately behind the appeal site (Nos 4-14 even). Although these have a staggered forward building line in relation to each other, and which is stepped behind the side elevation of No 10 due to the alignment of the road, each property maintains an open frontage and set back that is consistent with the wider area. As a result of this development pattern, and despite the two-storey scale of some buildings and the obvious visual stop created by those at the terminal end of the cul-de-sac, there is a distinctly spacious and open character to the vista along Anglesey Close.
7. There is an existing approximately 2m high boundary wall enclosing the side and rear garden of the appeal site. However, the openness of the appeal site beyond the side elevation of the dwelling can still be openly seen and valued, contributing positively to the spacious character of the street scene, and which can be appreciated in views looking both east and west along Anglesey Close. I accept that the proposal would maintain a gap of almost 3.4m between the edge of the side extension and the boundary that would exceed the minimum distance of 2m expressed within the SPD. However, the circumstances in this case indicate to me that the degree of encroachment into open space at the side of No 10 would be excessive and out of keeping with the established development pattern and character of the area.
8. Overall, by failing to respect the important symmetrical form of the existing building, or the spacious character of the area, the proposal would neither respect nor enhance the surroundings or positively contribute towards the local identity and character of the area. As such it would conflict with Policies DE1 and H5 the Coventry Local Plan 2017. For the same reasons there would be conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed places.

Other Matters

9. I understand that planning permission was granted on appeal for a similar extension in the first half of the 1990s (Ref T/APP/U4610/A/94/244464/P2). However, that permission has long since lapsed. Furthermore, I have been presented with no information to demonstrate precisely the development that was proposed, the reasoning behind the decision, or the evidence that was considered by the Inspector at that time. My decision is based upon the

current circumstances and merits of the case and, more specifically, up-to-date guidance and planning policy at both local and national levels.

10. I appreciate that the proposal would provide improved living space for the owners, including making adaptations for 'Life Time Living'. However, I have been presented with no substantive evidence to suggest that this could only be achieved by the proposed extensions. I have noted some apparent local support for the proposal but this does not alter my findings.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given, I find that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing building and to the wider character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR