
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 December 2023

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th December 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/D/23/3330238
186 Albany Road Coventry CV5 6NG

- 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 Rehan Yunis of City Green Investments Ltd against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref PL/2023/0001116/HHA, dated 1 June 2023, was refused by notice dated 11 August 2023.
 - The development is single storey rear extension and rear wing dormer extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Council's decision letter describes the development as retrospective. It is clear from the evidence provided and my site visit that the development, including the rear wing dormer extension, had been constructed. I shall determine the appeal on this basis accordingly.
3. I have used the Council's description of the development in reaching my decision as it more fully describes the details of the development than that given on the original planning application form. The appellant's appeal form also makes reference to the updated description.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the rear wing dormer extension on the character and appearance of the area, including the setting of the adjacent Locally listed Earlsdon Library and the Earlsdon Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property consists of a two storey extended end terrace dwelling. It is located in a mature well-established residential area within a row of terraced properties that are of comparable scale and form, with two storey rear outriggers and traditional gabled pitched roofs. The generally uniform architectural character of the roofline of the terraced properties makes a positive contribution to the character of the Earlsdon Conservation Area (CA). A modern two storey block of flats is located immediately to the west of the site together with the locally listed Earlsdon library further to the west.

6. Earlsdon library forms part of a group of three locally listed buildings in this location, including the library, Earlsdon Primary school and Earlsdon Methodist Church, that have been included for group value at the heart of Earlsdon village to inform the Earlsdon Conservation character. The library is of early 20th architecture built in red brick with stone dressings. The significance of the library building to the CA can be readily appreciated within the immediate vicinity of the site.
7. The development involves the retention of a flat roof rear wing dormer extension that extends an existing small scale flat roofed rear dormer extension. It is set in from the eaves of the roof and wraps around the roof of the main house over the rear two storey outrigger projection. The rear wing dormer extension is built up to the rear building line of the main property and the ridge line of the rear outrigger.
8. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Document: Householder Design Guide 2023 (SPD) states that roof dormer extensions should be of high-quality materiality which complements the main roof of the existing dwelling and complement the architectural style of the host property. Dormer window extensions that wrap around two roof slopes are not normally acceptable as they create bulky and disproportionate additions.
9. Although the rear wing dormer is set in, the scale and form of the roof extension nevertheless still results in a significant addition relative to the main house. As such, the rear wing dormer extension results in substantial bulk being added to the roof plane with only very narrow peripheral parts of the sloping roof being evident. The awkward design and appearance of the rear wing dormer extension is very much at odds with the more traditional gabled pitched roof and outrigger over the original dwelling and the adjacent row of terraced properties.
10. The consequential harm is not in my view sufficiently resolved by the limited effect of the rear wing dormer extension on the street scene. In any case, the dormer extension is visible at the rear from the surrounding properties and above the roofline of the library from a number of public vantage points along Earlsdon Avenue North. The contrasting use of red hanging roof tiles contribute to the overall scale of the roof alterations, giving it particular prominence in relation to its surroundings.
11. I therefore consider that the rear wing dormer extension, by virtue of its scale, siting and design, fails to achieve an appropriate degree of subordination to the host property and detracts from the architectural integrity of the host property. As such, I consider that the rear wing dormer extension results in an incongruous and out-of-keeping addition that causes unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the area.
12. I have considered the appellant's arguments that the development seeks to extend the previously constructed rear dormer extension over the main house and that the design and layout of the rear wing dormer extension has been carefully considered in order to take into account the character of the host property and the varied roofscapes and roofing materials in the area.
13. However, although there is some variation in the roofscape and roofing materials in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, the rear wing dormer built is larger and more prominent than the previous smaller flat roofed dormer

on the host property. Whilst the use of darker framed windows and matching fenestrations assist in integrating the dormer extension with the host property, these aspects do not overcome the adverse effects outlined above. As such, I consider that the development adversely harms rather than positively contributes to the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

14. Given the location of the appeal site within the CA, special attention has to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. Similarly, a balanced approach is required to assess the effect on the setting of the locally listed Earlsdon library as a non-designated heritage asset, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). I consider that the appeal scheme, by virtue of its scale, layout and design has a negative material impact and fails to preserve or enhance the CA and harms the setting of the adjacent locally listed building.
15. Given the scale of the development, the harm would be less than substantial but in accordance with paragraph 202 of the Framework, that harm should be weighed against any public benefits to the proposal. I note the appellant's desire is to provide additional living accommodation within the host property and secure its optimum viable use. However, I find insufficient public benefit arising from this proposal to offset the identified harm to which I attach significant weight.
16. Consequently, I conclude that the rear wing dormer extension has a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the area including the setting of the adjacent Locally listed Earlsdon Library and the Earlsdon Conservation Area. It conflicts with Policies DE1 and HE2 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017 and the Council's SPD. These policies and guidance, amongst other things, seek to ensure that new development proposals and extensions to residential properties demonstrate a high quality design that respects and enhances the surrounding residential environment, conserves and, where appropriate, enhances heritage assets and positively contributes towards the local identity and character of an area.
17. In addition, the development does not accord with the aims of the Framework that seeks to secure a high quality of design (paragraph 126) that are sympathetic to the local character (paragraph 130) conserve and enhance the significance of designated heritage assets (paragraph 197) and non-designated heritage assets (paragraph 203).

Other Matters

18. I note the appellant's willingness to reconsider the appeal scheme and accept a split decision on the single storey rear extension and rear wing dormer. This, however, would result in a material change to the development before me. As all parties have not been consulted and provided with an opportunity to comment on this, I cannot be certain that any parties would be prejudiced by this change. In any event, I am required to consider the appeal on the basis of the same details that were before the Council when it made its decision.
19. I have noted the issues raised by the appellant regarding the communication with the Council about the designation of the CA as part of the local search in purchasing the appeal property and the works subsequently undertaken on the rear wing dormer extension under the proviso that it constituted permitted development. Whilst this may be so, this does not set a precedent for such an

inappropriate development in this location for the reasons set out above and as such are material considerations to which I can attach only limited weight in making this decision.

20. I note the appellant's comments regarding the various benefits arising from the proposal including the scheme's high quality design and providing additional accommodation to meet the appellant's needs. While I have given them some weight, these benefits would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified. For all these reasons, there are no other material considerations to outweigh the development plan conflicts identified.

Conclusion

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

David Troy

INSPECTOR