



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 March 2024

by R Morgan BSc (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/24/3336556

Quietways, 3 Beech Grove, Rothwell, Leeds, LS26 0EF

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Andrew Jones against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/06843/FU.
 - The development proposed is a two storey front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. Beech Grove is a short cul-de-sac of large, detached houses set in generous plots. The houses all differ in their style and appearance, but most appear to date from the early twentieth century. Although different, the houses in the street present an attractive and harmonious grouping.
4. 'Quietways' is a double fronted property with a simple, symmetrical design and central gabled porch. Like several of the other properties on Beech Grove, the appeal property has a steeply pitched, hipped roof, with a slight curve towards the eaves. Its distinctive roof form, with its centrally positioned chimney, contributes significantly to the character of 'Quietways', and provides clear clues to the age of the dwelling.
5. The front elevation of the appeal property would not be significantly altered as a result of the proposed development. The house would still be set back from the road, with a sizeable front garden retained. However, by extending the building forward by some 3.8m, the depth of the house would be markedly increased. This change to the proportions of the original house would harmfully affect its existing character, and would be clearly discernible from Beech Grove.
6. To accommodate the additional depth to the house, the roof would effectively need to be replaced. The submitted plans show that the overall ridge height would remain the same, but the position of the ridge would be brought forward, with a notably shallower pitch. The chimney would be retained in a central location although the submitted plans are inconsistent as to its position on the new roof.

7. The drawings of the existing property do not fully reflect the roof shape, as they do not show the curve to the eaves. This detail is not shown in the proposed plans either, so I can only assume that the distinctive, curved shape of the existing roof would not be incorporated in its replacement.
8. Matching roof materials would be used, but the pitch and shape of the roof would not be the same as that of the existing dwelling. These changes, together with the alterations to the overall proportions of the house, would mean that the property would lose some of the distinctive characteristics which clearly identify it as an early twentieth century dwelling. Not only would the proposed extension detract from the original house, it would also erode the character of the wider group of similarly aged properties along Beech Grove.
9. I conclude that the proposed extension would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would not respect the form of the original dwelling or the character of surrounding buildings, so would not comply with Policy P10 of the Core Strategy (amended 2019). As it has not resolved design considerations, the proposal would also conflict with saved Policy GP5 of the Unitary Development Plan 2006.
10. In addition, the proposal would fail to comply with Policy HDG1 of the Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2012, which requires that development should respect the scale, form, proportions, character and appearance of the main dwelling and locality, with particular attention being paid to the roof form and roof line.
11. As it would not be sympathetic to local character and the surrounding built environment, there would also be conflict with paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

Other Matters

12. Beech Grove is close to, but outside of, the Rothwell Conservation Area (CA), which encompasses a large area of the town and a wide diversity of built form. Those parts of the CA which are close to the appeal site, including Churchfield Road and Sandy Bank Avenue, are characterised by attractive, early twentieth century suburban housing. The architectural quality of the houses, and their contribution to our understanding of the development of the town, afford aesthetic and evidential value to the CA, and make a positive contribution to its significance.
13. The appeal property can be seen in glimpse views from surrounding streets within the CA, including Abraham Hill and Churchfield Road. When viewed from within the CA, 'Quietways' does not form a prominent feature, and is seen in the context of the surrounding built development, which varies significantly in form and appearance. Although it is a building of quality in its own right, which dates to a similar period as other development within the CA, its restricted visibility means that the appeal property makes a limited contribution to the setting and significance of the CA.
14. As it would not be particularly noticeable from within the CA, I share the Council's view that the proposed extension would not cause harm to the setting of the CA, or to its significance. However, this does not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the appeal property itself, and to the immediately surrounding area of Beech Grove, which I have described above.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons set out, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and the Framework. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

R Morgan

INSPECTOR