

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 June 2024

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 3RD July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/R1845/D/24/3342370

17 Westhead Road North, Cookley, Kidderminster, DY10 3TJ

- 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 Mrs Mandy Howles against the decision of Wyre Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/0077/HOU.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a first floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of a first floor side extension at 17 Westhead Road North, Cookley, Kidderminster, DY10 3TJ in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 24/0077/HOU subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule.

Preliminary matters

2. In the interests of conciseness, I have adopted the description of the development used by the Council in its decision notice rather than that contained in the application form.

Main issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling standing at the junction of Westhead Road North and Woodlands Road in a residential area characterized by dwellings of different types and styles. As the planning history suggests previous permissions for extensions and alterations to the property have been forthcoming, and this is reflected in the extended dwelling's current appearance. However, despite the extensions, the character of the original property, particularly when viewed from those points to the south where it is most apparent in the public realm, remains plainly discernible.
5. The proposal involves the creation of an additional bedroom over an existing ground floor side extension. It represents, in effect, an extension on an extension. The ground floor extension is largely screened from view by a tall hedge. The proposed extension, however, would be in full view above the hedge particularly when approaching along Westhead Road North from the south.

6. The proposed extension has been skillfully designed to match the shape, profile and characteristics of the dwelling and the previous extension at this level, and would be subservient to the host property. Accordingly, despite its relatively prominent position on a corner, the extension would not look out of place and the original property would retain its essential characteristics. I note the appellant's preparedness to alter the proposed materials of construction, but I do not consider this to be necessary since the cladding proposed would add variety, lightness, and visual interest at the corner.
7. In opposing the scheme, the Council's relies in part on the mathematical formula for extensions set out in its SPD¹, but as the appellant points out, the development would not exceed the current width of the extended property.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposal, if built, would sit acceptably in its visual context without harming the character and appearance of the host property. Accordingly, no material conflict arises with the main objectives of policies DM.24, DM.25 & SP.20 of the Council's Local Plan (LP) (2022), since the extension is of a high quality integrating effectively with its surroundings, and in keeping with the architectural characteristics of the original property.

Conditions

9. The Council's suggested condition that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans shall be imposed in the interests of certainty.
10. Conditions regarding materials shall be imposed in the interests of visual amenity. Cladding is proposed, but the type and colour has not been specified. The application form refers to '*timber effect*', but this is far from clear. I shall require the type of cladding and its colour to be used to be the subject of future agreement with the Council. I would expect it to be natural timber. The tiles should match those used in the original dwelling and extensions.

Other matters

11. The Parish Council's comments on the proposals have been considered but for the reasons set out above I do not share its view.
12. I note the representations made in respect of the reasons for the proposal involving the personal circumstances of the appellant and her extended family. The appeal, however, has been determined strictly on its planning merits and the personal circumstances cited have attracted no weight.
13. No other matter raised is of such strength or significance as to outweigh those considerations that led me to my conclusions.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR

¹ Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

Schedule of Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
2. The roof tiles to be used on the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing dwelling.
3. Prior to its installation the type and colour of timber cladding to be used on the extension hereby permitted shall be agreed with the Council, such agreement to be obtained in writing.
4. The type of cladding excepted, the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: the location plan and Plan Ref: 01; 02 & 03.