



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 September 2024

by N Bromley BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D4635/W/24/3340964

11 Sabrina Road, Wolverhampton WV6 8BP

- 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 D McDonald against the decision of City of Wolverhampton Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00074/FUL.
 - The development is proposed 1 No. 6 Bedroom Detached Replacement Dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue raised by this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises an existing detached bungalow set within a sizeable plot that fronts Sabrina Road. The bungalow has a simple and modest appearance, with an attached flat roof garage to the side, which reduces its overall bulk and mass within the plot.
4. The residential area nearby is predominantly characterised by a variety of dwellings including detached two-storey houses, bungalows, and dormer bungalows. The existing dwellings are of a varying size, form, and appearance, primarily set within large plots. Overall, the street scene has a spacious and suburban character of individually designed buildings.
5. The appeal property is located in between two detached dwellings, which have a two-storey height. As such, the replacement of a bungalow with a two-storey dwelling could sit comfortably within this context. However, the proposed dwelling, due to its large footprint, set slightly forward compared to the two neighbouring properties either side, and its bulk and mass would dominate the site. In particular, the front elevation, with double storey projecting gable and entrance features would have a commanding appearance within the street scene.
6. I accept that double storey projecting gable features are relatively common on other properties along Sabrina Road. In particular, the neighbouring property, 9 Sabrina Road (No 9), has a double storey projecting gable feature on its front elevation, next to the shared boundary with the appeal site. The

projecting gable feature of No 9 has a modest and proportionate design on the front elevation that adds interest to the appearance of that property.

7. In contrast, the cumulative effect of two large, double storey projecting gable features and the entrance feature, on the prominent front elevation of the proposed dwelling would be visually dominant and disproportionate.
8. Even though two projecting gable features would add balance to the front elevation, this would not overcome my concerns that the increased bulk and mass of the proposal would exacerbate the size and dominance of the proposed dwelling within the street scene. As such, although the street scene comprises individually designed properties, the proposal would be a poor design, which would be overly dominant and incongruous within the context of the existing properties within this part of the road.
9. My attention has been drawn to a scheme that was allowed at appeal¹, at 83 Sabrina Road (No 83), for proposed rear and front extensions and loft conversion. However, the full details and plans have not been provided and whilst there may appear to be some similarities, a proper comparison has therefore not been possible. Furthermore, No 83 is located within a different part of the street scene, with a different site context compared to the appeal scheme before me. Given this, the example does not add weight in favour of the scheme. Therefore, as I am required to do, I have determined the case before me on the site-specific circumstances and on its own merits.
10. I also acknowledge that there is an extant planning permission, reference: 23/00807/FUL, on the site for the demolition of the existing bungalow and the erection of a six-bedroom detached dwelling (the previous approval). However, I have determined the appeal on its own merits based on all of the evidence before me. Nevertheless, this claimed fall-back position will be considered further in my planning balance.
11. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would be unacceptably harmful to the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with the design aims of Policies D4, D8 and D9 of the Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan and Policies ENV3 and CSP4 of the Black Country Core Strategy, which together and amongst other things, require development to be of high-quality design that responds positively to the appearance of an area.

Other Matters

12. A copy of the approved plans for the previous approval have been submitted as part of the appeal. In the event that this appeal is dismissed, I consider that there is a greater than theoretical possibility that the previous approval might take place. Accordingly, this represents a fallback position and is a significant material consideration.
13. The difference between the previous approval and the current appeal proposal is on the front elevation. Instead of two, double storey projecting gable features, the previous approval proposes just one, as well as a gable headed large dormer window. The dormer window feature noticeably reduces the mass and bulk of development proposed. As a result, it would lessen the overall dominance of the proposed dwelling within the street scene. Consequently, the

¹ Appeal reference: APP/D4635/D/23/3326433

fallback position would have a markedly lesser effect on the character and appearance of the area than the appeal scheme. I therefore attach limited weight to the previously approved scheme as a fallback position.

14. The appellant considers that the proposed development would increase the space within the upper bedroom and provides structural simplicity, which is better value for money and would benefit the local and wider economy. However, the weight attached to these matters, including the fallback position, would not outweigh the harm caused by the impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, I have found that the proposed development would conflict with the development plan as a whole. I have found no other material circumstances that would outweigh that conflict. As such, the appeal should be dismissed.

N Bromley

INSPECTOR