



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 December 2024

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 December 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/D/24/3353705
10 Poultney Road, Coventry CV6 1JB

- 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 Mrs Julie Bowen against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref is PL/2024/0001730/HHA.
 - The development proposed is 2 storey and single storey rear extensions and front elevation bay window, porch extension and canopy roof.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matter

2. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 12 December 2024, during consideration of the appeal. Having regard to the changes in the Framework and to the comparatively minor scale and nature of this appeal proposal, I consider that further consultation on this matter is not necessary.

Main issues

3. The main issues are the effects of the proposal on:
 - i) The character and appearance of the house and the local area;
 - ii) Living conditions at the next door houses; and
 - iii) The safety of public highway users.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. 10 Poultney Road is a 2 storey end of terrace house within a residential neighbourhood of mainly terraced and semi-detached houses. The terrace is designed to be bookended by Nos 10 and 20, which both have projecting gables to the front, while the houses in between are more flat-fronted. The Council's concern is about the proposed front extension - a porch and a bay window to be linked by a canopy roof.
5. The Council's Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (HDG) advises against front extensions which would project forward of the building line, fail to maintain distinctive features of the house or link bay windows to porches. In this case the local area includes a number of small

scale porch and bay window additions which add interest and variety to the street scene.

6. The proposed bay window and porch, taken on their own, would be small scale additions that would fit in well and complement local character, with no significant effect on the stepped building line. The proposed linking canopy roof would, however, break up the vertical design emphasis of the feature gable, stretching across the full width of the house. It would be an overly large and somewhat incongruous architectural element on the front of the house, detracting from the harmonious design of the house and terrace.
7. I note that there is a similar extension on 13 Poultney Road opposite, but saw no other examples of this type of addition in the immediate vicinity. Linked porches and bay windows are therefore not an established part of local character.
8. I conclude that the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the house and the local area, due to the inclusion of the canopy roof. It therefore conflicts with Coventry City Council Local Plan (LP) policy DE1, the HDG and the Framework, which aim to secure high quality design that respects and enhances its surroundings and positively contributes towards local identity and character.

Living conditions

9. The proposal also includes a rear extension which would be 2 stories on the side next to 8 Poultney Road, replacing an existing single storey element. The Council's concern is about the impact on a first floor bedroom window at No 8, which would face more or less directly onto the new extension. I understand that this is the only window serving that habitable room.
10. The HDG sets out a '25 degree rule' which provides a guideline for assessing the impact of proposed extensions on neighbours' living conditions in situations like this. As illustrated in the HDG, where an extension would break a 25 degree angle, drawn in the vertical plane from the mid-point of a habitable room window, it would not normally be acceptable.
11. In this case, the steeply pitched roof of the proposed extension would take it well past the 25 degree line from No 8's side bedroom window. As indicated by the Council's guidance, it would be an overly imposing feature in the outlook from the window. I note that this window currently has views across much of No 10's rear garden. This is part of the original design layout, where as usual there is a high degree of mutual overlooking between terraced properties. This situation does not justify intruding on outlook to the extent proposed.
12. As the extension would sit to the south of No 8, it would also block a significant amount of direct sunlight, especially in winter months when the sun is low in the sky. On the other hand, No 8's bedroom window does appear to be high enough up that it would retain adequate daylighting (light from the sky).
13. I understand from the representations that No 12 to the other side has a rear living room window and pergola that would also be affected. The proposal is only for a single storey extension to that side, however, and it would sit to the north of No 12. The effect on that property would therefore be reasonably limited. The proposal would not create any significant new overlooking of either No 8 or No 12.

14. I conclude that the proposal would unacceptably affect living conditions at 10 Poultney Road next door, due to effects on outlook and sunlight. It therefore also conflicts with the HDG and the Framework, which aim to ensure a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Highway safety

15. No 10 has an existing parking space at the front. The Council's concern is that this parking space would become too short as a result of the development. The HDG advises that in situations like this a minimum depth of 5m must be provided to ensure vehicles do not overhang the footway. The Council refers to a minimum depth of 4.8m as set out in Appendix 5 of the LP.
16. Cars could park partially underneath the overhang of the canopy roof, so the key here is the distance from the proposed porch to the footway. The Council and the appellant provide differing measurements. My own check on-site confirms the appellant's statement that a 5.0m deep parking space would be maintained, in line with both of the Council's documents.
17. This residential street is subject to a 30mph speed limit, with unrestricted on-street parking. Traffic appeared to be light and at reasonably low speeds. I saw nothing to suggest that the standard recommended depth for traffic spaces was inappropriate in this particular situation.
18. I conclude that the proposal would not prejudice the safety of highway users. It accords in this respect with LP policies AC2, AC3 and AC4, which aim to ensure that proposals do not have a negative impact on the safety of the highway network, including provision for pedestrians.

Other matters

19. I recognise the appellant's reasonable wish to improve their home, including its energy efficiency, and the care they have taken to maintain its character and appearance during their stewardship. I do not, however, consider these to be overriding factors.

Conclusion

20. My concerns in regard to the first 2 main issues are sufficiently compelling for me to conclude that the proposal conflicts with the development plan and the appeal should not succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR