



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 January 2025 by M Jones

Decision by L McKay MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/G4620/D/24/3355203

10 Hall Road, Sandwell, Smethwick B67 6SG

- 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 M Nadeem against the decision of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is DC/24/69700.
 - The development proposed is two storey side and forward front porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and local area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal dwelling is situated on Hall Road, a residential street with a mix of detached and semi-detached houses. Although there are a range of designs, exterior materials and roof types, I saw that the predominant house type on Hall Road and the surrounding streets is a semi-detached dwelling with a cat-slide roof and a dominant front gable feature either shared across the pair, similar to that of the existing appeal dwelling, or smaller dual gables. Other houses are of much simpler form, with hipped roofs and a single storey element across the front. A large number of houses on the street have been altered or extended in some way with some of these extensions being particularly bulky and substantial.
5. The proposed development would increase the width of the appeal dwelling and materially increase its footprint. The proposed front gable would add substantial bulk and width to the front of the property and create a dominant feature, resulting in the loss of the distinctive articulation of the front elevation. The limited depth of this two-storey side element would also be evident from the road, resulting in a front-heavy appearance to the dwelling. Consequently, the proposed development would be incompatible with the form and design of the existing dwelling.

6. No 12 has a bulky, full gabled front extension and lacks articulation, creating an imbalance to the existing pair. Adding a large gable to the frontage of the appeal dwelling would not rebalance the pair however, as the proposed roof would be taller and steeper than that of No 12. While it would instead more closely match the pitch of the shared gable, it appears that it would not be as tall as that existing feature.
7. Therefore, the proposal would result in the pair having three large, bulky gable features of different size and appearance across the frontage. Furthermore, the submitted drawings show different window designs to those on the main dwelling and No 12 in terms of shape, style and glazing arrangement, despite being labelled as matching the existing dwelling. This would further distinguish the extension from the existing dwellings.
8. The proposal would not therefore lead to a balanced and coherent frontage between these two dwellings as argued by the appellant. Rather, it would create a substantial triple-gabled frontage across the pair of dwellings with little articulation. This would exacerbate the bulk and massing of the shared frontage and result in an over-intensive development and a prominent and dominant shared frontage incompatible with, and unsympathetic to, the street scene.
9. I recognise that there are no local policies specifically restricting the size of developments, so a large extension may be permissible in principle. However, local policy is clear that extensions must respond to their surroundings, including by virtue of their scale and design. Further, it is clear from the Residential Design Guide 2014 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that over intensification of dwellings, will be resisted, and that extensions should be subservient and proportionate to the original dwelling.
10. The appellant indicates that other nearby properties that have undergone similar or larger extensions. Each proposal is determined on a case-by-case basis and the context and relevant factors to be considered are likely to be different in each case. As such, previous approvals do not necessarily set a precedent for future development. In this case I do not have the full details of how these other examples came to be built.
11. Nevertheless, whilst I accept that the extensions of Nos 7, 12, 33 and 40 are substantial, dwellings with bulky extensions are in the minority in this street scene. Most dwellings are of a more modest scale with a similar form and scale to the appeal dwelling meaning any substantial extension is likely to stand out in the street scene. In any event, Nos 7, 33 and 40 have designs more sympathetic to most of the other dwellings on the street for example through the retention of articulation. They also generally match in materials, form and detailing. Consequently, these examples do not justify the harm I have identified above.
12. The fact that No 12 has already been extended also means that the context for assessing the effect of the appeal development on the pair of dwellings is different from when No 12's side extension was first proposed. I must consider the appeal proposal with that existing development, and for the reasons above have concluded that the cumulative effect of both extensions would have a harmful impact on the street scene.
13. Consequently, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the existing appeal dwelling and the local area, contrary to policies ENV3 of the Black Country Core Strategy 2011 and SAD EOS 9 of the Site

Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document 2012 which require developments to be compatible with their surroundings, of a reasonable scale and high-quality design. Furthermore, it would conflict with the design guidance in the SPD.

Other Matters

14. The appellant argues that the development will be sustainable development as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). The proposal will result in only minor economic benefits, given that this is a domestic extension, which carries limited weight. Expanding the occupants' living space and making it more adaptable would be a private benefit, and it has not been demonstrated that the existing, extended, dwelling does not already provide liveable accommodation, so I give the potential social benefits limited weight. Making effective use of the site is supported in the Framework, however lack of ecology harm is a neutral impact. There is no substantive evidence before me on the use of innovative and sustainable materials to demonstrate an environmental benefit. Therefore, these matters carry very limited weight.
15. Furthermore, the Framework is clear that good design is a fundamental aspect of sustainable development. For the reasons above the proposal is not good design, therefore it does not benefit from the support of national policy. These matters do not therefore justify the harm that would result from the proposal.
16. A lack of objections is a neutral matter so does not weigh in favour of the proposal or override any of the considerations referred to in this report.
17. The appellant states that they would accept conditions to render the proposal acceptable. However, it is unclear what changes to the design and form of the extension are being suggested, so I cannot be certain that they would address the harm identified. In any event, material changes to design should not generally be secured by condition as this would deprive interested parties from understanding and commenting on the detail of proposals. Such a condition would not therefore be reasonable.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

M Jones

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

19. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and agree with the reasoning and recommendation. On that basis the appeal is dismissed.

L McKay

INSPECTOR