



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 March 2025

by R Gravett BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28th April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/D/24/3355057

36 Rakehill Road, Scholes, Leeds LS15 4AJ

- 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 A Germaine against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/04101/FU.
 - The development proposed is First floor side extension; one dormer windows, a porch and three rooflights to front.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area; and
 - the living conditions of the occupiers of 34 Rakehill Road, with particular regard to outlook and natural light.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. 36 Rakehill Road (No 36) is a detached dormer bungalow on the south side of Rakehill Road, angled on its plot so that it broadly fronts the corner with Belle Vue Avenue. It has an attached double garage and it is proposed to extend over this at first floor to create a snug accessed from an existing bedroom.
4. Rakehill Road is identified as a non-designated heritage asset in the Barwick in Elmet & Scholes Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2028 (2017) (NP). It is an attractive residential street which is significant, in part, because of its open, long views toward countryside to the east. It is characterised predominantly by detached bungalows and houses which differ in their architectural design and detailing.
5. The guidance in the Council's 'Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2012)' (SPD) for two-storey extensions, including those to detached properties, is they should have some degree of subservience to their host, recognising that the usual method of achieving this is to set the extension back from the front wall and lower the ridge line. The proposal has been designed as an 'integrated' extension so that the ridgeline and eaves (on the front elevation)

of the existing bungalow have been continued, with no set back from the front elevation.

6. I accept that there are situations where an 'integrated' design would ensure the extension remains subservient to its host. I note that the appellant has drawn my attention to such a proposal at No 78 Belle Vue Avenue, where the first-floor extension is over a very modest single garage. In contrast, I observed that the existing double garage is roughly over half the width of No 36 and extending over such a width at first floor, with no differentiation in ridge height, would dominate the host bungalow. The proposal would therefore fail to achieve the degree of subservience envisaged by the SPD guidance.
7. A dual pitched dormer window is proposed which would be sited broadly centrally within the new roof of the first-floor extension. The dormer would be modest in scale, set well off the sides and eaves of the host roof and just below the ridgeline. It would not be dissimilar in size or design to the dormer windows on the neighbouring property at 34 Rakehill Road (No 34), or the dormers recently constructed at 7 Lyndhurst Close to which the appellant refers. In isolation, the proposed dormer would not represent an unsympathetic or alien addition to its host.
8. The ground floor of No 36 is offset from the flank of No 34 to the front, but this tapers to the rear because of the respective orientation of the two dwellings. This existing offset is broadly consistent with the spacing between other dwellings on the south side of Rakehill Road, and I observed that this spacing, and the openness between dwellings, contributes positively to the character and appearance of the streetscene.
9. The offset between the ground floor of No 36 and its neighbour would not change, but by extending over the garage at first floor the gable and overall massing of the roof would be much closer to No.34. No 36 is sited forward of the building line of its neighbour at No 34, and because of this, and its orientation on its plot, the gable of the extension would appear unduly prominent in the significant long views along Rakehill Road toward the east mentioned in the NP. It would also appear to crowd its neighbour at No 34 to the detriment of the characteristic spacing and openness of the surrounding area that I have described.
10. Further, the proposed first-floor extension would extend only the depth of the garage retaining an existing conservatory to the rear. In order to continue the profile of the main roof, there would be a small section of pitched roof to the rear, with very high eaves and a vertical rear elevation. This section of pitched roof would be visible from Rakehill Road and would appear an awkward, discordant addition to its host.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. It would conflict with policies P10 and P12 of the Core Strategy (as amended by the Core Strategy Selective Review 2019) (2019) (CS), saved policies GP5 and BD6 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006) (UDP) and NP Policy BE1. These, amongst other things, require new development, including extensions, to deliver high quality design which is of a size, scale and design appropriate to its context and respects the character and quality of surrounding buildings and townscapes.

12. The proposed development would further conflict with NP Policy LE1 which requires any development proposals to pay due regard to the importance of conserving non-designated heritage assets.

Living conditions

13. On the flank gable of No 34 are two ground floor windows which directly face the common boundary with the appeal property. It is understood from the evidence before me that, although both are obscure glazed, the larger of these windows serves a bedroom which is a habitable room. This bedroom window is located broadly centrally in the flank but because the building line of No 34 is set back from its neighbour, the outlook from this window is principally toward the conservatory of No 36 and the existing high boundary fence which is close. The outlook from this window is also partly toward the rear corner of the existing garage of No 36, which has a reasonably high parapet to its flat roof, however this is at an angle.
14. The proposed first floor extension would project across the full width of the existing garage and at its rear corner would be only around 3m from the flank of No 34, extending the bulk and massing of the gable closer to it. It is acknowledged that the extended gable of No 36, as well as the corner of the extension and part of the new vertical elevation to the rear, would be visible from the bedroom window. However, because it would be seen at an angle, and above the boundary fence, it would not appear unduly dominant or result in a harmful loss of outlook.
15. Given its proximity, the lower part of the ground floor bedroom window is already overshadowed by the close-boarded timber fence along the common boundary with No 36. Because the proposed first-floor extension would be located to the north-east, I am not persuaded, nor do I have any evidence to suggest, that it would result in a discernible reduction in the level of daylight or sunlight to this bedroom window.
16. I therefore conclude that the proposed first-floor extension would not cause harm to the living conditions of the occupiers at No 34, with particular regards to outlook and natural light. It would accord with CS Policy P10, saved UDP policies GP5 and BD5 in so far as they require development to be designed with consideration given to the amenity of their surroundings and to avoid a loss of, and protect, residential amenity.

Other Matters

17. I acknowledge that the appeal property is within an existing residential area close to amenities and transport connections. However, whilst benefits of the location, these are not matters which would outweigh the harm that I have found above to character and appearance.

Conclusion

18. I am satisfied that the proposed first-floor extension would not cause harm to the living conditions of the neighbours at 34 Rakehill Road. Nevertheless, for the reasons given above, it would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

19. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Gravett

INSPECTOR