



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 February 2025 by A Khan BSc (Hons) MA MSc

Decision by S Edwards BA MATCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4625/D/24/3356962

32 Highwood Avenue, Solihull, West Midlands B92 8QX

- 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 Sabrina Mohammed against the decision of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is PL/2024/00737/MINFHO.
 - The development proposed is two storey side, two storey front and rear extension along with 2 no. dormers to the rear.
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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.

Preliminary Matters

3. The description of development as detailed on the application form has been amended in subsequent documents. I have adopted the description used in the Council's decision notice, which describes the proposal accurately and precisely.
4. A large part of the development subject to this appeal has been constructed and planning permission is therefore being sought retrospectively. The works carried out are incomplete, and the submitted plans do not represent the development as built. I have assessed the appeal development as shown on the plans considered by the Council for the determination of the planning application.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal site is located within a residential area, predominantly characterised by brick semi-detached dwellings, greenery and trees along the footway. The dwellings are typically set back from the highway, featuring front gardens that are either open or enclosed with low forms of boundary treatments. Some dwellings have modest front alterations and extensions, resulting in a notable variation in front elevations that contribute to the area's distinct character. These elements give the area a pleasant suburban feel.

7. The appeal property occupies a prominent corner plot, alongside its semi-detached counterpart, 1 Dursley Close (no 1). The proposed development involves substantial alterations to the existing property through two-storey extensions to the side, front, and rear, along with the addition of dormer windows. By reason of its excessive height, width and depth, the proposed side extension does not appear proportionate to the appeal dwelling. The cumulative effect of the excessive bulk and massing of the proposed additions, combined with the lack of setback of the side extension from the front elevation of the house, result in a development which fails to appear subservient to and harmfully dominate the host property.
8. The harm is compounded by the use of inappropriate materials and introduction of features that fail to reflect or complement the character and architectural detailing of the original property. For example, the proposed bays harmfully compete with the existing bay windows and introduce alien features through the extensive use of glazing, which detract from the host dwelling.
9. The disproportionate and incongruous additions do not solely have an adverse effect on the appeal property but also means that the appeal development harmfully contrasts with the neighbouring semi-detached dwelling, no 1, which incorporates a more modest and subservient extension. Consequently, the appeal scheme results in a significant imbalance in the symmetry of the semi-detached pair, which is also of detriment to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Due to its excessive bulk, height, massing and scale, but also its incongruous design approach, the extended property appears unduly prominent within the street scene, and detracts from its surroundings.
10. My attention has been drawn to the variety of housing design and large scale developments in the area that deviate from design guidelines, though little information has been provided regarding the particular circumstances of these examples. Consequently, I am unable to draw parallels with the appeal scheme before me. Although there is a degree of variation within the area, this does not provide justification for the significant harm which the development causes to the host property, the symmetry of the semi-detached pair and wider area for the reasons given above.
11. I have had regard to the fact that the proposed additions provide additional residential accommodation, and note that the appellant is willing to alter the materials and some of the design elements. However, this does not address the adverse impact caused by the excessive bulk, scale and massing of the appeal development, and resulting harm to the character of the host property and established visual harmony of the surrounding area.
12. Given the above, the proposal causes significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and area. The development is contrary to Policy P15 of the Solihull Local Plan [December 2013], which states that development proposals will be expected to conserve and enhance local character, distinctiveness and streetscape quality. The development is also contrary to the design aims of the Council's House Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document [February 2010].

Other Matters

13. Concerns have been raised regarding the effect of the development on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, particularly in terms of overlooking, privacy,

noise and light. Given that I have recommended the appeal to be dismissed on other grounds, I have not considered these further. The concerns relating to boundary disputes and party wall damage fall outside the scope of what I can consider as part of this appeal.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

A Khan

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's recommendation and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

S Edwards

INSPECTOR