



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 March 2023

by Gareth Wildgoose BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C3430/D/23/3316456

6 Meadow Way, Codsall, Staffordshire WV8 2AS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Prior against the decision of South Staffordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 22/01064/FUL, dated 13 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 5 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is a 2-storey front extension comprising new bedroom, garage extension and open porch and exchange of gabled roof over existing rear bedroom projection.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the 2-storey front extension comprising new bedroom, garage extension and open porch.
2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted insofar as it relates to exchange of gabled roof over existing rear bedroom projection at 6 Meadow Way, Codsall, Staffordshire, WV8 2AS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 22/01064/FUL, dated 13 November 2022, and the plans submitted with it so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted, insofar as it relates to the exchange of gabled roof over existing rear bedroom projection only, shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted, insofar as it relates to the exchange of gabled roof over existing rear bedroom projection only, shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - 0400 WS3 C-01 (Location Plan)
 - 0400 WS3 C-02 (Proposed Site Plan)
 - 0400 WS3 P-01 (Proposed Floor Plans)
 - 0400 WS3 E-01 (Proposed Elevations)
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the gabled roof over existing rear bedroom projection hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development proposed on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

4. No. 6 Meadow Way (No. 6) comprises a two-storey detached property with a pitched roof and distinctive ground floor front projection across almost the full width of its frontage. It is located close to the turning head of the cul-de-sac within an established residential area in Codsall. The immediate street scene includes a mix of properties, such as detached bungalows (Nos. 1 - 3) on the opposite side of the cul-de-sac and a two-storey detached dwelling (No. 4) with a different design, form and materials also adjoining the turning head. However, in contrast, No. 6 lies in the middle of a group of three detached properties on the southern side of Meadow Way that offer a more distinctive coherence and harmony evident in a broad regularity of architectural style, scale, massing and form. This is complemented by the stepped sequence of front building lines and staggered roof heights that transition with an increase in land levels towards the turning head from the junction with Oaken Lane. The resultant important contribution that the distinctive rhythm of the three properties make to the Meadow Way street scene prevails despite previous extensions to each of Nos. 5, 6 and 7 and some differences in materials and fenestration on the front elevations of each dwelling.
5. Policy EQ11 of the South Staffordshire Council Core Strategy Development Plan Document (CS), adopted December 2012, seeks that the design of all development must be of the highest quality. This includes, amongst other things, that the form of proposals should respect local character and distinctiveness including that of the surrounding development and in terms of scale, volume, massing and materials, development should contribute positively to the street scene and surrounding buildings in the local area. The South Staffordshire District Design Guide, a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) adopted in 2018, provides associated guidance which, amongst other things, includes that generally extensions should be subservient to and fit in with the character and form of the existing building, respecting scale, form and relationship to adjacent buildings. The SPD also indicates that it is generally not appropriate for extensions (other than small porches or canopies) to project forward of the existing front façade of a building, although in that respect it is notable that No. 6 already has an existing single storey front addition as have Nos. 5 and 7.
6. Having regard to the above, the proposed two-storey front extension now seeks to introduce a prominent front gable at first floor level with matching eaves and lowered ridge height than the existing roof. The resultant scale, design and proportions of the extension would subsume a significant proportion of the existing front elevation of No.6 and consequently, would be viewed as an unduly dominant and incongruous addition that would detract from the character and appearance of the property. The harmful visual effect would not be mitigated by alignment of the front building line of the extension with No. 5 or use of white render and hanging tiles to closely match with existing features of the dwelling. It rather would be emphasised by the contrast with the pitched roof designs of Nos. 5 and 7 whereby it would harmfully disrupt the existing rhythm of the group of properties on the southern side of Meadow Way. In those specific surroundings, the proposed two storey front extension would be viewed as a prominent and harmful feature in the street scene despite the presence of the more varied character and appearance of properties on the opposite side of the cul-de-sac and its turning head.

7. In reaching the above findings, I have taken into account that there are examples of front extensions along the nearby Suckling Green Lane that have previously been granted planning permission by the Council, including the addition of a two-storey front extension with a similar gable design and open porch at No. 99 Suckling Green Lane which lies immediately to the rear of No. 4 Meadow Way. However, I observed that the examples of front extensions are very much in a minority in Suckling Green Lane. Furthermore, the characteristics of the specific examples drawn to my attention at Nos. 29, 33 and 99 Suckling Green Lane, by virtue of their visual relationship with dwellings of differing design immediately surrounding and the character of the respective street scenes are materially different to the proposal before me. As such, I consider that the examples in Suckling Green Lane do not replicate nor justify the harm that would arise from the proposal in its particular surroundings.
8. The appellant has referred to the appeal property not being subject of or in proximity to listed buildings or conservation area designations, and that it retains its permitted development rights. However, the absence of such designations does not alter the design requirements of Policy EQ11 of the CS. Furthermore, there is no substantive evidence before me to indicate that there is a significant probability that a more harmful extension would be constructed by utilising permitted development rights should the appeal relating to the proposed front extension be dismissed.
9. Having regard to all of the above, I conclude that the two-storey front extension comprising new bedroom, garage extension and open porch would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area. This element of the proposed development, therefore, conflicts with Policy EQ11 of the CS and the associated guidance in the SPD. The policy is consistent with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
10. The Council have not expressed any specific concerns with respect to the design and appearance of the proposed exchange of gabled roof over the existing rear bedroom projection. Based on the evidence before me and my own observations, I have no reason to take a different view. The roof alteration is a separate element from the proposed front extension and as such it would be a subservient addition to the existing rear elevation of the property. Furthermore, matching materials could be secured by condition to ensure that it would assimilate appropriately. The roof alteration at the rear of the property would be well screened from public vantage points by the position of the host dwelling and surrounding properties which would ensure no harm to the Meadow Way, Oaken Lane and Hawthorne Lane street scenes.
11. It follows that I conclude that the proposed exchange of gabled roof over existing rear bedroom projection would be acceptable in terms of its effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the area. Consequently, that element of the proposal does not conflict with Policy EQ11 of the CS, the SPD and the Framework in that regard.

Other Matters

12. The proposal would retain adequate space for off street parking to serve the property. The proposed addition of the front extension would not, therefore, have a harmful effect on highway safety or existing parking arrangements in the cul-de-sac. The relationship of the proposal with habitable windows in the

front and rear elevations of Nos. 5 and 7, together with the separation distance to properties opposite and those at the rear, would also ensure no unacceptable impacts on the outlook and privacy of occupiers of the respective dwellings. I am also satisfied that the relationship to surrounding properties and the parking arrangements at No. 6 and along Meadow Way would enable construction works to take place without unacceptable impacts on the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties in terms of noise or disturbance. However, the absence of concern in those respects is a neutral factor which does not justify the harm otherwise identified relating to the proposed front extension.

Conditions

13. I have found the proposed exchange of gabled roof over the existing rear bedroom projection to be the only acceptable element of the proposal and it is clearly severable from the other parts of the development to enable a split decision. In such circumstances and in the interest of certainty of the planning permission granted, conditions are required to clarify the time limit and to specify the approved plans and the relevant part of the development to which they relate. A further condition is also necessary to ensure matching materials in the interest of the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, having had regard to the development plan as a whole and to all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed insofar as it relates to the 2-storey front extension comprising new bedroom, garage extension and open porch. However, the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted insofar as it relates to the exchange of gabled roof over existing rear bedroom projection subject to the conditions set out.

Gareth Wildgoose

INSPECTOR