

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2022

by Helen Smith BSc (Hons) MSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C3430/D/22/3304587

14 Whilmot Close, Featherstone WV10 7BJ

- 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 I Williams against the decision of South Staffordshire Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01169/FUL, dated 29 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 26 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is single and two storey side extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a two-storey semi-detached dwelling located on a corner plot on Whilmot Close. The corner plot is partially bound by fencing; however, the site is otherwise exposed. The openness of the corner plot makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.
4. Whilmote Close has a curved alignment, but there is a degree of uniformity in terms of the front building line of properties and their relationship to the road. The curving nature of the road means that the host dwelling is sited at an angle to the road, which makes the appeal site prominent within the street scene.
5. The proposal would entail building over the host dwelling's side garden and would be sited very close to the road. This would be significantly closer than the prevailing distance for the existing dwellings nearby. As such, the proposal would project beyond the established building line and would uncharacteristically protrude towards the road. The closeness to the road and the lack of space to the side boundary would combine to make the proposal appear cramped on its plot. This would be out of keeping with the existing building form and would result in a discordant feature in the street scene.
6. The two-storey element of the proposal would be slightly set-back from the front elevation of the host dwelling. However, the proposal would incorporate an expanse of brickwork to its side elevation facing the road, which would present a bland appearance. Therefore, the proposal would appear as a highly visible and incongruous feature within the street scene.

7. Furthermore, the presence and massing of the proposed extension would significantly erode the sense of openness of this prominent corner plot. The positive contribution the appeal site makes to the character and appearance of the street scene in its current form would be lost.
8. The proposal would include sympathetic detailing and matching materials that could be reasonably secured through the imposition of planning conditions. However, these acceptable aspects would not outweigh the harm identified above.
9. Whilst there are examples of side extensions nearby, I am not fully aware of all the circumstances relating to these developments. In any event, these are not directly comparable to the current proposal, which I have determined on its own merits and its site-specific characteristics.
10. Therefore, I conclude the proposal would have a harmful effect upon the character and appearance of the area. As such, the proposal would fail to accord with Policy EQ11 of the South Staffordshire Council Core Strategy (2012). Amongst other things, this policy seeks to ensure development respects local character and contributes positively to the street scene in terms of scale and massing. The proposal would also conflict with the Council's South Staffordshire Design Guide (2018), which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure extensions respect the scale and form of the main building and appear subservient to it.
11. In addition, the proposal would fail to accord to the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

12. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole, and there are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight that would indicate a decision other than in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Helen Smith

INSPECTOR