The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 February 2023

by K E Down MA(Oxon) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B3438/D/22/3309520
Vale View, Hazles Cross Road, Kingsley, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 2AX

- 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 Liam Saunders against the decision of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
- The application Ref SMD/2022/0308, dated 7 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 15 August 2022.
- The development proposed is a two storey front and side extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey front and rear extension and creation of an access at Vale View, Hazles Cross Road, Kingsley, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 2AX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref SMD/2022/0308, dated 7 June 2022, subject to the following conditions:

   1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.

   2) The development permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: VALE-VIEW-IDS-507-DR-A-05-10-001A, VALE-VIEW-IDS-507-DR-A-05-10-002A, VALE-VIEW-IDS-507-DR-A-05-10-003B, VALE-VIEW-IDS-507-DR-A-05-10-004B, VALE-VIEW-IDS-DR-A-507-00-10-005A, VALE-VIEW-IDS-507-DR-A-00-10-006E.

   3) Other than as shown on the approved plans, the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural matter

2. Although the original application form describes the proposed development as a two storey front and side extension the plans and other evidence make clear that the proposal is for a two storey front and rear extension and creation of an access. For the avoidance of doubt, I have used this description of development in my decision above.

Main Issue

3. There is one main issue which is the effect of the proposed extensions on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal dwelling is a two storey red brick house dating from around 1950. It is architecturally unremarkable. The main windows to the front elevation are set symmetrically but the front door, porch and secondary windows between are not, detracting from the double fronted effect. To the rear there is a full width, single storey garden room of little merit which it is proposed to demolish.

5. The house sits in a row of other red brick, two storey detached houses of mostly post-war age and design on the edge of Kingsley. The dwellings are set back from the highway on falling ground and mostly have a ridge that runs parallel to the highway. However, front facing feature gables are also seen. The opposite side of the street is characterised by bungalows, many with front facing gables, set on higher ground.

6. The proposed front extension would be in matching brickwork to the host dwelling but of contemporary design. It would feature a two storey gable fronted projection some 1.5m deep and set centrally on the front elevation. This would be predominantly glazed. Although of contemporary design the front extension would be well designed, improve the symmetry of the dwelling and add interest to this unremarkable house whilst remaining subservient to it. Although it would be clearly visible and introduce a modern element into the street, there is currently limited uniformity of design and in my view it would readily assimilate into a street scene that has clearly evolved over time.

7. The Council raises concerns regarding the contemporary design and use of non-matching materials. However, it is clear from the evidence that walls are proposed to be of matching brickwork and this can be secured through a planning condition. Although the feature windows would be aluminium framed, I find this appropriate in the context of the overall contemporary design. With regard to design, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expects development to be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and sympathetic to local character and history whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. It goes on to say that design should not be used as a valid reason to object to development where it accords with clear expectations in plan policies.

8. In the context of the host dwelling and Hazles Cross Road I consider that the proposed front extension would meet these expectations. In particular, it would comply with Policy DC1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, 2020, (LP) and the Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide, adopted in 2018. Taken together these allow for a contemporary approach provided it is well designed such that it harmonises with the parent building, is subordinate to it and reinforces local distinctiveness, positively contributing to and complementing the special character of the area, by incorporating appropriate creativity, detailing and materials.

9. Turning to the rear extension, this would extend across the full width of the dwelling and project some 4m beyond the original rear façade. It would have a

significant effect on the appearance of the dwelling by introducing a contemporary double gable with large, full height feature windows at first floor which would noticeably change the rear elevation. Nevertheless, the gables would be set down from the main ridge and the projection would not be excessive, meaning that the dominance of the original building remained apparent.

10. The Council raises concerns regarding the full height windows and the amount of glazing. However, whilst the gabled design would result in glazing above existing first floor level this would be carefully arranged, adding interest and symmetry. Moreover, I am satisfied that the ratio of glazing to solid brickwork would not be excessive at either ground or first floor level and whilst different, would not be inappropriate in the context of the host dwelling or its neighbours.

11. The Council does not object to the proposed new access and I agree it would be acceptable.

12. It is concluded on the main issue that the proposed extensions, whilst introducing change and innovation, would have no materially detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the host dwelling or the surrounding area. In consequence there would be no conflict with LP Policy SS8, which identifies Kingsley as a larger village, or LP Policy DC1 or with the NPPF or Council's Design Guide.

13. The Council suggests two conditions in addition to the statutory commencement condition. I agree that, other than as shown on the approved plans, materials used in the external surfaces should match those used in the existing building. I also agree that the development should be carried out in accordance with the approved plans. These are necessary to ensure that the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area are protected and for the avoidance of doubt.

14. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

K E Down
INSPECTOR