

**Appeal made against the refusal of planning permission**

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Appeal reference</b>     | APP/P1805/D/11/2158896                              |
| <b>Planning Application</b> | 11/0337-RL  |
| <b>Proposal</b>             | Bedroom over existing garage                        |
| <b>Location</b>             | 23 Middleton Road, Sidemoor, Bromsgrove,<br>B61 8NH |
| <b>Ward</b>                 | Charford  |
| <b>Decision</b>             | Refused (delegated decision): 1st June 2011         |

The author of this report is Mr. Tim Collard who can be contacted on 01527 881243 (e-mail: t.collard@bromsgrove.gov.uk) for more information.

**Discussion**

The proposal was for a first floor side extension.

The inspector considered that main issues are the effect of the proposal: (a) on the character and appearance of the locality, and (b) on the living conditions of the residents of 21 Middleton Road with particular reference to visual impact.

The Inspector considered that Middleton Road displays a variety of house types and designs, but the appeal property is a detached, brick-built dwelling of relatively modern construction. The front wall of the bedroom addition would be set back from that of the host dwelling, and its ridge would be lower. These are features which appeal to the Council in the context of its Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Design (SPG). However the Inspector noted, the side wall of the bedroom would be sited on the common boundary separating No.s 21 and 23 Middleton Road, and in the Council's view, this has the potential to create a 'terracing' effect.

The Inspector noted that it appears that the Council would be content with the extension if it were reduced in width, so as to be set off the boundary by a metre, so as to accord with the advice of the SPG. However, the appellant's reluctance to do so is understandable, since the internal width of the bedroom, already narrow, would be reduced to a virtually impractical level.

The Inspector considered the Council's concerns to be misplaced. Such is the significant difference in levels between No.s 21 and 23 that the feared terracing effect would not occur. The ridges of the 2 dwellings would be set at substantially different levels, so that neither they, nor the dwellings, would be perceived as unified. Additionally the Inspector noted, a sufficient gap would remain between the 2 respective side elevations to maintain visual separation.

The Inspector noted that it appears that the Council's decision, in part, was affected by the prospect of a similar proposal arising from No. 21. However, no such proposal is before me, and it will be for the Council to determine any such proposal, should it arise, on its merits.

It was considered that the proposed extension is well designed, and therefore it would sit acceptably without harming local character and appearance; it would conform with those provisions of policy S10 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan (LP) requiring extensions to dwellings outside the Green Belt to be of a matching design to the host dwelling, and subservient to it.

It was noted that number 21's porched main entrance is sited at the side of the house. The porch has a door and window facing the street, but it has a blank wall facing No. 23. The porch is separated from the boundary by a gate providing pedestrian access to the rear of the dwelling. An obscurely glazed window serving a bathroom is set in the main gabled side wall of no. 21 facing the appeal site. There is no other fenestration in the side wall.

The Inspector considered that the proposed bedroom addition would not materially affect the internal living conditions of No. 21's residents. They would be aware of the heightened wall on their boundary when entering and leaving their property, but the Inspector did not regard its effect on them as oppressive, claustrophobic or harmful. It would have no materially greater effect in this regard than the siting for the proposed extension suggested by the Council.

The Inspector concluded that the residents of 21 Middleton Road would not suffer material harm to their living conditions by reason of visual impact. The proposal therefore conforms with the provisions of BDLP policy S10 requiring extensions to dwellings outside the Green Belt not to adversely affect the existing amenities of adjoining occupiers.

Otherwise than as set out in this decision and conditions the Inspector stated it is necessary that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

The Inspector took account of the representations made by the residents of 21 Middleton Road, but neither these nor any other matter raised are of such significance as to outweigh the considerations that led the Inspector to conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

The appeal was therefore allowed.

### **Costs application**

No application for costs was made.

**Appeal outcome**

The appeal was **ALLOWED**.

**Recommendation**

The Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** that the item of information be noted.