

Appeal made against a refusal to grant planning permission

Appeal reference	APP/P1805/D/11/2167909
Planning Application	11/0878-TC
Proposal	First floor side extension
Location	233 Old Birmingham Road, Marlbrook, Bromsgrove, B60 1HQ
Ward	Marlbrook
Decision	Refused (Delegated decision) - 8th December 2011

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

Discussion

The Inspector considered that the main issue is the effect of the proposal, for a first floor side extension, on the character and appearance of the local area.

The Inspector identified that the application dwelling is within a long row of similar houses, almost all of which have a single storey garage to one side, with only a narrow gap between the side wall of the garage and the main gable wall of the next house. The Inspector outlined that the proposal is to build a first floor side extension over an existing flat roof garage, closing the gap to the neighbouring house (No. 235) at upper floor level to only about 0.6m.

It was noted that a number of other extensions have been built over the side garages in this part of Old Birmingham Road, closing down the space between houses at first floor level. The Inspector mentioned the officer's report which recognised this and raised no objection to the loss of the visual gap between the properties.

The Inspector identified that the Council's position that the proposal would cause a 'terracing effect', harming the street scene. The Inspector referred to Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 1 (SPG1) *Residential Design Guide* which states that it is important that semi-detached or detached houses should not appear to become terraced. For this reason, it advises that 2 storey or first floor extensions should be set at least 1m off the common boundary thus the proposal conflicted with the guidance.

It was considered that as the front of No. 233 is stepped back by a couple of metres from that of No. 235, it would significantly reduce the potential for Nos. 233 and 235 to look like a pair of semi-detached or terraced houses and it would also limit the prominence of the extension in the street scene. The Inspector acknowledged the technical breach of SPG1; however, could not find a substantive conflict with its aims in this respect.

The Inspector also acknowledged that the proposal conflicted with SPG1 in terms of the extension not being subservient to the main house. However, the Inspector considered

that extension would improve the dwelling's general proportions and balance. It was considered that the extension would appear as a complementary, rather than a visually dominant, part of the building. It was considered that a smaller scale extension, complying with the detailed advice of SPG1, would likely have a somewhat contrived and awkward appearance here.

It was considered that the proposal would not harm the character or appearance of the local area. The Inspector imposed a condition listing the approved plans and a further condition requiring the use of matching materials to protect the character and appearance of the area.

The Inspector thus concluded that the appeal should succeed.

Costs application

No application for costs was made.

Appeal outcome

The appeal was **ALLOWED** (16th February 2012).

Recommendation

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