

APPLICATION REFERENCE: PL/2016/00407/MINFHO**Site Address:** 127 Wyckham Road Castle Bromwich Solihull B36 0HU

Proposal:	Retrospective consent for single storey side and rear extension, two storey side and rear extension and rear dormer with hip to gable conversion.
Web link to Plans:	Full details of the proposal and statutory consultee responses can be found by using the above planning application reference number at: http://publicaccess.solihull.gov.uk

Reason for Referral to Planning Committee:	Head of Service request
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Recommendation:	REFUSAL
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The rear dormer and hip to gable conversion has not been designed to be in keeping with the design and character of the original property and furthermore the dormer window by virtue of its proportions, size, design and positioning has led to an overbearing and intrusive structure when viewed from neighbouring gardens (No. 129 Wyckham Road). Therefore it is considered that the development does not accord with the advice within Policy P14 and P15 of the Solihull Local Plan 2013 and the Councils SPD on House Extensions Guidelines 2010.

Background

Planning permission was granted on 16 April 2015 (PA Ref. PL/2015/50186/MINFHO) for a single storey side and rear extension and a double storey side and rear extension. This was followed by a further application of a similar description but slightly larger at first floor level which was approved on 7 July 2015 (PA ref: PL/2015/50974/MINFHO).

The above planning permissions were not implemented in accordance with the approved plans and the current application seeks to retain what has been built on site and regularise the situation.

KEY PLANNING ISSUES

The following key planning issues are material to the determination of this application:

- Principle of development
- Design and Character
- Impact on the Neighbouring properties

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Non Statutory Consultees - The following Non-Statutory Consultee responses have been received:

SMBC Drainage - No objection

SMBC Highways – No Objection

PUBLICITY

The application was advertised in accordance with the provisions set down in the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 2015.

Three letters of objection received with regards to the following

- Inappropriate development
- Inconsiderate building noise
- Untidy site
- Out of scale with existing properties
- Mishmash of materials
- Overbearing
- Too large as a single residence
- Set a president for other corner properties
- Parking issues
- Overlooking

In addition to the above, Castle Bromwich Parish Council have commented that the application “could be approved subject to any neighbour comments”.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

This report considers the proposal against the relevant polices of the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) 2012, the National Planning Practice Guidance and the adopted planning policies of Solihull Council. The policies of the Solihull Local Plan “SLP” 2013 that have been used to assess this application are considered to be in accordance with the NPPF and as such are material planning considerations.

Principle of Development

Government policy set out within the NPPF advocates that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Ministerial Forward states that 'development that is sustainable should go ahead – without delay'. At Solihull MBC policies P14 and P15 of the SLP and expanded upon by the House Extension Guidelines provide the framework under which proposals such as this are assessed. The principle of development for this proposal is therefore established subject to compliance with relevant development plan policy.

Design and Character

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF advises, inter alia, that:

'The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people'.

Paragraph 64 of the NPPF advises, inter alia, that:

'Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions'.

Policy P15 Securing Design Quality of the Solihull Local Plan 2013 advises that:

'All development proposals will be expected to achieve good quality, inclusive and sustainable design, which meets the following key principles:

Conserves and enhances local character, distinctiveness and streetscape quality and ensures that the scale, massing, density, layout, materials and landscape of the development respect the surrounding natural, built and historic environment'

In terms of dormer windows, the Council's adopted House Extension Guidelines SPD advises that:

Dormer windows should be modest, well proportioned and in keeping with the vertical proportions of the main elevations, should sit exclusively within the roof plane they are located on, away from the edges of the roof. Wrap around dormers will not be permitted and large box dormers on rear elevations should be avoided.

In terms of first floor / two storey side extensions, the Council's adopted House Extension Guidelines SPD advises, inter alia, that:

Most first floor extensions should be subservient to the existing dwelling in design and external appearance, with a lower ridge height and set back from the front main wall of the house. This should normally be a minimum of 440mm to be effective.

Having regard to the above, the proposal represents a poorly designed and integrated addition to the dwelling.

In particular, the dormer window and hip to gable conversion is not considered to complement the features of the original dwelling in terms of proportions, size, design and positioning. The dormer does not sit exclusively in the rear roof plane of the original roof and merges with the side extension/roof alteration creating an unacceptable and harmful addition. Further, the side extension/roof alteration extends the main ridgeline of the roof and significantly increases the roof's bulk and mass. Whilst there are examples of poorly designed extensions elsewhere within the street scene, the majority of these were granted permission prior to the adoption of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document entitled 'House Extension Guidelines' in 2002 and updated in 2010.

The development by reason of its bulk, scale and design has led to a poorly integrated addition not in keeping with the design of the original house resulting in an extension that detracts from the visual amenity of the application property, unbalances the symmetry between the pair of semi-detached houses, and appears as an incongruous addition to the street scene.

All of the above combine to create an extension that does not comply with the requirements of Policy P15 of the Solihull of the adopted Householder Extension Guidelines SPD. Significant negative weight should be attached to this in the decision making process.

Impact on the Neighbouring properties

The nearest neighbours to the development are adjacent properties in Wyckham Road and Windleaves Road.

The Council's SPD advises that:

'The main impact upon neighbours is through loss of direct sunlight or general daylight, a general overbearing or dominating effect from an extension that is too large or too close to the adjacent property and unreasonable loss of privacy from overlooking windows, particularly at first floor level'.

In terms of neighbouring amenity the dormer window has resulted in the introduction of a structure which causes an undue visual intrusion to the occupants of the neighbouring dwelling – 129 Wyckham Road. The dormer window, by virtue of its proportions, size, design and positioning has led to an overbearing and intrusive structure when viewed from this garden.

Therefore, the development would be contrary to Policy P14 of the Solihull Local Plan, House Extension Guidelines SPD 2010 and NPPF.

Significant negative weight should be attached to this in the decision making process.

CONCLUSION

The development is considered to be unacceptable in both size and design and as such is harmful to the appearance of the dwelling and the streetscene, which weighs negatively in the planning balance. The development also has a detrimental impact on the amenities of the adjacent neighbours and therefore similarly has a negative impact which again weighs negatively in the planning balance. Conversely, no material planning issues have been identified that should be considered in favour of the proposal against which the negative issues should be balanced.

Having regard to the above the development does not accord with Policy P14 and P15 of the Solihull Local Plan, guidance within the adopted House Extension Guidelines and is therefore considered unfavourably with planning permission to be refused.

RECOMMENDATION

Refusal is recommended for the following reasons:

(1)The proposed development by reason of its bulk, scale and design has led to a non-subservient addition that is poorly integrated with the design of the original house resulting in a discordant structure that detracts from the visual amenity of the application property, unbalances the symmetry between the pair of semi-detached houses, and appears as an incongruous addition to the street scene. Therefore, the development would be contrary to Policy P14 & P15 of the Solihull Local Plan, House Extension Guidelines SPD 2010 and NPPF.

(2)The dormer window by virtue of its proportions, size, design and positioning has led to an overbearing and intrusive structure when viewed from the neighbouring garden of 129 Wyckham Road. Therefore, the development would be contrary to Policy P14 & P15 of the Solihull Local Plan, House Extension Guidelines SPD 2010 and NPPF.