
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 February 2017

by Y Wright BSc (Hons) DipTP MSc DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 10 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/16/3167102

1 Georges Crescent, Grappenhall and Thelwall, Warrington WA4 2PP

- 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 Hulse against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2016/28793, dated 24 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is single storey front extension and dormers to existing loft room.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

1. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached house located within a residential area, attached to No 3 Georges Crescent. Houses within the vicinity are predominantly semi-detached of varying designs. The dwellings are set back from the streets with modest front and rear gardens. Some of the properties have driveways and garages.
 2. The appeal property has previously been extended with the addition of a two storey side extension which sits flush with the front elevation of the main property and ridge height. There is also a porch to the front. The front garden is predominantly hard standing.
 3. Policy QE7 of the Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) (CS) seeks, amongst other things, development that reinforces local distinctiveness, enhances local character and appearance and harmonises with the scale and proportions of adjacent buildings. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance 2 on House Extension Guidelines (2003) (SPG) includes seeking development that enhances and maintains local character. The Supplementary Planning Guidance A Front Extensions/Porches (2003) (SPG A) advises, amongst other things, that front extensions should be subordinate in scale to the main building, have a minimal projection so as not to dominate neighbouring properties and not appear overly prominent in the streetscene. Supplementary Planning Guidance D Roof Extensions/Dormers (2003) (SPG D)
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- advises, amongst other things, that dormer windows should be located and designed so as to minimise their impact on the appearance of the property and the streetscene.
4. In considering this appeal I am also mindful that the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) places great importance on development being of good design and responding to local character to ensure the integration of new development into the existing environment.
 5. The proposed single storey front extension would extend almost the full width of the main dwelling and existing side extension and project forwards by approximately 3m. Whilst I saw on my site visit that there are some front extensions to properties within the locality, these are limited in scale. As such their generally subservient scale and minimal projection do not appear unduly prominent in the streetscene.
 6. In comparison the proposed extension would form a large, intrusive and uncharacteristic projection forward of the main elevation and attached neighbouring property. This would be detrimental to the appearance of the dwelling and its attached neighbour and would not be in keeping with other properties within the vicinity. Furthermore the existence of other front extensions within the surrounding area does not set a precedent, as each case is considered on its merits. As such I have duly determined this appeal on its own individual merits.
 7. Whilst I acknowledge that the attached neighbouring property (No 3) has not been extended to the side and therefore the pair of dwellings are not now directly symmetrical in this regard, the front elevations are generally aligned. The proposed front extension would have a detrimental impact on the appearance of these front elevations. I have also considered the appellant's argument that the existing porch already provides a focal point at the front of the property, but I consider its limited scale and projection is not unduly prominent when viewed from the street.
 8. I note that the neighbours' at 144 Knutsford Road have a detached garage to the rear of their property accessed off Georges Crescent, which abuts the front garden boundary of the appeal site. However I saw on my site visit that from within the streetscene this is viewed predominantly within the context of the neighbours' host dwelling and does not detract from the prevailing set back pattern of development within the locality.
 9. As regards the proposed dormer windows, I have noted that these would be set back from the eaves, be lower than the ridge line, would use matching materials and be generally proportionate with the windows in the main dwelling. Nevertheless the use of flat roofs and their location on the front of the roof would appear overly prominent and discordant within the streetscene.
 10. Whilst the appellant has drawn my attention to other properties with dormer windows, I saw they do not form a dominant characteristic within the locality. Nevertheless I looked at the specific examples highlighted that are within the vicinity of the appeal site. I saw that the dormer windows at 1 Nicholls Street have pitched roofs and are located on a subservient extension. Whilst there is a flat roofed dormer at 125 Knutsford Road this is on a bungalow on a street with a different appearance and overall character. As such I do not consider these are directly comparable to the appeal proposal and they do not set a

precedent. I can confirm that I have determined this appeal on its own individual merits.

11. Consequently, for the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal proposal, by virtue of its overall size, scale and massing would result in material harm to the character and appearance of the property and surrounding area. This would be contrary to CS Policy QE7, the SPG, SPG A, SPG D and the Framework.
12. In reaching this conclusion I note that sufficient car parking spaces would remain available at the property. In addition I recognise that the appellant wishes to make best use of the space available by increasing his living space and creating a downstairs toilet, which would aid the childminding business at the property. I also note the appellant's comments that the proposal would make use of the currently under-utilised hardstanding, would be more aesthetically pleasing than the approved planning permission for an extension to the rear of the property and would provide emergency window escapes. Whilst I have taken account of these benefits they nevertheless do not outweigh the harm I have identified above.
13. I note the appellant's comments that a smaller extension of less depth would not provide the room sought within the property and would not make economic sense. The appellant also highlights that there was a lack of objections from neighbours to this proposal, whereas the application for development to the rear was disputed by neighbours. However these matters would not justify allowing harmful development.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Y Wright

INSPECTOR