
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 April 2017

by Thomas Hatfield BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 5th May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/16/3163462

33 Lodge Drive, Culcheth and Glazebury, Warrington, WA3 4ES

- 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 & Mrs D Swindells against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2016/28604, dated 22 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is two storey side, front and rear extension, single storey rear extension as well as elevational changes and changes to front curtilage including front boundary wall and repositioning of drop kerbs.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a modern detached house on the southern side of Lodge Drive. The majority of the surrounding properties are detached, although a row of semi-detached properties are located further to the east
 4. The properties along Lodge Drive have a relatively consistent character and design. The detached properties opposite to No 33 and immediately to the east have pitched front gables and are of a consistent scale. In contrast, the appeal proposal would create an uncharacteristically wide dwelling that would be distinct in appearance. The proposed roof hipped roof shape would also contrast sharply with surrounding properties. Whilst there are a number of detached properties with hipped roof profiles at the far end of Lodge Drive, these are some distance away from the appeal property and do not relate to its immediate surroundings. Furthermore, the semi-detached properties to the west are of a separate character, and I do not consider that they lend support to the proposal.
 5. The frontages along Lodge Drive are generally green and open, and boundary treatments mostly consist of soft landscaping. Where front boundary walls exist, they are low in height and supplemented with planting. In this context, the proposed boundary wall and gate would appear excessively tall and
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prominent within the street. They would also be at odds with the open character of the surrounding boundary treatments. Whilst a shorter boundary wall could be built under permitted development rights, it is open to the appellant to pursue this outside of the appeal process.

6. The development would also significantly alter the appearance of the host property, and would effectively remodel it. It would almost double its width at first floor level, and would introduce a hipped roof profile on either side of the new front gable. The proposed extensions would effectively reshape the property rather than being subordinate additions. Whilst I accept that not every extension must be subservient to the original dwelling, in this case it would create a property that would be out of keeping with the surrounding area, as set out above.
7. Whilst other extensions along the street have been brought to my attention, these are either smaller in scale, or are otherwise away from the immediate setting of the appeal property. They do not set a precedent that I am bound to follow in this case.
8. For the above reasons, I conclude that the development would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to Policy QE7 of the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), and guidance contained in the House Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Guidance (2003). This policy and guidance seek to ensure, amongst other things, that new development reinforces local distinctiveness and enhances the character and appearance of the area.
9. Whilst the appellant states that the Core Strategy has been subject to legal challenge in relation to its housing policies, there is no information before me to suggest that Policy QE7 is affected by this.

Other Matters

10. Whilst the development would not result in any loss of privacy or outlook to neighbouring occupiers, or result in any loss of parking, this represents an absence of harm in relation to these matters rather than a positive benefit.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Hatfield

INSPECTOR