
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 May 2017

by Darren Hendley BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 7 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/17/3169470

8 Leamington Close, Great Sankey, Warrington WA5 3PY

- 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 Milsom against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2016/29400, dated 21 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 24 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is a side extension with a room in the loft space.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a side extension with a room in the loft space at 8 Leamington Close, Great Sankey, Warrington WA5 3PY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2016/29400, dated 21 November 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site Location Plan dated 21 March 2012, AHT 2075 dated 19 Nov 16, AHT 2075-A dated 19 Nov 16.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey detached house with a single storey element which abuts the boundary with 10 Leamington Close. The house at No 10, which is semi-detached, is set back from this boundary with its driveway in between. The appeal property is also set slightly forward of No 10, and along this part of Leamington Close, there is not a continual building line because the plots are gently staggered. The plots sizes are relatively small on Leamington Close, with narrow frontages and a limited sense of space, apart from the corner plots, which are more spacious.
 4. The 'terracing code', which is set out in Warrington Unitary Development Plan (2003) Supplementary Planning Guidance 2 (SPG2) – House Extension
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Guidelines and SPG B Side Extensions, seeks to avoid neighbouring properties joining up to create a terracing effect through controls over side extensions. The appeal proposal would extend the existing front roof plane of the single storey element back to provide first floor accommodation in the enlarged roof space. It does not propose to increase the existing eaves height that faces Leamington Close and its massing would be towards the rear of the existing house, away from the streetscene. The increased height of the roof ridge would still be substantially less than the existing two storey part of the house.

5. The appeal proposal would extend up to boundary with No 10, and this falls short of the expectations of SPG2 and SPG B that at first floor level a 1 metre gap should be maintained to the boundary, to prevent extensions joining up and creating a continuous effect. With the gently staggered siting of the appeal property and No 10, and as the height of the proposal would be substantially less than the existing two storey part of the house, there would not however be the potential for the properties to create a continuous front elevation. The appeal property and No 10, together and its adjoining semi, would maintain their character and appearance in this regard.
6. I also note that where the SPG2 and SPG B provide diagrammatic advice to demonstrate the terracing code, this relates to full two storey side extensions. This is not the case with the appeal proposal where living accommodation would be formed principally through alterations to the existing roof and raising of the rear eaves level.
7. I consider that the scale of the proposal would be modest, and with its form and siting would not result in an appreciable loss of any noticeable gap, open feel around the appeal property, or any sense of rhythm in the street scene. The proposal would therefore not result in the potential for undue terracing, or fail to respect the character of the streetscene.
8. Permitted development rights for extensions have been taken away from the appeal property and others under the relevant planning permission (Council ref: 92/29564), in part, so the effect on the character of the surrounding area can be assessed. However, this does not imply that extensions are unacceptable, but that a more regulated approach through the need for planning permission is required so that extensions do not have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. Each proposal where planning permission is required is to be determined on its merits, as I have done so with this appeal.
9. As the proposal would not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area, it would comply with Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) policies CS 1, QE 6 and QE 7 that require development to deliver a high standard of design, have an acceptable impact on the surrounding area and reinforce local character.
10. The proposal would also comply with paragraphs 56 and 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework as it would constitute good design, having regard to the character and quality of the area. Whilst the proposals may not entirely comply with the guidelines in SPG2 and SPG B, as the potential for undue terracing would not result, the appeal proposals would be acceptable.

Conditions

11. I have imposed conditions necessary in the interests of certainty and for the avoidance of doubt, and that seek to safeguard the character and appearance of the area through use of matching materials to the existing house.

Conclusion

12. I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

Darren Hendley

INSPECTOR