

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 May 2017

**by Mrs A L Fairclough MA BSc(Hons) LLB(Hons) PGDipLP (Barrister)
MRTPI IHBC**

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

Decision date: 16 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/17/3173371

101 Poulton Crescent, Woolston, Warrington WA1 4QP

- 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 and Mrs Scott Henderson against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 2017/29658, dated 20 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 10 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as the "Re-submission of approved application 2016-29253 for proposed two storey front, side and rear extension and single storey rear extension in order to accommodate existing solar panels on altered south facing roof plane".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background

2. Planning permission was granted for front, rear and side extensions at the appeal property on 3 January 2017 (Ref: 2016/29253). The current appeal scheme differs from the approved scheme only in relation to the two storey rear/side element. The approved scheme has a two storey symmetrical rear extension with a hipped roof. The approved extension would project sideways beyond the original side gable and forwards to create a side extension. The current appeal scheme proposes a two storey asymmetrical gabled rear extension. This would also project sideways and forward into a side extension but the side element would have a slightly bigger form. Although the whole scheme is before me, I will deal with the issue between the parties, that is, the proposed rear/side extensions.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed two-storey rear/side element on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling, which is attached to another pair of semi-detached dwellings by a pair of single storey garages. While these properties are linked at ground floor level, the first floor gaps above the garages allows for unbroken views at first floor level between the pairs of semi-detached dwellings resulting in a feeling of spaciousness. This area is
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predominantly semi-detached dwellings of a similar design, style and appearance.

5. The proposed scheme includes an asymmetrical gabled rear extension that wraps around the corner and extends forward along the side elevation to create a bulky side extension. Due to its asymmetrical roof form, the side element would have a high mono pitched roof which would appear to horizontally dissect the side gable of the original dwelling. This would create a prominent and incongruous feature on the side elevation. This would be harmful to the host property when viewed from the adjacent properties rear gardens. Also, the interrelationship between the proposed side roof form and the host dwelling would appear awkward. The bulk and height of this side element would result in an over dominant and cramped form of development, which would reduce the sense of space around the building at first floor level, when viewed from Poulton Crescent. Additionally, the asymmetrical roof form would fail to harmonise with the established character of simple symmetrical gables which is a particular feature of the locality. Therefore, due to its prominence within the street scene, the proposed side/rear extension would detract from the character and appearance of the host property and the area.
6. The appellants state that the appeal scheme was submitted to ensure the full use of a solar array panel, which has been established on the existing dwelling. I note that the long roof slope of the proposed asymmetrical extension would be approximately south east facing. As such this roof slope would receive a significant amount of sunlight. I also note that the roof form of the appeal scheme would be positioned at a higher level than the approved scheme such that it would possibly receive more light and that this would be more energy efficient.
7. However, I consider that this is not a reason to accept poor design. Moreover, I agree with the Council that the design of the proposed scheme should not be dependent on the solar panels. In my view, the use of solar panels should complement the scheme rather than compromise or dictate the design of it. I acknowledge the appellants contend that solar panels should be sited where they can collect the most amount of energy from the sun in accordance with national policy. I note that the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) states that new development should help increase the use and supply of renewable energy. However, the NPPF also states that new development should always seek to secure high quality design and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
8. I note also that the appellants refer to other gabled rear extensions in their submissions¹. I have no details of these. However, I am required to determine each appeal on its own merits in the light of current policy. I have done so in this case.

Conclusions

9. Thus the proposed two-storey rear/side element would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. I note that the appeal scheme would be more energy efficient and

¹ Application form.

would accord with that aspect of Policy QE 7 of the *Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy* adopted 2014 (CS). However, it would be contrary to CS Policy QE 6 and other aspects of CS Policy QE 7 which requires, amongst other things, that development does not have an adverse impact on the surrounding area and that proposals should ensure a high quality place in terms of harmonising with the scale, proportions and materials of existing buildings and by enhancing the character and appearance of the street scene.

10. I acknowledge that there may be some benefits in terms of energy efficiency. However, in my view this does not outweigh the harm that the proposed two storey rear/side element would have on the host building or the locality. Thus it would also conflict with the NPPF. Additionally it would conflict with the *Supplementary Planning Guidance 2* entitled '*House Extension Guidelines*'², which requires that extensions harmonise visually with existing dwellings.
11. Therefore, for the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Mrs A Fairclough

INSPECTOR

² Although the *Supplementary Planning Guidance 2* entitled '*House Extension Guidelines*' is of some vintage in that it refers to the *Warrington Unitary Development Plan* policies, the document generally supports the above CS design policies.
