



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 July 2017

by Gareth Wildgoose BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 24 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P2365/D/17/3174021

19 The Serpentine, Aughton L39 6RN

- 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 Jeff Wynne against the decision of West Lancashire Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2017/0046/FUL, dated 12 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 9 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is erection of side and rear dormers and extension of existing front dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of side and rear dormers and extension of existing front dormer at 19 The Serpentine, Aughton L39 6RN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2017/0046/FUL, dated 12 January 2017, 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: 24430/loc; 2443/1.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials shown on plan no. 2443/1.
 - 4) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, details of the obscure glazing and opening mechanisms for the first floor windows in the southern side elevation shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The obscure glazing and opening mechanisms shall be installed as approved, and permanently retained thereafter.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the host building and the area.

Reasons

3. Policy GN3 of the West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 (LP), adopted October 2013, amongst other things, seeks that development should be high quality design, complements or enhances local distinctiveness within its surroundings through sensitive design and in the case of extensions, the

proposal should relate to the existing building in terms of design and materials. The policy is supported by guidance in the West Lancashire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), adopted January 2008.

4. The appeal site consists of a semi-detached bungalow with a hipped roof and single storey front and rear outriggers, in a residential area consisting of a mix of similar dwellings and contrasting two storey semi-detached properties. Dormers to the front, side and rear of properties with a variety of styles, scale and proportions are a characteristic feature of The Serpentine, including asymmetrical front dormers visible on semi-detached pairs and large side dormers of significant depth. In that context, the front dormer would be viewed as a subservient and harmonious addition to the host building and the area given its siting, scale and proportions relative to the main hipped roof.
5. The side and rear dormers would be architecturally consistent with the front dormer with a similar flat roof design and complementary materials, together with a reduced height relative to the main roof and a set back from its eaves. Consequently, the proposed dormers would relate to the existing building in accordance with Policy GN3 in those respects. The scale, massing and form of the side and rear dormers would be more considerable than the front dormer and would largely subsume the existing hipped roof of the single storey rear outrigger with some differences in style and proportions of windows. However, I observed examples of similar side dormers in The Serpentine which project beyond the main roof at the rear and encompass the roof of single storey rear outriggers, with a range of window styles. Some existing dormers also link to the front, side and rear in more visually prominent locations within the street scene than the proposal. When those examples are taken together with screening afforded by an existing chimney stack and the respective orientations of No 19 and the adjacent No 21, the relationship of the side and rear dormers with the host building would not appear prominent, dominant or incongruous within the street scene.
6. Having regard to the above, the proposal broadly accords with the design principles in the SPD that a development should fit in and reinforce the local characteristics of the area, in so far as it responds to its context, local distinctiveness and grain of the surrounding area. However, in that respect, the site is located in an area characterised by a significant proportion of bungalows where the proposal and the majority of existing dormers do not conform with the specific guidance in the SPD relating to dormers and roof extensions. In such circumstances, as the SPD guidance carries less weight than policy, I have necessarily assessed the scheme on its merits relative to its surroundings. The established character and appearance of the area given the prevalence of front, side and rear dormers of considerable scale, form and massing would prevent harm to the host building as the development would not look out of place.
7. I conclude that the development would not have an unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the host building or the area. The proposal, therefore, would not conflict with Policy GN3 of the LP.

Conditions

8. The Council provided a suggested list of conditions which where necessary I have amended to accord with paragraph 206 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. Time limit and plans compliance

conditions are necessary in the interest of certainty as to the development for which planning permission is granted. In the interest of the character and appearance of the development, the materials indicated on the submitted plans are also subject to a condition.

9. A further condition to secure obscure glazing and restricted opening of windows in the southern side elevation is necessary to prevent overlooking of No 21, as direct views of the rear garden would otherwise be available above boundary hedging. In contrast, there would be adequate separation distance to prevent any impact upon properties at the front or rear. Furthermore, the rear windows would have an indirect relationship with rear gardens of neighbouring properties at each side with some screening afforded by intervening boundary hedging and therefore, would not result in a harmful loss of privacy to the occupiers of those properties.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above and taking all other matters into consideration, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted subject to the conditions set out in the formal decision.

Gareth Wildgoose

INSPECTOR