



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 July 2017

by A Jordan BA Hons MRTPI

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

Decision date: 4 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/17/3174715

1 Cambridge Close, Stockton Heath, Warrington, WA4 6SF

- 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 Conor Teague against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2017/29947, dated 1 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 24 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is a rear and side 2 storey extension, single storey rear extension and dormer rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a rear and side 2 storey extension, single storey rear extension and dormer rear extension at 1 Cambridge Close, Stockton Heath, Warrington, WA4 6SF in accordance with application ref 2017/29947, dated 1 March 2017 and 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, Site Plan Ref: 1094, Existing/Proposed Elevations except in respect of the windows on the side elevation shown on the Existing/Proposed Elevations.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, no development shall take place until further details of the position and glazing of windows on the side (southward) facing elevation have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Main Issues

2. The main issues for the appeal are:
 - The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of adjoining occupiers at Nos 12 and 14 Westbourne Road.

- The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. 1 Cambridge Close is a modern semi-detached dwelling which sits in a cul-de-sac of similar properties. I noted during my site visit that the properties on the surrounding streets exhibited a varied range of alterations, many of which were large side extensions of a similar form to the one proposed in this case, including the immediately adjoining No 12 Westbourne Road. These alterations were so widespread that they now formed part of the established character of the area.
4. The appeal property has a single storey lean to garage to the side boundary which also forms the rear boundary of Nos 12 and 14 Westbourne Road. The proposal includes a 2 storey side extension to replace the existing garage and this would project beyond the existing building line by around 4 metres. A further single storey rear addition would stretch the remainder of the width of the property.
5. The side extension would run flush with the existing front elevation and so would not appear subservient to the host dwelling. Due to the width of the extension the works would distort the symmetry of the pair of semi's, however, as these are arranged in a cul-de-sac, some of which have already been altered, the dwellings do not have a uniform appearance and the identified imbalance in proportions would not appear unduly intrusive in this context. The dwelling is also not in a prominent location, as the cul de sac lies behind the Westbourne Road frontage and so the extension would not form a notable feature in the streetscene. The Council have raised no objections to the appearance of the works to the rear, including the dormer window. Having regard to the limited visibility of this element of the works in the streetscene, I see no reason to dispute this view.
6. Therefore, although I agree that a smaller extension would sit more comfortably in relation to the host property, the proposal before me would not itself appear incongruous and when viewed in the context of other altered properties would not have a significant effect on the character and appearance of the wider area. I note that many of these alterations will have occurred some time ago, or with the benefit of permitted development rights. Nevertheless, the extent to which they are common in the streetscene provides a context in which I cannot consider the appeal proposal to be significantly harmful.
7. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not significantly detract from the appearance of the host property or harm the character and appearance of the area. Although it would not comply with some of the guidance within the *Warrington Unitary Development Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance – Side Extensions* (SPG), it would not conflict with Policy QE6 and QE7 of the *Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy* which seeks development which enhances the character and appearance of the local area and harmonises with the scale proportions and materials of existing buildings. The proposal would also comply with guidance in the *National Planning Policy Framework*, which has similar aims.

Living Conditions

8. The proposal would bring the side elevation of the appeal property to align with the side boundary, which also forms the rear boundary of the gardens of Nos 12 and 14 Westbourne Road. The gardens of these properties are around 13.5 metres deep and so, although the proposal would increase the amount of built form, bearing in mind the height of the proposal and its relative position to the nearby dwellings, it would not be perceived as being overbearing. The position of the proposal, north of the adjoining properties would also not lead to a significant loss of light or sunlight within adjoining gardens.
9. The proposal would lead to the introduction of 2 additional windows on the side elevation, with all 3 windows brought closer to the adjoining properties. I concur with the views of the Council, and the occupier of No 12, that in its present form this would result in an unneighbourly degree of overlooking and the perception of it, and that this would detract from the enjoyment of the adjoining gardens. However, none of the proposed windows serve as the main source of light to principal rooms. The 2 windows serving the bedroom are secondary to the main source of light from the full length windows on the rear elevation and are unnecessary and the appellant has confirmed that they could be removed. Furthermore, the window serving the landing could be finished in obscured glass to prevent direct overlooking, much in the same way the existing window on the side elevation is, which the appellant has also confirmed.
10. Therefore, although it would fail to comply with some of the guidance contained within the SPG, subject to the imposition of a condition relating to the removal of the side windows serving the bedroom, and the provision of obscured glass in the side window, the proposal would not be harmful to the living conditions of adjoining occupiers.
11. Accordingly, I find no conflict with policies CS1 and QE6 of the *Warrington Borough Council Adopted Local Plan Core Strategy* which together seek to ensure that new development respects the living conditions of existing neighbouring residential occupiers or with guidance within the *National Planning Policy Framework*, which has similar aims.

Conclusion

12. The proposal would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and wider area and would not harm the living conditions of adjoining residential occupiers. Accordingly the appeal is allowed. In addition to conditions relating to the period of implementation, construction in matching materials and construction in accordance with the approved plans I also consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring that the windows on the side elevation be amended to secure the privacy of adjoining occupiers.

Anne Jordan

INSPECTOR