
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 August 2017

by Alison Partington BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18th August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W4325/D/17/3175922
38 Queensbury, Newton CH48 6EP

- 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 Beaumont against the decision of Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref APP/17/00217, dated 24 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 25 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is a single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached bungalow located on the corner of Queensbury and Grange Mount. A similar bungalow is found on the adjacent corner plot. Although the side and rear garden of No 38 is enclosed by a high fence that abuts the pavement, views across the site are still possible, and together with the side garden of No 40 give this junction a relatively open character.
4. Detailed guidance on extensions to dwellings is found in the *House Extensions Supplementary Planning Guidance (adopted July 2004)* (SPG). This highlights that as corner plots are generally prominent sites within the street scene, particular care is needed in the design of extensions. It indicates that normally side extensions on such plots should not be more than half the width of the original frontage of the property, or more than half the width of the side garden /plot between the property and the adjacent highway.
5. The proposed extension would be located on land that currently forms the side garden of the dwelling. The Council have indicated that the distance from the side of the dwelling to the boundary of the site is 6.5m, and that the proposed extension would be 5.5m wide. These figures have not been disputed by the appellant. The extension would therefore occupy the majority of the plot between the original house and Grange Mount. It would also be significantly wider than the 3.25m allowed in the SPG.

6. Although set down from the ridge, the width and mass of the extension would make it an overly dominant and unsympathetic addition to of the host property. In addition, it would not respect the ratio of solid wall to openings found on the main dwelling. As such, it would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the host property.
7. Despite the fence around the boundary, the extension would still be clearly visible. Given this, and as a consequence of its scale and mass, and its close proximity to the boundary, the proposal would be an overly dominant feature in the street scene. It would also be detrimental to the open character of the junction. As such, the appeal scheme would have an unacceptable visual impact on the area.
8. Therefore, I consider that the proposed extension would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. Accordingly it would conflict with Policy HS11 of the *Unitary Development Plan for Wirral (adopted February 2000)* which seeks to ensure that house extensions do not have an adverse impact on the host property or the wider area.
9. In support of the appeal my attention has been drawn to other side extensions on corner plots in the vicinity that do not conform to the guidance within the SPG. However, I observed that these examples were very much a minority in the area, and were to a large extent screened from view by existing vegetation. Moreover, the extensions did not dominate the host properties as would be the case here. Thus they do not justify allowing a poorly designed scheme on this dwelling.
10. I note the personal circumstances of the appellant and the desire to be able to provide accommodation for elderly parents. However, personal circumstances seldom outweigh more general planning considerations, and it is likely that the extension would remain long after the current personal circumstances cease to be material.
11. Overall, for the reasons set out above, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Alison Partington

INSPECTOR