



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 January 2020 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Sarah Housden BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 24th February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V4250/D/19/3239727

6 Longden Road, Ashton-in-Makerfield, WN4 9LF

- 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 Steven Bell against the decision of Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref A/19/87590/HH, dated 23 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is a 'Garage conversion on the ground floor resulting in a change of windows. Extension on the first floor over the garage, to form a larger bedroom.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and wider area, having particular regard to the Longden Road street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling, located within a predominantly residential area. The immediate area comprises a mix of property types and there is variety in the roof forms and external materials. The single storey elements that project forward of the main front elevations of many properties, be that a canopy over bay windows, a porch or garage, also contribute to the variety in the street scene. This proposal seeks permission for a first-floor extension to the front over the converted garage.
5. The House Extensions Design Guide, Supplementary Planning Document, June 2019 (the SPD) recognises that streets are often characterised by a common design which establishes a distinctive building rhythm, and unless a front extension is small enough to be absorbed within the design of the building and the street scene as a whole, it will rarely be visually acceptable.

6. Whilst the appeal dwelling and the attached property at No 8 include forward projecting elements, they do not detract from the strong building line along this stretch of Longden Road due to their limited scale. The proposed first floor extension would be a substantial addition to the host property which would be readily apparent and incongruous in the street scene due to its significant height, massing and projection forward of the building line. It would therefore dominate the dwelling's front elevation and fail to read as a subservient addition.
7. It is acknowledged that the single storey elements of the appeal dwelling and No 8 have different roof forms and window detailing. However, they have a similar footprint and their limited scale ensures they are read as subservient additions to the host dwellings and are not unduly prominent in the street scene. This proposal would add significant massing to a prominent elevation thereby creating a substantial unbalance with No 8 which would be readily apparent from public vantage points and would therefore read as an incongruous and harmful addition to the street scene.
8. It has been suggested that the occupiers of No 8 may seek to erect a similar extension to the appeal proposal in the future. Be that as it may, I am required to determine this appeal based on the current context and the plans before me. As such, this matter has had no bearing on my decision.
9. Photographs of other extensions have been submitted in support of this appeal. Whilst I have noted these examples, some of which appear to be similar to the appeal proposal, I do not have the details of the context in which they were permitted and cannot therefore be certain that they are directly comparable to this appeal. In any event, this appeal has been determined on its own merits and the scale, height and siting of the extension in this location are factors which have been taken into account. Accordingly, the examples do not justify the appeal development.
10. Therefore, taking all the above into consideration, the proposed extension would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the Longden Road street scene. As such, it is contrary to Policy CP10 of the Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2013) which seeks to ensure development, amongst other things, respects and acknowledges the character and identity of its locality in terms of the siting, size, scale and details used. It would also be contrary to the requirements of the SPD as set out above.

Other Matters

11. The appellant has referred to Core Strategy Policy CP6 however I have not been provided with a copy and cannot therefore determine its relevance to this appeal. Nevertheless, I have considered that the proposal would provide additional accommodation for the appellant's family and enable them to continue living in the local community. However, these are personal circumstances which can change over time and the development would remain long after such circumstances have ceased to be relevant. Accordingly, I do not consider that the personal circumstances in this case are sufficient to outweigh the conflict with Core Strategy Policy CP10 and the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene.

12. It is noted that the proposal would be finished in materials to match the host dwelling. However, this does not overcome the harm to character and appearance as identified above.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Hannah Ellison

Appeal Planning Officer

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Sarah Housden

INSPECTOR