



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2020 by L Wilson BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

Decision by Kenneth Stone BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/19/3241918

10 Oak Road, Penketh, Warrington WA5 2LH

- 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 Adam Purcell against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2019/35327, dated 1 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 25 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as "demolition of an existing single-storey garage/storage/utility building and construction of a new two-storey side extension and a single-storey rear lean-to extension to an existing two-storey house."
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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 Council's main objection relates to the proposed two-storey side extension element of the scheme. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. No. 10 is a detached two-storey dwelling which is set back from the highway behind a driveway and small grassed area. There is a detached garage to the western side of the site which abuts the boundary and to the rear is a modest garden. The appeal site is located within a residential area which contains a variety of dwelling types. To the north, east and on the opposite side of the highway, there are primarily two-storey semi-detached dwellings. On the side of Oak Road where the appeal site is located, the appeal site marks a transition point between two-storey dwellings and bungalows.
5. The Supplementary Planning Guidance: House Extensions (2003) (SPG) sets out guidance relating to two-storey side extensions. I acknowledge that the recommendations within the SPG are guidance, as opposed to a fixed policy requirement. Nonetheless, the SPG recommends that two-storey extensions should be: stepped back from the main front elevation, stepped in from the

boundary, the roof design should match the existing dwelling and the ridgeline should be set down from the existing roof ridge. These design principles help to ensure that the original look of the property is retained and that the extension achieves some degree of subservience.

6. The width of the two-storey extension would be over half the width of the existing dwelling. In support of the scheme, the appellant has drawn my attention to the width of other dwellings within the streetscene. However, these examples cannot be directly compared to the appeal scheme as they relate to originally semi-detached properties and the width stated by the appellant includes several dwellings rather than one.
7. The proposed extension would not be subordinate to the original dwelling due to a combination of the extremely small set back, the additional width and the proposed ridge height. I note that the roof ridge would be set down from the existing roof, but as it would only be by a small amount this would not be clearly evident. To support the proposed roof ridge the appellant has provided a photograph of a recently extended dwelling. The example is distinguishable from this appeal as the extension does not erode the gap to the side boundary and no. 45 Sycamore Lane is not directly adjacent to a bungalow.
8. The two-storey extension would be significantly more noticeable than the existing single-storey garage because of its proposed scale and massing. The scheme would remove the existing gap between the host property and garage, additionally it would extend up to the boundary. The SPG states that the aim of the 'terracing code' is to protect the street scene and the amenities of areas that were originally designed and laid out as detached or semi-detached properties. The development would conflict with the objectives of the SPG as it would result in a currently detached dwelling joining with the neighbouring property.
9. The scheme also includes bi-folding doors on the front elevation. Based on the available evidence, these would appear as an odd feature on the principal elevation due to the solid to glass ratio. I am not convinced that the bi-folding doors would appear as a garage door, as asserted by the appellant. Consequently, the proposal would result in a prominent addition which would be inconsistent with the simple architectural style of the originally detached dwelling because of its design and built form.
10. Whilst side extensions have been carried out within the local area, some more sympathetically than others, gaps to the side boundaries are still a key characteristic of the area. There are examples of extensions which have fully eroded the gap to the side boundary. However, these developments cannot be directly compared to the scheme before me as no. 10 is situated adjacent to a bungalow.
11. Although the host property is irregular within the street scene as it is detached, there is currently a sense of space between the host property and the adjacent bungalow. The scale of the existing garage is in keeping with no. 8. The addition of such a dominant two-storey extension with no gap to the side boundary would be visually harmful because it would reduce the spaciousness between the two properties. This is due to the significant increase in building mass directly adjacent to no. 8. Accordingly, as a result of its siting, scale and massing the extension would be visually harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

12. For these reasons, the proposed development would be visually harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and area. Consequently, it would conflict with Policy QE 7 of the Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), the SPG and the Framework. These Policies collectively seek, amongst other matters, to promote good design which harmonises with existing buildings and reinforces local distinctiveness.

Other Matters

13. I acknowledge that the proposal would provide additional living space to the appellant. However, it would not form sustainable development, as defined by the Framework, given the harm identified to the character and appearance of the host building and area. I also note that, the development would be constructed to current building regulation standards, there has been a lack of objections from consultees, the proposal would not cause harm to the living conditions of existing occupants and I note the appellants' frustrations with the Council. However, these are not considerations that outweigh the harm that would be caused by the development.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. For the reasons given above I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

L M Wilson

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and, on that basis, I agree and conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Kenneth Stone

INSPECTOR