



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2020

by M Shrigley BSc (Hons) MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V4250/D/20/3245215

20 Wolmer Street, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Wigan WN4 9TT

- 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 Paul Eatock against the decision of Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref A/18/86340/HHRET, dated 22 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 30 October 2019.
 - The development proposed (retrospectively) is for a two storey and single storey extension to the rear of the dwelling, and loft conversion including window on gable and rebuild of bay window to front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Procedural Matters

3. The Council has no objection to the roof alterations and the rear extensions (which at the time of visiting the site both appeared substantially complete), and I have no reason to take a different view. It is only the front extension which is contested.
4. That said, the front porch currently erected at the appeal property differs from that detailed on submitted plan drawing WS-02 in that it has a rectangular flush door entrance rather than an arched entrance with recessed doorway. The plans also show some minor differences to the window frames. However, aside from these elevational differences between what has been built and what is shown on the plans, the size and structure of the extension is the same as what is shown on the plans. My decision is based on the submitted plans.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling located within a row of two pairs of semi-detached and several detached properties. Neighbouring semi-detached dwellings on the same side of the road as the appeal property feature two storey red brick built curved front bay windows and recessed front doorways with decorative arches. On the opposite side of the road there are other semi-detached properties with ground floor bays of differing designs.

Most of the existing semi-detached properties in the road exhibit a high degree of building symmetry.

6. The development is highly visible within the street-scene. The proximity of the development relative to the highway is comparative to some of the other front bay windows and canopies elsewhere along the street. The design makes use of matching red external facing bricks in keeping with the existing pair of semi's and other properties along the road. The proposed bay and porch combined eliminate the original symmetry of the previous curved bay and arched front doorway entrance detailing mirroring that of the adjoining dwelling.
7. The house to the other side of the appeal property has a contrasting architectural appearance to other dwellings in the immediate street-scene in terms of fenestration detail, grey-green coloured irregular broken stone-like cladding and reddish-brown brickwork. As a result, the extension is also seen in the context of the appearance of no.22 which is an existing established break in the form and symmetry evident elsewhere along the road. Moreover, the hip to gable roof enlargement undertaken, which the Council has not specifically objected to, significantly alters the original symmetry previously apparent with no.18. In that context the incorporation of the bay and porch brings a pronounced geometrical emphasis to the front elevation of the host property. All those elements including the variation in the appearance of properties elsewhere within the street-scene, some of which I note, have rectangular shaped bays are significant factors in my assessment of whether, or not, visual harm is apparent.
8. Whilst the development does take some visual cues from the adjoining semi in terms of matching materials and the incorporation of an arched entrance, its size, position and mass leads to a highly prominent and exacerbated imbalance in symmetry when the properties are viewed as a pair. The effect is harmful to the character and appearance of the area especially so when viewing the other semi's forming part of the row from pedestrian approaches along the road.
9. Overall, the development fails to accord with policies CP10 and CP17 of the Wigan Local Plan CSDPD 2013 which seek that development respects and responds positively to the character of the area and protect amenity; the House Extensions Design Guide SPD 2019 which has similar objectives as well as the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to encourage good design.

Other Matters

10. The appellant refers to historic building maintenance issues and permitted development allowances towards alterations to the front elevation. However, those considerations do not justify allowing the visual harm identified.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I dismiss the appeal.

M Shrigley

INSPECTOR