



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 June 2020

by Mark Dakeyne BA (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25th June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W4325/W/20/3245463

26 Cross Lane, Bebington CH63 3AL

- 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 Atlas One Chartered Surveyors against the decision of Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref APP/19/00908, dated 6 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension to provide ground floor retail space and residential above, including loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Reasons

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the area.
3. The appeal site comprises a shop with a flat above at one end of a retail parade. To the side of the shop is an undeveloped area. A similar open area exists at the other end of the parade. The block of shops and flats have a larger scale than most of the surrounding residential properties due to the span of the building and the bulk of the hipped roofs which include sizeable dormers. However, the existing building, acting as a focal point for the surrounding residential area, does not look out of character and is typical of such suburbs.
4. Extending the frontage onto the undeveloped land to provide a further retail unit with residential accommodation above in a form and design and with a function that replicates the existing would, in principle, be acceptable. However, the proposal also includes a substantial element that extends beyond the main two-storey rear elevation of the parade some way down the side road of Borrowdale Road, with the same height as the frontage block and with its side elevation abutting the pavement.
5. The resultant tall and deep side elevation, hard up against the footway, would appear out of scale and over-dominant in the context of the residential tree-lined side road of modest semi-detached houses. The significant scale of the extension would be readily apparent when looking west along Borrowdale Road and when seen from the junction of the side road with Cross Lane. No attempt has been made to break up the mass of the addition by setting back part of the side elevation from the pavement.

6. For these reasons the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area and conflict with Policies HS4 and HS15 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted January 2000, as the development would be of inappropriate scale and result in a detrimental change in the character of the area. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) permission should be refused as the proposal would represent poor design that would fail to take the opportunity to improve the character and quality of the area.
7. Policy HS11 of the UDP and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance have been referred to but they are not directly relevant as they relate to house extensions.
8. The side elevation would contain windows at first and second floor levels to serve a flat. However, most of these openings would be to non-habitable rooms such as bathrooms or provide secondary openings. They could be glazed with frosted glass to prevent overlooking into the rear garden of No 28 Cross Lane.
9. The appellant refers to the lack of a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites and this is not disputed by the Council. As the proposal would involve the provision of housing, paragraph 11 d) ii. of the Framework would be triggered. The development would have economic and social benefits during the construction phase and through the provision of housing and a shop. However, the adverse environmental impacts arising from the scale of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Moreover, similar benefits could arise from a development more in scale with its surroundings.
10. For the above reasons the appeal should be dismissed.

Mark Dakeyne

INSPECTOR