



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 June 2020

by Mark Dakeyne BA (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V4250/W/20/3248059

Norfolk House Residential Home, 34 Norfolk Street, Wigan WN6 7BJ

- 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 Jingree against the decision of Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref A/17/84437/FULL, dated 28 June 2017, was refused by notice dated 25 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is single storey front, side and rear extensions, along with internal alterations to provide 6 additional bed spaces, together with the reconfiguration of the car parking area.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - (1) the effect on the character and appearance of the building;
 - (2) the effect on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers in Buckley Street West, with particular reference to outlook and privacy; and,
 - (3) whether the proposal would provide an acceptable living environment for future occupants, with regard to outlook and amenity space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Nos 32 and 34 Norfolk Street are a pair of large semi-detached properties on sizeable plots, located in an area of more tightly knit inter-war semis. No 34, which is used as a care home, has already been extended significantly to the side and rear with single and two-storey additions, but still has a large rear garden and a reasonably sized parking area to the front.
4. The existing extensions, despite their overall scale, ensure a reasonably compact form to the building. However, the proposed single storey rear extension would project almost 16m further down one side of the back garden, taking the building close to the rear boundary of the site. Due to the location of existing frontage development and its single-storey height, the rear extension would not be prominent from the street. That said, it would be visible between No 36 Buckley Street West and the appeal property. Even in glimpsed views it would appear as a very elongated and incongruous addition to the building and unlike any other form of development in the area.

5. The extensions would be more clearly visible from surrounding properties, particularly from some of the semis in Buckley Street West which back onto the side boundary of No 34. From these private viewpoints, its incongruity would be clearly seen in the context of the existing building and other nearby development. Whilst private views of development have generally less significance when considering the visual attractiveness of new development, they should not be discounted altogether.
6. For the above reasons, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the building. There would be conflict with Policy CP10 of the Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted September 2013 (CS), as the development would not respect the character of the locality in terms of its siting, size and scale and would not integrate effectively with its surroundings.

Living conditions of neighbours

7. The properties in Buckley Street West backing onto the site have raised patios close to the houses and fairly short rear gardens. Nos 24 to 28 enjoy a relatively open aspect across the appeal site with trees and vegetation forming a backdrop to the 2m high fencing and planting along the common boundary. The rear of No 30 faces the existing single storey extension but greenery is seen to the left.
8. Taking the relationship between No 30 and the existing building as a guide, the upper walls of the extension and roof would be visible above the boundary treatment. The development would also bring the building closer to No 30. Whilst single storey, the depth and siting of the extensions would ensure that there would be an unrelieved view of the building when looking out over some of the back gardens. The extensions would dominate the outlook from Nos 26 to 30 Buckley Street West in particular. This would be unacceptable in a residential area where most residents would expect to see other back gardens and some greenery to the rear of their homes.
9. In considering the outlook of neighbouring residents, the Inspector who considered the appeal in 2010 was concerned about the effects of the two-storey element not the single storey component¹. I have not been provided with all the details of the scheme that was before the previous Inspector. However, it would appear that the single storey additions proposed then did not extend as far back into the site or as near to No 30 Buckley Street West as the scheme before me. Moreover, local and national policy has changed in the intervening period.
10. The windows in the side elevation of the rear extension would not be at a height, relative to the boundary fence, that would allow overlooking from the new bedrooms into neighbouring gardens or houses. Therefore, there would not be any material loss of privacy for neighbouring residents.
11. In conclusion, whilst there would be no harm to privacy, the effects on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers in Buckley Street West, with particular reference to outlook, would be unacceptable. The proposal would be contrary to Policy CP17 of the CS as there would be an unacceptable adverse impact on amenity and quality of life.

¹ Appeal decision ref: APP/V4250/A/10/2133278 dated 28 October 2010

Living environment for future occupants

12. The windows of the new bedrooms would be close to the boundary fence and would be north facing. There is little space for landscaping. Residents of the care home, who would spend most of the time in their rooms, would have a poor outlook and limited sunlight.
13. A reasonable area of garden would be retained to the south of the extension and residents may be able to make use of the area to enjoy fresh air, sunshine and outdoor space. However, none of the new bedrooms would have an outlook onto it, unlike the previous appeal scheme.
14. Accordingly, the proposal would provide an unacceptable living environment for future occupants, with regard to outlook. As a result, there would be conflict with Policy CP17 of the CS in this regard because of the unacceptable adverse impact on the quality of life of future residents. The amenity space remaining would be satisfactory.

Other matters

15. I have taken into account the other matters raised including the adequacy of parking, the effects of construction work, access for emergency services, the maintenance of the property and grounds, and the quality of the care home. However, none of these matters affect my findings on the main issues.

Conclusions

16. The development would provide additional bedspaces with en-suite facilities and improvements to the internal layout of the premises. However, these primarily social benefits would not outweigh the harm that I have identified.
17. For the above reasons the appeal should be dismissed.

Mark Dakeyne

INSPECTOR