



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2020

by Robert Hitchcock BSc DipCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/20/3253996

12 Crosby Avenue, Bewsey, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 0DQ

- 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 James Appleton against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2020/36699, registered by the Council on 19 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 5 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is a garage.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. During the course of the Council's consideration of the planning application amended plans were received altering the proposed size and clarifying the external finish of the building. For the avoidance of doubt, I have considered this appeal on the basis of the amended plans.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the locality and highway safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The site is an end terrace dwelling located on a corner plot at the junction of Crosby Avenue and Alpass Avenue. The locality features similar terraces set behind front gardens with private amenity spaces to the rear. The terraces are well spaced at the road junctions and many of the gaps formed by the rear garden areas of the corner terraces contain domestic outbuildings, extensions and garages.
5. The proposal, stated as being about 4.5 x 7.3 x 2.7(h)m by the Council, would replace an existing timber shed with a mono-pitched roofed located close to the rear boundary of the site. The building would be constructed of rendered blockwork with a shallow dual-pitched roof of profiled steel sheeting.
6. The building would extend close to both side boundaries of the plot. On the Alpass Avenue frontage this consists of a brick wall with piers and infill timber panels and gates set immediately at the back of the pavement. Although much of the lower part of the building would be screened, the upper parts of the

walls, roof and end gable would be clearly visible above the side boundary. Taken with the significant floor area and proximity to the wall/fence, the scale of the building would give rise to an obtrusive form of development in a prominent location forward of the building line on Alpass Avenue.

7. This would contrast with the majority of other outbuildings in the locality which are generally more modest in scale, benefit from higher levels of screening or are sited in less prominent positions. From the junction of Crosby Avenue with Alpass Avenue the building would be highly conspicuous.
8. Although the upper part of the building would be partly screened by existing high planting in the frontage of 13 Alpass Avenue on approach from the north, this lies outside of the appeal site and therefore beyond the control of the appellant. Any loss of the screening would further highlight the scale of the building from this viewpoint.
9. For the above reasons, I find that the building would contrast with the characteristic domestic scale of outbuildings found in the locality and give rise to an obtrusive form of development that would harm the character of the Alpass Avenue streetscene. It would therefore conflict with Policy QE7 of the Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (July 2014) (CS), the SPG2 House Extension Guidelines and National Planning Policy Framework (the framework) as they seek to secure high standards of design of development that reinforce local distinctiveness and harmonise with the scale and character of existing buildings.

Highway Safety

10. The proposal would rely on access via an existing vehicular crossing and gated opening in the rear side boundary. Due to the siting of the building it would not be possible for the access gates to open inwards into the site. Any outward opening of the gates would have the potential to impede users of the adjacent footway causing them to either cross the road or enter the carriageway when the gates were in use.
11. Although the appellant states that the gates have always opened outwards since before he purchased the property, there is little evidence to confirm when that was. Nevertheless, the replacement of the existing outbuilding with a garage would result in more frequent use of the entrance to provide vehicular access. This would lead to additional instances of obstruction to free movement within the highway and elevate the potential for highway safety concerns.
12. For those reasons, I find that the proposal would prejudice highway safety in the locality and conflict with Policy QE6 of the CS, guidance in the Warrington UDP Supplementary Planning Guidance for House Extensions and the Framework as they seek to safe forms of development.

Conclusion

13. For the above reasons, the appeal should be dismissed.

R Hitchcock

INSPECTOR