



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 October 2020

by Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MEnvSc

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V4250/D/20/3256000

4 Leyburn Close, Wigan, Lancashire WN1 3NF

- 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 Daniel Sherman against the decision of Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref A/20/88895/HH, dated 20 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 07 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. No 4 is a modern 2 storey semi-detached property. It is on a relatively short residential street characterised by similarly aged properties in varying styles and sizes. Detached and semi-detached properties are individually sited in relatively narrow plots separated by private driveways. Irrespective of the lack of consistency to the immediate street scene, the repeating building styles, architectural details and a common palette of building materials, together with the open property frontages, results in a coherent townscape character.
4. The proposal is a 2 storey side extension with a ridge height slightly lower than the host property and it would be set back from the front elevation at ground and first floor levels. It would finish close to the side boundary. By virtue of the change in ground levels and the stepped building line, No 4 is sited forward from and elevated above the neighbouring semi-detached property, No 6. Therefore, the extension would be readily visible when looking along the street towards Platt Lane.
5. Although it would be set back, by virtue of the relatively small set down in height from the ridge line of the host property, combined with the matching eaves and first floor window heights, the proposal would appear only marginally subservient to No 4. It would be a bulky addition that would not relate particularly well to its host. Moreover, by virtue of its size and close proximity to the side boundary, the proposal would appear dominant in the plot and in juxtaposition with the neighbouring property.

6. Notwithstanding the variation in the size and siting of properties, the separation between buildings is a characteristic feature of the townscape. The minimal gap between the proposal and the boundary would be out of keeping and it would disrupt and detract from the distinctive local character. In this regard, the proposal would conflict with Wigan Council's House Extensions Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Adopted June 2019 (the SPD) in relation to maintaining the characteristic spacing between buildings by siting extensions no closer than 800mm to side boundaries.
7. I note that extensions to properties elsewhere in the area have removed the gap between buildings and created the appearance of short terraces. However, proposals elsewhere, including in different surrounding contexts and that were determined in an earlier policy context, do not form a visual context for the appeal proposal and they do not form a justification for it.
8. Consequently, the proposal would be visually obtrusive in the street scene. It would be a prominent feature that would not make a positive contribution to local character or distinctiveness. Moreover, by virtue of its close approach to the boundary, the proposal would compromise the neighbouring occupiers' opportunities to extend No 6 without creating the appearance of a continuous built form.
9. Therefore, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would be in conflict with Policy CP10 of the Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy Adopted September 2013, with regard to respecting the character and identity of the area including in terms of siting, size and scale. It would conflict with the policies in the SPD that seek to maintain characteristic spacing of properties and avoid the creation of a terracing effect where this is not the street scape character. It would also conflict with the design policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

10. The appellant's desire to extend the property to enhance the internal living accommodation is understandable and, in this regard, the width of the plot is a constraint. However, there is little to suggest that alternative forms of extension have either been explored or discounted. Therefore, it has not been demonstrated that there are no alternative schemes that could deliver additional living accommodation without the harm that I have found.
11. The proposal would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers. It would provide adequate off street parking and bin storage. The requirements of the development plan do not weigh in favour of the scheme.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

Sarah Manchester

INSPECTOR