
Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 20 August 2021

by Gareth W Thomas BSc (Hons) MSc (Dist) DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/21/3278729

15 Hillside Road, Appleton, WARRINGTON, WA4 5PX

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for utility room extension and detached garage at 15 Hillside Road, Appleton, WARRINGTON, WA4 5PX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2020/37875, dated 21 September 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing reference numbers 3094:06; 3094:07; 3094:08 and; 3094:09.

Preliminary Matters

2. The application was amended during the planning application process and prior to the submission of this appeal to lower the overall height of the proposed garage. The Council raised no objection to the single storey extension and I have no reason to take a contrary view in relation to this element of the appeal proposal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue relates to the effect of the proposed garage on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal dwelling lies within an established residential close containing detached houses each with fairly substantial gardens front and rear. There is little uniformity of design but overall, the immediate area is sylvan and the built environment characterful. The host property benefits from mature hedgerows of substantial height, including along the road boundary which conceals the front of the property from general public view.
5. The proposed double garage would sit within the front garden area and be set back from the tall beech hedging that form the front boundary with Hillside. The Council's concern is that a garage in this location would appear as an incongruous feature in the street scene and thereby out of character with the area. It is accepted that properties on this side of the road are set back at generally the same distance from the road edge. However, as noted during my site visit, there are at least two other properties along Hillside where garages

have been built beyond the generally defined building line. I found these structures to be of an acceptable design and that they have become a familiar part of the street scene here.

6. With the benefit of existing hedgerow providing effective screening, I consider that the well-designed structure would not look out of place along this relatively narrow lane, which has an almost rural character with overhanging branches of mature trees adding to the overall charm. The revised drawings would see the ridge of the garage sit below the height of the beech hedge, which adds to the acceptability of the appeal scheme.
7. Accordingly, I consider that the proposed development would not dominate the property or street scene and would not be out of place to such an extent that it would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. This conclusion would be the same with or without the high hedge. It would therefore comply with Policy QE7 of the Warrington Borough Council Adopted Core Strategy as well as the Council's House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This policy and guidance seek to ensure that new developments reinforce local distinctiveness, harmonise with the scale, proportions and materials of adjacent buildings and be visually attractive.

Conditions

8. Three conditions are suggested by the Council in the appeal questionnaire. In addition to the time limit condition for commencement of development, a condition is attached specifying approved drawings. The drawings specify materials to be used, which I consider sufficient to ensure that the garage is constructed in materials that match the host property so that the character and appearance of the area is safeguarded and in order to provide clarity. I have not imposed the condition suggested by the appellant that would see the height of the existing beech hedge maintained at the present height given that I have found the design and siting to be acceptable.

Conclusion

9. For the above reasons and taking into account of all other matters raised, I conclude that this appeal should be allowed.

Gareth W Thomas

INSPECTOR