



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 14 September 2021

by R Hitchcock BSc(Hons) DipCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/21/3276080

9 Bruche Avenue, Warrington WA1 3HX

- 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 Andreas Efthymiou against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2021/38444, dated 5 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 12 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is to re-roof the garage including habitable space within void forming small bedroom plus replacement of existing sun room and covered canopy with single storey rear extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a first floor extension over the existing garage and a single storey side rear extension at 9 Bruche Avenue, Warrington WA1 3HX in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 2021/38444, dated 5 January 2021, 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: Location plan 9 Bruche Avenue at 1:1250 and 01321/SK/01 Rev C.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of the development appearing in the banner heading above is taken from the planning application form. However, this was simplified to 'proposed first floor extension over existing garage and single storey side rear extension' on the Council's Decision Notice. I have used this in my decision above. It does not change the development for which planning permission is sought. The appellant uses the same description on their appeal form. Consequently, I am satisfied that no party will be prejudiced by my use of it. I have proceeded on this basis.
3. The address in the banner heading is taken from the planning application form. There is some discrepancy in the description of the neighbourhood area between the appeal questionnaires and the Council's Decision Notice. To avoid any confusion in this respect, I have used the original address.

4. During the period of the Council's consideration of the planning application revised plans were submitted by the appellant showing a reduced scale of development. It is unclear whether the Council re-consulted the relevant parties with regard to those changes. However, as the nature of concerns of those who would normally have been consulted would have arisen from the consultation on the original set of plans, I do not consider that their interests would be prejudiced if I take the reduced proposals into account.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed side extension on the character and appearance of the Bruche Avenue streetscene.

Reasons

6. The appeal property features a detached 2-storey dwelling set behind a front garden with private amenity space to the rear. A single storey garage extension has been added to the dwelling's northern elevation and various small extensions to the rear. The site lies within a predominantly residential estate of similarly style and finished detached and semi-detached buildings.
7. The proposal includes the removal of a small rear extension and covered area. These would be replaced by a single-storey pitched-roof extension. The rear extension would project to the side boundary with 11 Bruche Avenue and integrate with an existing room behind the garage. In addition, the existing low roof of the garage would be replaced with a pitched roof. This would extend to a short distance above the eaves level of the main roof. The new roof would incorporate a pitched-roofed dormer central in the front slope and a partial hip to the side gable.
8. In the vicinity of the site, Bruche Avenue is developed on one side only. A park faces a line of houses interrupted by junctions serving a number of residential cul-de-sacs. The existing building at 9 Bruche Avenue sits square on to the road. However, the adjacent properties are angled to the corners of two cul-de-sac roads served off the Avenue. The corresponding corner houses on the other side of the cul-de-sac entrances are also angled.
9. The splayed positions of the adjacent dwellings contribute to a sense of spaciousness about the junctions and between development on Bruche Avenue and the regular lines of development within the cul-de-sacs. On Bruche Avenue the building arrangement close to the junctions results in increased spacing between the frontages but with converging side elevations.
10. The single storey extension would be contained to the rear of the dwelling. Here it would be screened by the surrounding development and have little active contribution to the Bruche Avenue streetscape. The side extension would be visible along the street frontage. It would extend to the common boundary with No11 and partially fill the space between the neighbouring dwellings.
11. The roof extension would appear subordinate on account of the modest overall height and scale. It would appear recessive as the roof pitches away from the line of the front elevation and on account of the set back position of the dormer face. This would preserve the focus of the principal elevation and thereby the relationship between the consecutive elevations fronting on to Bruche Avenue.

12. Although the space between the buildings would be reduced, there would be clear visible space above ground floor level and between the neighbouring roofscapes. This would preserve sky views between the properties. Taken with the limited scale and form of the hipped roof extension, this would preserve the sense of spaciousness about the buildings to ensure that the resultant building relationships would not appear cramped.
13. I acknowledge the concerns of the Council in relation to the proximity of the roof extension on or close to the site's boundary. The Council's House Extensions Guidelines SPG seeks the retention of a 2m gap between successive properties and 1st floor extensions to be set in 1m from the side boundary. This is predicated on avoidance of potential terracing impacts. However, the angled positions of the neighbouring houses and recessive nature of the roof extension would ensure no terracing effect would result. The sense of space would be markedly greater than the existing example of a similar side extension on Fir Grove.
14. For the above reasons, I find that the proposal would not lead to a cramped form of development. It would retain ample spacing between neighbouring buildings and would respond to the character and appearance of development in the area. It would comply with Policy QE7 of the Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy [2014] as it seeks the design of development to reinforce local distinctiveness and enhance the character, appearance and functionality of the street scene, local area and wider townscape.

Conditions

15. I have considered the suggested conditions from the Council and had regard to Paragraph 56 of the Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance in terms of the use of planning conditions. In addition to the standard condition limiting the lifespan of the planning permission, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty. A condition requiring matching external finishes is reasonable in the interests of visual amenity and good design.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons above, the appeal should be allowed.

R Hitchcock

INSPECTOR