
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 February 2022

by Katie McDonald MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/21/3285948

100 Fairfield Road, Stockton Heath, Warrington WA4 2BU

- 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 R Wild against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2021/39950, dated 12 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 30 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is a two storey extension to side.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey extension to side at 100 Fairfield Road, Stockton Heath, Warrington WA4 2BU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2021/39950, dated 12 August 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: 88/21/LP, 88/21/BP, 88/21/2 and 88/21/3.
 - 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.

Main Issue

2. This is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. Fronting north-west squarely onto Fairfield Road, the property is a 2 storey semi-detached house in a suburban residential area. The area is characterised by 2 storey dwellings set within moderate sized plots, all a similar age. To the north-east side of the dwelling is Fairfield Gardens, a road leading to further housing south and east. Fairfield Gardens does not spur off Fairfield Road at a right angle, meaning that the appeal property is set at an oblique angle to this access road. This results in the back side corner of the dwelling being located closer to the road than the front, having a triangular shaped side garden. It also has an exposed rear elevation to Fairfield Gardens because of this orientation, already sitting considerably forward, and breaking the building line, of the 4 east facing dwellings on Fairfield Gardens. However, the corner has an open aspect given the location of other dwellings on the east side.

4. The proposal is for a 2 storey side extension. To account for its oblique relationship with the corner, the extension would have a staggered footprint, projecting a greater width at the front where there is more space to the side. Sufficient space would be retained to the side such that this element would be compliant with the corner plots guidance in the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (June 2021) (SPD).
5. Towards the rear, the extension would 'dog leg' in where the garden narrows and would be around 1m off the boundary. This element would not comply with the SPD's specific guidance. However, whilst the proximity to the boundary would be conspicuous at this rear corner, it is only the rear corner that would sit close to the street. The rest of the proposal would slant away in line with the dwelling on the rear part until the 'dog leg'. Thus, it would not present a strong or hard building line along the roadside. Moreover, given the dwelling considerably breaks the building line already, the additional projection to the side would not detrimentally worsen the effect.
6. Therefore, given the orientation of the dwelling, the staggered design would appropriately address the space between dwellings, the road and the corner. This would ensure the proposal is not unduly prominent on the corner or result in a harmful effect on the street scene.
7. Turning to the front elevation, the width of the extension would not be less than half the width of the original frontage, in conflict with the SPD. However, the set back at first floor, set down from the ridge, including the considerably lower ridge height owing to the 'dog leg' element, and space retained to the side ensures the proposal appears proportionate.
8. I saw 3 other 2 storey corner plots side extensions on my visit, suggested by the appellant as comparable developments located close to the site. Whilst I know little about the circumstances that led to their construction, they all contained 2 storey walls near to or on their side boundaries, and to this extent, this proposal would reinforce existing local character.

Conclusion

9. Consequently, the proposal would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. This would be compliant with Policy QE7 of the Local Plan Core Strategy (July 2014) which seeks to ensure proposals reinforce local distinctiveness and enhance the character, appearance and function of the street scene, harmonising with the scale, proportions and materials of adjacent and existing buildings. It would also comply overall with the SPD, which seeks to ensure extensions do not adversely affect the character of the street.
10. For certainty, a condition to ensure that development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans is necessary. A condition relating to external materials is needed to ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory.
11. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Katie McDonald

INSPECTOR