
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 February 2022

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 MARCH 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/MO655/D/21/3288024

41 Waverley Avenue, Appleton, Warrington WA4 3BN

- 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 P Baker against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2021/39003, dated 2 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 15 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is two storey granny flat side extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed two storey side extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene.

Reasons

3. No.41 Waverley Avenue (No.41) is a two-storey dwelling at one end of a short terrace of four dwellings on the north side of Waverley Avenue. It benefits from an existing ground floor side extension, set well back from the front elevation, and a detached, flat roofed single garage. It is proposed to replace the existing garage with a two-storey side extension to provide additional living accommodation as a 'granny flat.'
4. Waverley Avenue is characterised by pairs of semi-detached dwellings and short terraces of four dwellings, with predominantly hipped roofs and bay windows. I saw on my site visit that many of the dwellings have been extended or altered but there is nonetheless an overall uniformity to the street scene and coherent character, particularly in terms of the roof forms.
5. The existing single storey extension (which has a hipped roof) would be changed to a dual-pitched roof and the proposed two-storey extension would have a large facing gable around 1.5m lower in ridge height than the host dwelling. The two-storey original hipped roof would therefore step down to a single storey pitch and back up to a two-storey gable. This roof arrangement and variation in height would be at odds with the uniform roof forms characteristic of the street scene, and the gable, in particular, would appear an alien and incongruous addition to the host dwelling. It would therefore conflict with the overarching objective of the Council's *House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2021)* (SPD) which is to ensure that

extensions complement and harmonise visually with the existing dwelling, and are subordinate in scale to it. It would also conflict with the SPD guidance on side extensions that the roof on a proposed extension should match the original in terms of pitch and shape.

6. The SPD outlines that side extensions should usually be no more than 50% greater in width than the original house unless the character of the property and the surrounding area can support such a large proposal. The SPD does not define 'original' and although the appellant describes the extension as being approximately 0.5m over 50% of the width of the original dwelling, this includes the existing ground floor extension as 'original.' Whilst there would be a conflict with this part of the SPD guidance, non-compliance should not automatically result in refusal. The guidance in the SPD should be considered in the context of the individual circumstances of a site.
7. I acknowledge that there is an unusually large gap between No.41 and No.39 Waverley Avenue (No.39), that could support a larger proposal, and that the proposed extension would be sited no closer to the common boundary than the existing garage, which is not aesthetically pleasing. However, the height and width of the proposed gable extension, in combination with the increased massing of the roof of the existing ground floor extension would result in a disproportionate addition to the original house. It would fail to appear subordinate to it, again inconsistent with the overarching objective of the SPD.
8. The proposed extension meets the SPD guidance in that it would be set around 1m back from the front elevation of the host dwelling. The proposed two-storey extension would however be set well forward of the existing ground floor side extension. As a result, the existing extension would appear as a 'link' between the two two-storey elements which would emphasise the width of the non-original and would appear a discordant building form in the context of the wider street scene. It would also result in the proposed extension appearing somewhat visually divorced from the host dwelling.
9. Further, although some interest would be provided by the mix of brick and render, the proposed extension would have a largely blank flank elevation. Because of the space between No.39 and its boundary with No.41, this flank would be particularly prominent within the street scene when travelling up Waverley Avenue toward Greenfield Avenue. Again, this would appear particularly incongruous because of the pitched, rather than gable roof form.
10. My attention has been drawn to examples of other dwellings on Waverley Avenue. Nos. 42 and 44 Waverley Avenue is a semi-detached pair on the opposite side of the road to No.41 which have traditional pitched roofs, rather than the characteristic hipped roof. However, they do not have facing gables and the ridgeline of the roof runs parallel to the road. The two-storey side extension to No.30 Waverley Avenue directly adjoins the original dwelling, is set well behind the front elevation and incorporates a hipped roof and bay windows. Although more contemporary in appearance, the recent infill dwelling opposite No.41 nonetheless has a hipped roof consistent with the prevailing character of the street scene. I do not therefore find these examples to be at all comparable to, or justify, the appeal proposal before me.
11. On the main issue, I find that the combination of the width of the proposed extension, its relationship to the non-original ground floor side extension, and the facing gable would result in significant harm to the character and

appearance of the host dwelling and the wider street scene. Consequently, it would conflict with guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy QE7 of the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) which together require development to be of good design, reinforce local distinctiveness and enhance the character and appearance of the street scene.

Other Matters

12. I recognise that the proposed extension would provide additional living accommodation and would meet the needs of the appellant's family, as well as those of future occupiers. I further recognise the economic benefits, in terms of local labour supplies, associated with the construction of the extension itself and the potential for additional Council Tax revenue to be generated by a larger dwelling. However, whilst benefits of the scheme, they are benefits that would be equally attributable to an extension of a different design. In this case, they do not outweigh the significant harm I have found to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR