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# 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: 2 MARCH 2022**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/21/3288394**

**40 Rushgreen Road, Lymm, Warrington WA13 9PW**

- 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 Paul Wilson against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
  - The application Ref 2021/40131, dated 9 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 November 2021.
  - The development proposed is proposed two storey side/rear extension.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed side/rear extension, including the blocking up and replacement of the front door, on the character and appearance of the host cottage and surrounding area.

## Reasons

3. No.40 Rushgreen Road (No.40) is a two-storey end of terrace C19<sup>th</sup> cottage set slightly back from the road. To the side of No.40 is a conservatory and garden area that has been largely cleared. It is proposed to demolish the existing conservatory and extend to the side of No.40 over two-storeys. There are two elements to the proposed extension. The first is described by the appellant as a '*glazed link connecting the proposed extension to the existing house*' and the second, wider, element is a gable extension (front and rear).
4. The Council's *House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document* (2021) (SPD) provides guidance for side extensions. As accepted by the appellant, the proposed extension is inconsistent with the SPD guidance in so far as it exceeds 50% of the width of the original cottage. In fact, it is more than one and a half times the width of the original cottage. The glazed link element of the extension would have a traditional pitch, however, the second element of the extension would have a wide gable to both the front and back. Inconsistent with the SPD guidance, this would not match the original cottage in terms of either roof pitch or shape.
5. I agree with the appellant that non-compliance with the SPD guidance, or part of it, should not automatically result in refusal. The guidance in the SPD should be considered in the context of the individual circumstances of a site. I also note the appellant's comments that the key objective of the guidance is to

- avoid a terracing effect, but this specifically relates (reference the first paragraph at section 2.6.2 of the SPD) to the requirement to retain distances to boundaries. The wider objective for extensions (SPD section 2.1.2) is to ensure that they harmonise visually with the existing dwelling and the wider area and are subordinate in scale to the building which is to be extended.
6. The proposal has been designed so that the ridge of the glazed link element is set below the ridge of the original cottage and below the ridge of the proposed gable. In height, this element would appear subordinate. However, the ridge of the proposed gable would be around 6.48m so only just below the height of the original cottage. This height, in combination with its width (which in itself is similar in width to No.40) means the gable would appear a particularly dominant and disproportionate addition. In combination, the two elements of the proposed extension fail to appear subordinate in scale to the original cottage in conflict with the SPD guidance and its objectives.
  7. In accordance with the SPD guidance, the extension has been set behind the front building line of the original terrace of cottages. Notwithstanding this, the combined width of the extension and the scale of the proposed gable element, means that the proposal would be highly visible in the street scene. I recognise that the extension would be viewed in the context of the built form of the whole terrace, and its associated scale and massing. I also saw on my site visit that the overall character of the area is fairly mixed with a variety of house types and styles. However, the terrace of four cottages form an attractive and uniform composition, modest in scale with traditional pitched roofs and fenestration. The extension would be an incongruous and visually jarring addition to the terrace that would unbalance its original composition, causing significant harm to the character and appearance of the street scene.
  8. The cottage at the opposite end of the terrace has been extended but this has been traditionally designed in brick (to contrast the render of the original cottage) with a pitched roof. I found it related well, in scale and design, to the existing terrace and is not therefore comparable to the appeal proposal before me. Nor does it cause imbalance to the terrace of cottages as suggested by the appellant.
  9. I am mindful of the guidance at paragraph 130 of the Framework that appropriate innovation or change should not be prevented or discouraged by planning policies or decisions, but this needs to be considered in the context of the local character. This is also recognised in the SPD (section 2.1.3) which outlines that *'some extensions and outbuildings can be of a more contemporary design to the original house although these are more likely to be acceptable where they are not widely visible in the street scene.'* The link element of the proposed extension has been designed with a fully glazed two-storey façade to the proposed entrance, hall and stairs. This would be clearly contemporary in design, but the design of the gable extension is more traditional particularly in its window detailing and brick banding. This mix between contemporary and more traditional appears somewhat contrived, fails to relate well to the original cottage, and am I not persuaded it represents 'appropriate innovation,' or would raise the standard of design in the area generally.
  10. It is proposed to brick up and recess the existing door of No.40 and relocate the entrance to the glazed link element broadly at the centre of the new front elevation. The Proposed Front Elevation (drawing ref. 21-168(FSD) 20 Rev \*)

suggests the existing door will be finished in a brick to match the existing. The existing cottage is rendered, but a contrasting brick would retain the existing form of the original arched doorway as a feature. The relocation of the door, in isolation, would not cause harm the appearance of the host cottage or wider terrace, particularly because the other three cottages already differ from No.40 in this regard, with small pitched roof porches.

11. Despite my conclusion in respect of the blocking up and replacement of the front door, I find on the main issue that the proposed side extension would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host cottage and the wider area. Consequently, the proposed extension would conflict with both the guidance in the SPD and Policy QE7 of the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) because it would not reinforce local distinctiveness, enhance the character and appearance of the street scene or harmonise with the scale, proportions of adjacent and existing buildings.

### **Conclusion**

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

*R. Jones*

INSPECTOR