



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 March 2022

by Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MEnvSc

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/V4250/D/21/3282577

164 Camberwell Crescent, Wigan, WN2 1AY

- 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 D Hancock against the decision of Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref A/21/91401/HH, dated 14 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is to extend dwellinghouse – single storey to side, first floor to side and rear including front dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposed development is described in the application form as single storey side extension and first side - rear extension. In the interests of clarity, I have adopted the description from the decision notice in the banner heading above.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on i) the character and appearance of the appeal property and the area; and ii) the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. No 164 is a detached single storey dormer dwelling on a large corner plot in a residential area. Camberwell Crescent comprises matching semi-detached single storey properties with front and rear dormers. Properties are set back from the street on consistent building lines behind open frontages with low boundary walls. This part of Ashbourne Avenue is characterised by the side elevations of dwellings and their side boundary treatments including fences and hedgerows. Although styles and sizes of property vary through the area, there is a harmony and uniformity to the row of properties, and the street scene, of which the appeal property forms part.
5. The proposed first floor extension would occupy the footprint of the existing single storey extension, effectively wrapping around the side and the rear of the original dwelling. At the front, it would have a single storey eaves height to match, and a ridge height set slightly below, that of its host. The proposed front dormer would be the same height as the existing front dormer, but its

front elevation would be set back. The first floor extension to the rear would have a shallow and asymmetric pitched gable end and it would protrude out from the main rear elevation and the rear roof slope.

6. Viewed from the front, the 2 storey extension would respect the front elevation and it would be subservient to its host. However, from the side and the rear, the first floor extension would be out of scale and it would overwhelm the original dwelling. The 2 storey rear gable extension would not only be out of keeping with its host but also with the distinctive dormer roofscapes that characterise the area and that provide the visual context. By virtue of its prominent open siting, the overly large first floor extension would be a conspicuous and dominant feature. The proposal would not be sympathetic to its host nor to the surrounding built environment. It would not make a positive contribution to local character or the identity of the townscape.
7. My attention has been drawn to a 2 storey gable end extension to the rear of 158 Camberwell Crescent. While it is similar to the proposal in part, full details have not been provided in relation to planning permission or to demonstrate that it was considered in the same policy context. From what I saw, that scheme is poorly related to the characteristic rear dormer roofscapes of the row of properties. However, it is part way along the street in a less prominent location than the appeal property and it is screened in part by surrounding buildings. Therefore, the extension to No 158 has a lesser visual impact that would the appeal proposal. Furthermore, the proposal would not be integrated into its surroundings by the extension to No 158, but rather it would contribute to cumulative adverse effects on local distinctiveness and sense of place.
8. The single storey extension would be substantially similar to the existing single storey extension. It would be subservient in scale to the extended 2 storey property. Nevertheless, it would contribute to a significant increase in the width and bulk of the building. The single storey extension would be more conspicuous by virtue of its close proximity to the side boundary and the footway. Read as a whole, the proposal would be a disproportionately large addition to the appeal property resulting in a visually obtrusive and discordant form of development at the end of an otherwise harmonious row of properties.
9. I accept that the single storey side extension to 2 Albury Way closely approaches the side boundary and the footway. Full details of that scheme have not been provided, but it is screened and softened by dense boundary planting. Irrespective, the single storey extension to 2 Albury Way is not directly comparable to the proposal, which would be a substantial increase in the ground and first floor bulk of the appeal property and a significant increase in the hard built environment with apparently no landscape screening.
10. I also note the suggestion that, even if the proposal was considered to be an overly dominant addition, it would be acceptable because there are overly dominant extensions elsewhere in the area. In this regard, the submitted photograph of 48 Kirkwood Close appears to show a substantially large rear extension. However, it is a different style of dwelling and extension in a different location. In the absence of full details, I cannot be certain that it is directly comparable to the proposal or that it provides a justification for it.
11. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the appeal property and the area. It would conflict with Policies CP10 and CP17 of the Wigan Core Strategy Development Plan Document

Adopted February 2011 (the LP). These require, among other things, that development is designed to avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on amenity, that it respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the area and that it is integrated effectively with its surroundings.

12. The proposal would conflict with the guidance in the House Extensions Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Adopted June 2019 (the SPD) including in relation to adverse effects on the character of the area from overly dominant forms of development and roof alterations where groups of houses share a distinctive roof form. It would conflict with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in relation to adding to the overall quality of the area, being sympathetic to local character and the surrounding built environment and maintaining a strong sense of place.

Living conditions

13. The reason for refusal refers to detrimental impacts on the neighbouring bungalow, but it does not specify which property would be affected. However, the Council's officer report indicates that the dominant first floor rear addition would adversely affect 4 Alston Road, which is to the rear of No 164.
14. There would be a significant increase in the bulk of development at first floor level. However, this would not protrude beyond the extended rear building line of the appeal property. The separation distance from the proposal to the rear of No 4 would accord with the guidance in the SPD. Therefore, there would be no overlooking or loss of privacy between neighbouring windows.
15. The first floor extension would approach No 4 more closely than the existing rear dormer and roof of the appeal property. However, taking into account the distance to the shared boundary, and the outbuildings in the rear gardens of the neighbouring properties, I find that the proposal would not be significantly overbearing to the neighbouring occupiers in their dwelling or garden.
16. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would not harm the living conditions of the residential occupiers of 4 Alston Road. It would not conflict with LP Policy CP17 which requires, among other things, that development should avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on amenity and quality of life.

Other Matters

17. The increased footprint of the building would reduce the private outdoor space. However, the area to the side of the property appears to be underutilised hardstanding. Moreover, it is likely to be shaded for much of the day and it is not the principal part of the garden used by the occupiers. Taking into account the plot sizes of neighbouring dwellings, I am satisfied that an adequate extent of private outdoor space would remain. The loss of outdoor space would not be detrimental to the occupiers of the property.
18. The Council considers that the parking provision is not in accordance with the requirements of the development plan in relation to 4 bed properties. However, the evidence with the appeal states that 2 spaces would be provided, although these do not appear to be indicated on the plans. Irrespective, No 164 is already a 4 bed dwelling and the parking provision did not form part of the grounds for refusal. Therefore, I have not considered this matter further.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposal would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers, but it would harm the character and appearance of the property and the area. It would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that conflict.
20. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

Sarah Manchester

INSPECTOR