
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 July 2022

by Elaine Moulton BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/22/3295940

13 Sycamore Drive, Lymm, Warrington WA13 9AU

- 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 Steve Higginson against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2020/38330, dated 14 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 16 February 2022.
 - The development proposed is extended roof dormers and rear single storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the extended roof dormers. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the rear single storey extension and planning permission is granted for the rear single storey extension at 13 Sycamore Drive, Lymm, Warrington, WA13 9AU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2020/38330, dated 14 December 2020, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and 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: P.100.01 and P.100.12 Rev C except in respect of the extended dormers shown on plan P.100.12 Rev C.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposed development has commenced with regard to the roof dormers. However, as the construction of the rear single storey extension has not commenced, I have dealt with the appeal based on the appeal plans.
3. For reasons that follow, I find the proposed rear single storey extension to be acceptable. It is clearly severable both physically and functionally from the extended roof dormers. Therefore, I intend to issue a split decision in this case and grant planning permission for the rear single storey extension.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area.

Reasons

5. Whilst there is some variation to the house types along Sycamore Drive, its prevailing character consists of semi-detached, hipped roofed bungalows, many with modest front dormer features that add interest to the roofscape. Prior to the commencement of the construction of the extended dormers, the appeal property inherently included these features and as such positively contributed to this character.
6. The enlarged dormers would extend the full width of the first floor element of the roof and wrap around from front to back. This would considerably alter and disrupt the roof shape. By virtue of the proposed size and position, the extended dormers would be an unduly dominant and incongruous feature which consequently would substantially harm the dwelling's character and appearance. Furthermore, the extended dormers would unbalance the appearance of the pair of dwellings removing the sense of symmetry, interrupting the overall rhythm and pattern of the roofscape resulting in an incongruous feature. Such harm is not alleviated by the proposed traditional materials.
7. The proposed single storey rear extension is of a contrasting, simple design to the host dwelling that would be appropriate in appearance. The extension would sit behind the existing dwelling and only limited glimpses of it would be possible from the street. It would be acceptable in respect of its impact on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the wider area and would therefore conform with Policy QE7 of the Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS).
8. I have noted the concern raised in respect of possible damage to trees on adjoining land however I have been supplied with no compelling evidence to suggest that the construction of the single storey rear extension would be a harmful intrusion into the root protection area of such trees. I am satisfied that the proposed extension would be of sufficient distance from the trees so as not to put them at risk of future pruning or removal.
9. Consequentially I conclude that the proposed extended dormers would harm the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area contrary to Policy QE7 of the LPCS, which seeks to ensure a high-quality place. In addition, the dormers would not follow the guidance set out in the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document. Furthermore, the appeal proposal is contrary to a core planning principle of the National Planning Policy Framework which aims to achieve well-designed places.

Other Matters

10. The appellant wishes to extend their property and remain in the area by providing additional, private, safe, and secure living space for a growing family. These aspirations are understandable; however, they do not alter or outweigh the harm that I have identified.
11. The Council's handling of the planning application has not affected my findings on the planning merits of the scheme.
12. Even if there were no unacceptable effects on living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, as stated by the appellant, this would be a neutral factor and would not weigh in favour of the scheme.

Conditions

13. In addition to the standard time limit condition limiting the lifespan of the planning permission I have also, in the interests of certainty, attached conditions specifying the approved plans.
14. A condition securing matching materials is not necessary as the proposed use of render is appropriate and acceptable.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed in part and dismissed in part.
16. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the single storey rear extension.
17. The extended dormers, however, conflict with the development plan when considered as a whole and there are no material considerations, either individually or in combination, that outweighs the harm and associated development plan conflict. I hereby dismiss this appeal insofar as it relates to the extended dormers.

Elaine Moulton

INSPECTOR