



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 March 2023

by Elaine Moulton BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/P2365/D/22/3311286

6 Brooklands Grove, Lathom, L40 5UT

- 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 Alex Connolly against the decision of West Lancashire Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2022/0888/FUL, dated 8 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 29 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is erection of two storey rear extension, new cladding to existing front dormer and roof lights to front elevation, internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of two storey rear extension, new cladding to existing front dormer and roof lights to front elevation, internal alterations at 6 Brooklands Grove, Lathom L40 5UT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2022/0888/FUL, dated 8 August 2022, 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: 393-01-B; 393-04-H; and 393-05-H.
 - 3) Prior to any above ground works taking place, full details of all external materials shall be submitted to, and approved in writing, by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
 - 4) No site clearance, preparatory work or development shall take place until a scheme for the protection of the retained trees (the tree protection plan) and the appropriate working methods (the arboricultural method statement) in accordance with paragraphs 5.5 and 6.1 of British Standard BS 5837: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations (or in an equivalent British Standard if replaced) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme for the protection of the retained trees shall be carried out as approved. In this condition "retained tree" means an existing tree which is to be retained in accordance with the approved plans and particulars.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a dormer bungalow with a steeply pitched roof. It is located on Brooklands Drive which contains dormer bungalows of uniform design.
4. The proposal would replace the existing rear single storey extension with a two-storey addition across the majority of the rear elevation, set slightly behind the corners of the property. The roof ridge of the proposed rear extension would be, at its highest, marginally lower than its host and with a significant section of the roof that would be considerably lower. Whilst the two-storey design would differ from that of the original property it would have a complementary building form that would not be harmful to, or compromise, its character and appearance.
5. The proposed changes at the front of the property do not materially change the appearance of the dwelling. The two-storey rear extension would be glimpsed in the gaps between the dwellings on Brookland Grove but it would not be prominent in the street scene. Furthermore, as it would not extend beyond the side elevation of the host property, the spacing between the buildings would be retained. It would not, therefore, disrupt the consistent street scene.
6. Having regard to its height, roofline, scale and design, I find that the proposal would not be unduly bulky or visually obtrusive. It would not be out of keeping with the street scene and would not detract from local distinctiveness or sense of place.
7. I note that there is a tree within the rear garden that is protected through a Tree Preservation Order. It makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the area, although that contribution is limited due to its lack of prominence.
8. I have no evidence before me that suggests that the development would harm the tree if protection measures were employed during construction. Given the existing single storey rear extension, the amount of rear garden area would not be significantly reduced nor would the relationship of the accommodation to the tree materially change. As such the extension will not materially increase the likelihood that there will be future pressure to prune or remove the tree. There is no basis to conclude that the development would undermine the positive contribution that the tree makes to the appearance of the area.
9. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the host property or the area. It would not, therefore, conflict with Policy GN3 of the West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 Development Plan Document which requires, among other things, that extensions relate to the existing building in terms of design and materials and should complement or enhance local distinctiveness. In addition, it would not conflict with guidance set out in the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document which advises that rear extensions should have a size, scale, form and external appearance which do not compromise the existing architectural style or character.

Conditions

10. In addition to the standard condition which limits the lifespan of the planning permission I have specified the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
11. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area a condition is necessary regarding materials. The condition, as worded, requires prior approval of the external facing materials in recognition that it is intended to introduce composite cladding not currently found on the building and the materials would not, therefore, fully match those of those of the existing property.
12. I have also included a condition requiring tree protection measures to be implemented which I consider should be a pre-commencement condition to provide protection over the full course of construction.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, having regard to the development plan as a whole and all relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Elaine Moulton

INSPECTOR