
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 April 2024

by Elaine Benson BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12.04.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/W4325/D/24/3337308

3 Weymoor Close, Spital, Wirral CH63 9HG

- 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 and Mrs Matthew and Nicola Kelly against the decision of Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref APPH/23/01427, dated 12 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 15 January 2024.
 - The development proposed is 2 storey/1st floor extension.
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Preliminary Matter

1. The proposal was amended during the determination of the planning application. This appeal decision is based on the revised scheme on which the Council made its decision.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for 2 storey/1st floor extension at 3 Weymoor Close, Spital, Wirral CH63 9HG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref APPH/23/01427, dated 12 September 2023, 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: DWG 1 – 3 Weymoor Close.dwg, DWG 2 – Drainage Protection - 3 Weymoor Close.dwg, DWG 3 – Site Plan - 3 Weymoor Close.dwg, DWG 4 – Existing Ground and First Floor - 3 Weymoor Close.dwg, DWG 5 Rev D – Proposed Ground and First Floor - 3 Weymoor Close.dwg and DWG 6 Rev F – Elevations - 3 Weymoor Close.dwg.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the appeal proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached house standing on a small cul-de-sac in a large housing estate. The cul-de-sac has an open, 'U'- shaped arrangement and contains 9 detached and semi-detached houses. Some of the properties have been altered or extended, however, none have first floor front extensions. Properties in the wider estate comprise a mix of house styles and sizes. They are nonetheless standard housebuilder designs of no particular architectural merit. A number of these houses have been altered, including through the construction of first-floor front extensions similar to the appeal proposal. Notwithstanding that some were approved over 10 years ago and each proposal must be determined on its individual merits, the altered buildings nevertheless form part of the built context of the appeal site.
5. The partial first-floor extension would be set back from the ground floor building line which would not be altered. A pitched roof would be formed over the already converted garage and would extend above a ground floor extension to the porch area. The extension would respect the design features of the existing dwelling and would be finished in matching materials. The first-floor extension would be more than half the width of the house, thereby aligning with the ground floor projection.
6. The balance of the house frontage would not be disrupted as the ground floor projection is already off-set. The pair of semi-detached properties are no longer identical and the modest extension would not have a significant effect on the balance of the pair. The pitched roof over the ground floor element would resemble the roof over the adjoining neighbour's garage, thereby introducing an element of design symmetry. The scale of the front extension would be appropriate to the size of the house and the plot and would not appear over-dominant.
7. The houses in Weymoor Close face inwards. The proposed extension would sit above the converted garage and would not disrupt the existing 'U'- shaped building line. The extension would be visible on entering Weymoor Close and from the public footpath and open land to the east of the site. However, as the extension would result in a modest change to the appearance of the property, it would not appear dominant. Any visual impact would be further diminished due to the width of the side garden and the openness of the adjacent area of public open space.
8. Allowing the appeal would not set a precedent for further similar development in the cul-de-sac. Each application is required to be determined on its own merits, enabling the Council to ensure that the open character of the cul-de-sac is retained.
9. I conclude that the proposed extension would not harm the character and appearance of the existing building, the pair of semi-detached properties or the surrounding area. The proposal therefore complies with the provisions of Policy HS11 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance 11: House Extensions which, in summary and of relevance to this appeal, promote development that is in keeping with the existing building and the surrounding environment. For the same reasons there would be no conflict with the design principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.

10. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised the appeal is allowed.

Conditions

11. A condition is necessary requiring the use of matching materials to preserve the character and appearance of the surrounding area. I have included a condition identifying the approved drawings for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Elaine Benson

INSPECTOR