



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2024

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 December 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Z4310/D/24/3352849

9 Westbury Close, Liverpool L17 5BD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Anita Ciurciu against the decision of Liverpool City Council.
 - The application reference is 24H/1244.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of bungalow to 2-storey property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The proposal is primarily to raise the height and alter the roof form of the appeal property, which is a detached bungalow that stands at the end of a cul-de-sac within an estate style residential area. Front and rear gable ends would be introduced with the extra internal living space created at first floor level served by new windows and roof lights. A sun tunnel would also be provided together with some minor external alterations to the host building.
4. The proposal has been carefully designed to maintain a sense of balance to the main façade with the ground floor bay window retained, as existing. The simple pattern of fenestration would be in keeping with the existing dwelling and the proposed external materials would be appropriate. The completed building would be taller and more substantial in-built form than the existing dwelling with new front and rear gables that would alter its shape and general appearance. Nevertheless, taken as a whole, the finished building would be broadly in keeping with the character of an individually designed detached dwelling. In itself, No 9, once enlarged, would have an acceptable appearance.
5. However, it is also important to have regard to the context of the site. The appeal dwelling occupies a prominent position facing the approach to the turning head of the cul-de-sac. It stands within a group of 3 bungalows with hipped roofs that are similar in height and form. With their modest scale and proportions, and low ridge heights with roofs that slope away from the road, these properties maintain a low profile and have a modest presence in the street scene to which they belong. When seen from the road, the broadly consistent form of this small group and their stepped profile due to the gentle

change in ground levels establishes a noticeable pattern to existing development along Westbury Close. On the opposite side of the site to this group is a 2-storey house. It is within the short row of similar dwellings and the adjacent 2-storey house that the proposal would be visually 'read'.

6. The additional built form, increased height and the introduction of a front gable would set the completed dwelling clearly apart from neighbouring properties on both sides and cause it to gain some prominence in the street scene. To my mind, the finished building would stand uncomfortably in the streetscape, between smaller and lower bungalows with hipped roofs on one side and a taller and more substantive 2-storey house on the other. As the proposal would neither match nor harmonise with the scale and design of the buildings on either side of the site, there would be an awkward transition in the street scene that would be uneasy on the eye. By unduly disrupting the pattern of existing development along this part of Westbury Close, the proposal would be a discordant, obtrusive and an unwelcome addition to the local area.
7. On the main issue, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would materially harm the character and appearance of the local area. Accordingly, it conflicts with Policy H8 of the Liverpool Local Plan 2013-2033. This policy aims to ensure that extensions and alterations to dwellings achieve a high quality of design that matches or complements the style of the dwelling and the surrounding area. It would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which states that new development should be sympathetic to local character and add to the overall quality of the area.
8. The proposal would enable the accommodation provided within the existing dwelling to be remodelled to better suit the needs of the appellant. The introduction of the new gable ends would also allow the efficient use of the space created at first floor level. I also appreciate that gables are a common feature in the UK, with several examples evident in the local area, to which the appellant has referred. Once complete, the additional bedrooms and bathroom created within the roof space would enhance the living conditions of the appellant. The development would also boost the local economy by providing jobs and through the sale of construction materials. The living conditions of others would not be affected if the appeal scheme were to come forward. Nevertheless, the proposal would be incompatible with its context for the reasons given. On balance, these considerations do not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

9. Overall, the proposed development conflicts with the development plan, when read as a whole. There are no material considerations, including the Framework, which indicate that the decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons set out above, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR