



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 January 2024

by Martin H Seddon BSc MPhil DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H4315/D/24/3350929

8 Whalley Avenue, Rainford, St Helens WA11 8HQ

- 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 Alison Houghton against the decision of St Helens Council.
 - The application Ref is P/2024/0217/HHFP.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, and a single storey front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, and a single storey front extension at 8 Whalley Avenue in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/2024/0217/HHFP, and the plans submitted with it, 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: J7_0178 (20) A011 Rev P02 proposed elevations (01), J7_0178 (20) A010 Rev P02 proposed plans (01) and J7_0178 (20) L002 Rev P02 proposed site plan.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have determined this appeal on the basis of the Council's description of development as it is a more appropriate specification for the proposal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of dwelling and surrounding area, and the effect on the living conditions of neighbours in respect of outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal building is a two storey semi-detached dwelling located at the junction of Whalley Avenue and Pilkington Street. There are similar dwellings on Whalley Avenue and two storey terraced dwellings at the opposite side of Pilkington Street.
5. The Council has raised no objection to the proposed single storey rear extension, or the single storey front extension. I see no reason to disagree as, subject to conditions, these parts of the proposal would cause no harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling, or the living conditions of neighbours.
6. The proposed two storey side extension would be located between the gable end wall of the building and the back of the footway to Pilkington Road. Currently this part of the site is occupied by the access to a doorway, rear garden/shed and some vegetation. The boundary to Pilkington Road is marked by close boarded timber fencing.
7. The Council considers that the proposed side extension would reduce the openness of the corner junction. However, the corner is relatively open at this point because of the large garden of 1 Pilkington Street and by the garden of 5 Whalley Avenue, with both spaces fronting on to the roads. There are also single garages with space around them at the rear of the appeal site on Pilkington Road. Parked vehicles tend to restrict the space at the junction. However, that situation would not be changed by the proposed extension. Moreover, the extension has been designed to appear subservient to the building because of its limited size and hipped roof.
8. The hipped roof would not be completely out of character as hipped roofs are also present at properties in Whalley Avenue. The Council's Householder Development supplementary planning document advises against side extensions at corner plots. However, I consider that the proposed extension would not appear unduly prominent and would not harm the general layout of development, or any existing strong building line, at this point.
9. I find that the proposed development would not conflict with St Helens Local Plan policy LPD04 which requires proposals to respect the appearance and character of the existing dwelling and other buildings within the surrounding area in terms of scale, size, design, and facing materials.

Effect on living conditions

10. The proposed side extension would be sited opposite the short terrace of 1-7 Pilkington Street. The front windows of those dwellings already face the gable end wall of the appeal building across their front gardens and Pilkington Street. The proposed side extension would project for around 2.7 metres towards these opposing properties. However, the extension would be seen against the main gable end wall and I consider that it would cause no significant additional harm to the outlook of the occupants of the opposing terrace. The rear wall of the proposed extension would be blank. The extension would have an advantage for the perceived privacy of neighbours by covering a high level window in the existing gable end wall.

11. I find that the proposed development would cause no significant harm to the living conditions of neighbours in respect of outlook. It would not conflict with St Helens Local Plan policy LPD04 which seeks to ensure that proposals do not have an overbearing or over-dominant effect on the outlook from any habitable rooms or gardens in any neighbouring dwelling.

Conditions

12. In addition to the standard condition for the commencement of development I have included a condition requiring matching external materials to ensure that the proposed extensions reflect the appearance of the dwelling. A condition also confirms the approved plans.

Conclusion

13. I have found above that the proposed development would cause no significant harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling or surrounding area, and no harm to residential amenity. The proposed development would comply with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and the development plan as a whole and should be allowed.

Martin H Seddon

INSPECTOR