



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 March 2025

by **P Eggleton BSc(Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W4325/D/25/3359406

88 Whitfield Lane, Heswall, Wirral CH60 7SD

- 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 Mr James Murphy against the decision of Wirral Council.
 - The application reference is APPH/24/01410.
 - The development proposed is a double storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect on the character and appearance of the area; and the effect on the living conditions of the residents of 86 Whitfield Lane with regard to outlook.

Reasons

3. The existing dwelling is stone built with a narrow form. It has a distinctive forward facing dormer that straddles the eaves to serve the first floor accommodation. It includes a front porch structure which is shared with the attached property. It also has a wide side addition towards the rear, with a matching stone frontage. These attached properties have a distinctive appearance, differing from the character of other houses to the west. The attached property has been extended to the side by way of a continuation of the main form of the dwelling, with a matching front dormer. The two storey element of that extension is relatively narrow but follows the front building line. A further single storey addition sits unobtrusively beyond the two storey element.
4. The width of the proposed two storey side extension would be substantially greater than the width of the original frontage of this property. As it would form a continuation of the frontage, on the same building line, it would entirely change the perceived proportions of the dwelling. The pleasing proportions of the original form of the dwelling would be lost. Even taking into account the two storey extension to the neighbouring property, the new works would be overly dominant and would detract from the existing character of the property.
5. The proposal does seek to reflect the detailing of the house and its neighbour with regard to the form of the dwelling, dormer window detailing and frontage materials. The materials of the side elevation and the need for matching headers and sills

could be controlled by condition as suggested by the appellant. However, these positive design elements do not overcome the concern with regard to the excessive unrelieved scale of the proposed frontage.

6. Whilst a step back from the frontage would help to maintain the original character of the property, as this has not occurred with regard to the attached dwelling, such a design mechanism, although preferable, would not be essential. However, the neighbouring extension is much more limited in scale and as such has a reduced impact. The scale and over-dominance of this proposal, given its substantial, unrelieved width, would result in harm to the character and appearance of this dwelling and the wider area. Although the first floor windows would reflect the existing, the ground floor window would also be at odds with the general design characteristics of this property.
7. The high wall that forms part of the existing side extension is not a positive feature of the current design. Remodelling within this area may bring some benefits but this proposal and its design shortcomings, particularly its unrelieved width, would be more prominent and would result in greater harm to the character and appearance of the house and its surrounds.
8. The proposal would be overly dominant and would detract from the existing character and proportions of this property. Its excessive scale and its unrelieved frontage would represent poor design. It would detract from the character and appearance of the area and it would conflict with the design objectives of policy HS11(i) of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan 2000 as it would dominate the existing building. The design objectives of this policy are reflected in the emerging Local Plan policy WD 5(7) and the council's Supplementary Planning Guidance: House Extensions 2004. The proposal would also be at odds with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 which is clear that development that is not well designed should be refused.
9. Concerns have also been raised with regard to the impact of the proposal on the outlook from the neighbouring property to the west. The impact would generally be limited to the single storey side extension which has rear facing patio doors. The height and position of the side extension, closer to the boundary, would reduce the outlook from those doors. The appellant advises that this is not a habitable room. I was not able to determine the use of the room during my visit which would be a critical matter in relation to considering the impact on living conditions. Given my main finding however, this is not a matter on which my decision would turn.
10. In conclusion, the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the property and would result in poor design due to its unrelieved scale. If I accept that the impact of the extension on the neighbouring property relates to a non-habitable room, this matter, together with the others put forward by the appellant, do not outweigh my design concerns. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

Peter Eggleton

INSPECTOR