



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 September 2025

by **J D Westbrook BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/D/25/3366687

31 Wednesbury Drive, Warrington, WA5 3EW

- 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 Graham Withington against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/00341/FULH
 - The development proposed is the construction of a part two-storey side extension with dormer and a single-storey rear extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed extension on:
 - The character and appearance of the area along Wednesbury Drive, and
 - Highway safety along Wednesbury Drive by way of impact on parking provision.

Reasons

3. No 31 is a two-storey semi-detached house, situated at the eastern end of Wednesbury Drive at a point where the road turns to the north, towards the end of the cul-de-sac. As a result of its location the property has a narrow frontage to the road, while the plot widens considerably to the rear. The house has a small, integral garage at the front, while its position on the bend means that it has a small, shallow front garden. The property slopes down slightly from front to back.
4. The proposed development would involve the construction of a side extension that would increase in width as it follows the side boundary with No 29. The side extension would have an asymmetrical pitched roof, which would rise from single-storey height at the front to a high point beyond the mid-point of the house, before dropping down again to the rear. There would be a dormer extension in the rear roof slope of the side extension. At the rear there would be a full-width single-storey rear extension, some 3.5 metres deep and with a mono-pitch roof.
5. Policy DC6 of the Council's Local Plan (LP) indicates that development proposals should respect, sustain and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness within the surrounding area, having regard to scale, height and massing. Policy ENV8 indicates that appropriate mitigation or compensatory measures should be secured with regard to potential impacts of traffic movement to, from and within a site and car parking, including impacts on highway safety.

6. The Council's House Extensions: Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides guidelines relating to planning applications and indicates that extensions should complement the existing house in terms of scale, design, roof pitch, materials, window placement and proportions, and that they should be subordinate in scale to the building which is to be extended. In line with the above, the SPD indicates that side extensions should usually be no more than 50% greater in width than the original house unless the character of the property and the surrounding area can support such a large proposal.
7. The SPD also has guidelines relating to car parking. In particular, houses with 4 or more bedrooms should provide 3 car parking spaces, and compliance with the parking standards should not result in a dominance of cars in front garden areas, while the front garden should retain some level of soft landscaping as a visual and environmental benefit.

Character and appearance

8. The Council contends that proposed side extension, by virtue of its form, massing and height would result in an incongruent addition to the streetscene. In addition, it would leave a gap of less than 1m to the shared boundary with No 29, and would be greater than half the width of the dwelling house. It would, therefore, insufficiently harmonise with the host dwelling and adjacent dwellings, and would adversely impact on the symmetry of the semi-detached pair.
9. The dwellings along Wednesbury Drive are a mix of chalet-bungalows with more traditional semi-detached houses. In the vicinity of the appeal property, there is a prevalence of chalet-bungalows, with Nos 31 – 37, and the uncharacteristic detached house at No 39, being of standard two storey design. Nos 31 – 39 are clustered around the outside of the bend in the road. Few dwellings along the road have side extensions, but there is a wide range of front canopies and porches. There is no clearly defined building line around the appeal property, and the dwellings are set back by varying amounts either side of No 31.
10. The appellant contends that there is a very similar side extension, with asymmetric roof, at the nearby No 41. I have no details of the background to this, but I note that it is more regular in shape to that proposed at No 31. Nevertheless, the side extension at No 31 is of a largely similar general design and it responds to the unusual shape of the plot. Although it is over 50% of the width of the main house at the rear, it is much narrower at the front and, by virtue of its lower roof line, it would not appear over-dominant in the street scene or disproportionate in size to the main house. In addition, the single-storey rear extension would be of limited depth with a mono-pitch roof, and would not be out of character or scale with the appeal property and its surroundings, particularly given the significant size of the rear garden and the full-width rear extension at the attached No 33. Moreover, it would not be visible from the public realm.
11. The proposed extension would be only 0.9 metres from the boundary with No 29, but the shape of the plots at this point of the road and the angle at which the two houses are set, mean that there would remain a significant amount of space between the side elevation of the proposed extension at No 31 and the single-storey side extension at No 29. The gap between the two would, in fact, increase away from the front of the properties.

12. In considering this issue, I have taken note of the particular circumstances of the appellant and his family, and the need for a home that has scope for the provision of specific facilities. On this basis, while there are minor conflicts with Policy DC6 in the LP and guidance in the SPD, I find that, in this case, the personal circumstances of the appellant outweigh these minor conflicts, which would, in any event, result in very little, if any, harm to the character and appearance of the area along this part of Wednesbury Drive.

Highway safety

13. At the time of my visit, there were two cars parked to the front of the house. Both were forced to overhang the pavement by reason of the limited depth of the front garden. From the submitted documents, the existing garage would appear to be extremely small, and the proposal would involve a small increase in its depth and width to enable the accommodation of a wheelchair accessible vehicle. This would bring the garage back into effective use, but would reduce parking space at the front of the property even further. From the submitted drawings it would not appear possible to create space for more than one further vehicle to manoeuvre and park within the property itself and, without precise drawings, even this may require the vehicle to protrude beyond the property boundary.
14. The proposed side extension would result in the creation of an extra bedroom at first floor level and another playroom/bedroom on the ground floor. This would result in the property potentially having up to 5 bedrooms, and the parking provision would fail to meet the standards set out in the SPD.
15. From my visit, I note that most properties in the vicinity have created space for two cars across the whole of the front garden. However, many of these spaces have no direct crossover and some have temporary ramps set against the kerb. I have no details as to the background to these parking arrangements but I presume many of them to be irregular and without express permission. The somewhat chaotic off-street parking in the area results in only limited on-street parking being available close to the appeal property. I have no evidence of actual demands for on-street parking at various times of the day, but at the time of my visit, little space was still available.
16. Given the insufficiency of space within the appeal property to meet guidance relating to on-site parking standards, I find that the proposal would be likely to increase pressure for parking on the highway and/or beyond the front boundary of the property, and that this could be harmful to highway safety. On this basis it would conflict with Policy ENV8 of the LP and with guidance in the SPD.

Conclusion

17. In conclusion, I find that the proposed extension would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the area along Wednesbury Drive, but that it would likely be harmful to highway safety, by way of increasing pressure on limited on-street parking. Accordingly, I dismiss this appeal.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR