



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2025

by **C Mayes CMLI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/W/25/3365221

21 Bridge Meadow, Lymm, Warrington WA13 9GH

- 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 Matthew Peacock against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/00286/FULH.
 - The development proposed is garage conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for garage conversion at 21 Bridge Meadow, Lymm, Warrington WA13 9GH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2025/00286/FULH, and the plans submitted with the appeal, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos:
 - A.02.1 Rev A 'Location & site plan proposed'
 - A.02.2 Rev A '0. GROUND FLOOR proposed'
 - A.02.3 '1. 1ST FLOOR proposed'
 - A.02.4 'S-01 Building Section proposed'
 - A.02.5 Rev A 'E-01 Elevation proposed'

Preliminary Matter

2. The appellant submitted revised drawings as part of the appeal. The revisions included annotations describing the width of the existing garage door and the proposed windows, making changes to the dimensions indicated on the plans that were before the Council at the time of its decision. However, the differences are slight. I am satisfied that the revisions do not alter the proposed development in a substantive way, and that my assessment of the amended plans would not cause unlawful procedural unfairness to any party. I have therefore determined the appeal on the basis of the plans submitted with the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers using Bridge Meadow.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a three-storey terraced house with integral single garage in a cul-de-sac development of similar dwellings. In keeping with other properties in the development, the front amenity space is predominantly hardstanding with a dedicated driveway providing parking for one vehicle. The layout also incorporates a pedestrian path to the front entrance of the dwelling, with no boundary fencing or hedging separating the frontage from the public realm or from neighbouring properties. The driveway is accessed directly from the highway across a footway, with a continuous dropped kerb running along the length of the terrace.
5. I have not been directed to specific policies within the development plan that set out standards for parking provision. However, section 2.3 of the Warrington Borough Council House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document, June 2021, (the SPD) states that there is an expectation that two allocated parking spaces would be provided for a dwelling of the appeal property's size. The SPD is clear that garages can only contribute towards parking provision when they are of, or greater than, a minimum size.
6. The proposal seeks to convert the integral single garage to a home office. The plans show that the existing opening width of the garage door is 2.1m. While the minimum internal dimensions specified in the SPD apply to a garage that would also provide cycle storage, the width of the garage door in this case would be some way below the minimum standard of 2.5m. Even if the door is 2.3m wide, as was suggested on the originally submitted plans, this would also fall below the specified width standard. The garage may originally have been intended to provide parking for the dwelling, but this constraint would notably hinder its practical use for parking today. Consequently, while the proposal would convert the garage, its inadequate door width means that the SPD indicates that it would not, in any event, contribute to parking provision. As such, there would not, in effect, be a loss of useable parking at the site.
7. In addition, the Council suggests that accommodating two vehicles at the front of the appeal property would require one to be parked either on the pedestrian access path to the front entrance of the dwelling, if parked side-by-side, or overhanging the adjacent footway, if parked in tandem. The former would cause inconvenience to occupants of the property, while the latter could pose a risk to highway users.
8. I saw no evidence of tandem parking at the appeal property or elsewhere on the street at the time of my site visit. I acknowledge that my site visit represents only a snapshot in time and that parking patterns may vary. Nonetheless, the Council's assertion that tandem parking would result from sub-standard parking provision has not been substantiated or explained further, particularly given the current shortfall identified above at the appeal site and at similar properties in the street. In any case, it is questionable whether a tandem parking arrangement is likely, given the substantial degree of overhang to the footway, and such parking arrangements would be subject to potential action under other legislative regimes and powers.
9. The proposed side-by-side parking arrangement reflect the current practice at several, comparable properties in the street and, based on the evidence before me, the vehicle parking arrangements already practiced at the appeal site. The proposed side-by-side parking arrangement would fail to meet the recommendations of the SPD. However, I have no compelling evidence that any

resultant inconvenience to occupants of the appeal property would cause harm to pedestrian, cycle or highway safety or any other meaningful harm, even if the arrangement would not be ideal.

10. Considering the above factors taken together and noting that there would not be a loss of useable parking space in practice, I consider it is highly unlikely the proposed development would prejudice highway safety or lead to any other unacceptable adverse effect. I therefore conclude that the development would not have a harmful effect on the safety of pedestrians, cyclists or drivers using Bridge Meadow. In this regard, it would accord with Policy ENV8 of the Warrington Local Plan (December 2023) which seeks to ensure that development does not compromise highway safety. While the proposal does not meet the expectations of SPD for parking provision, I find that in this instance the conflict would not result in unacceptable harm and a departure from the guidelines would be justified.

Conditions

11. To meet legislative requirements, a condition shall be imposed to address the period for commencement. I have imposed a condition requiring development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted plans in the interests of clarity and certainty.

Conclusion

12. The proposal accords with the development plan, when taken as a whole, and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal is allowed.

C Mayes

INSPECTOR