



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 September 2025

by **Andrew Dale BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 September 2025

Appeal Ref. APP/Q4245/D/25/3368273

40 Windsor Drive, Timperley, Altrincham WA14 5AN

- 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 Ben Coulson against the decision of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.
- The application ref. is 115883/HHA/25.
- The development proposed is described on the application form as “The construction of an extension at 1st floor at the side of the existing dwelling directly over the footprint of the existing single storey side extension + internal alterations”.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of an extension at 1st floor at the side of the existing dwelling directly over the footprint of the existing single storey side extension + internal alterations at 40 Windsor Drive, Timperley, Altrincham WA14 5AN in accordance with the terms of the application ref. 115883/HHA/25, 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 development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans referenced/numbered: Site Location Plan 1:1000; Site Plan 1:500; 3310/001; 3310/002; 3310/03; and 3310/005.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.

Main issue

2. Flowing from the reason for refusal on the Council's decision notice, the main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and visual appearance of the street scene and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. No. 40 is a 2-storey, 3-bedroom semi-detached house in an established residential area. It has a hipped roof, an advanced 2-storey front bay and single storey extensions to the side and rear. Windsor Drive mainly contains pairs of 2-storey semi-detached houses similar in style and set back from the highway along

- consistent front building lines with fairly regular spaces to the sides, some of which have been altered by subsequent side extensions at ground and 1st floor levels.
4. The appellant proposes to enlarge the house with a 1st floor extension to the northern side elevation directly over the forwardmost ground floor side extension.
 5. The appellant points to the current shortcomings of the existing single bedroom (Bed 3 on the plans) that the appeal scheme seeks to enlarge. I made an internal inspection of that bedroom. It is certainly of limited size. Excluding the bulkhead area, the usable floor space in the bedroom is of the order of only about 5.42 sq.m. The appeal scheme would add about 2.75 sq.m of floor space to that bedroom.
 6. The Council has referred to Supplementary Planning Document 4: *A Guide for Designing House Extensions & Alterations* (SPD). The SPD clearly carries weight as a material consideration in decision making but it should not be applied prescriptively to the exclusion of all other factors, including the physical circumstances and local context of a site. Indeed, the SPD says that “*All applications are considered individually and on their individual merits.*”
 7. The proposed 1st floor side extension would be set back from the front elevation by half a brick just like the ground floor extension below, measure only about 3.57m in depth and 1.35m in width well under half the width of the original property, have an eaves level that corresponds to that of the original house, exhibit a hipped roof that would be set down far below the main roof ridge, matching and complementing the design of the existing roof and utilize matching bricks and tiles. In all these respects, there would be compliance with the SPD which does not discourage a “...*setback of as little as half a brick length.*” for all side extensions. I find that the Council’s criticisms about the prominence, scale, height, massing and design of the proposal are not borne out. The extension would respect the design, scale, proportions and roof form of the original dwelling which would remain the dominant element.
 8. The Council’s concern about the proximity of the proposed extension to the side boundary with no. 42 is noted. The gaps between the pairs of semi-detached houses produce a rhythm of development that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Windsor Drive street scene and in some cases provide for views from the street to the vegetation and sky beyond.
 9. The SPD advises that proposals for 2-storey side extensions or 1st floor additions will **normally** be acceptable with regard to various criteria one of which states “*A gap of a minimum of 1m should be retained between the side elevation of an extended property and its side boundary, to retain the impression of space to the side of the dwelling. This is particularly important within a row of closely spaced detached or semi-detached houses.*” The SPD also says “*The Council will seek to prevent the loss of gaps where they are important in defining the character of the street scene and where their loss would compromise the established character, amenities of the residential area and result in the impression of an unrelieved mass of building.*”
 10. The width and depth of the proposed 1st floor side extension have evidently been determined by the need to provide a reasonably-sized bedroom.

11. It is also understandable that the appellant would wish to build above the existing ground floor side extension in its entirety, rather than leave small and visually awkward sections of ground floor roofing protruding just to arbitrarily moderate the width of the proposed 1st floor extension to satisfy the SPD. I saw that the visual drawbacks of that approach were very evident at no. 44 for instance, even though the 1st floor element there is well set back.
12. In any event, the proposed 1st floor side extension would not be built up to the boundary with no. 42. It would be set in from that boundary by a distance of 777mm, the same separation distance observed by the existing ground floor side extension. Nonetheless, it would reduce the gap at 1st floor level to below the minimum 1m gap sought by the SPD.
13. However, I consider that the 777mm gap that would remain, added to the lack of any type of side extension to no. 42, the low profile and hipped design of the proposed roof form and the very modest depth of the proposed 1st floor side extension such that the greater part of the depth of the original upper northern side elevation would be unaffected, are important considerations. In combination, they would be sufficient to avoid the impression of a cramped form of development or of an unrelieved mass of building and would guard against causing such a loss of spaciousness or of glimpses of the sky and greenery as to materially disrupt the established character and appearance of the street scene or the amenities of the residential area more generally.
14. The appellant refers to planning permissions for 2-storey side extensions at 15 and 27 Windsor Drive approved under ref. 103647/HHA/21 and ref. 106961/HHA/22 respectively. The former permission expired in May 2024 but remains relevant as the SPD dates from 2012. I saw that the latter permission had been implemented.
15. The plans for no. 27 retained a 900mm gap to the side boundary and showed the front wall of the extension to be flush with the front wall of the original house, both of which are contrary to the SPD. Given the absence of a lower roof for the side extension at the front and the sheer depth of the 1st floor side projection, question marks about the scale and proportion of the extension there arise in relation to the advice in the SPD. At no. 15, the scheme would have retained a 900mm gap to the side boundary towards the front and 850mm towards the rear, both under the 1m guideline. Again, the appeal scheme before me would be far more modest and restrained in terms of its depth along the side wall.
16. The commentary in the paragraph above is not made to be critical of the Council who would have correctly determined those applications on their individual merits. Both of the permissions do however illustrate that the Council has taken a flexible approach when applying the SPD to Windsor Drive, not unlike myself in this appeal. The word **normally** and the need to consider applications individually, both of which I highlighted earlier, allow for such an approach.
17. The Council refers to 2 appeal decisions which were dismissed: 24 Mosley Road and 223 Canterbury Road under appeal ref. APP/Q4245/D/20/3254266 and appeal ref. APP/Q4245/D/22/3290329 respectively. Those 2 roads are far removed from Windsor Drive. The context for those sites was different. The proximity to the respective side boundaries was slightly less than in the appeal case before me. Moreover, on Mosley Road, the Inspector found regularity in the very distinct gaps

or open spaces at 1st floor level over the subservient side garages. On Canterbury Road, the Inspector was clearly concerned about a garage with a flat-roofed extension above fitted flush with the front elevation at the side of the neighbouring property and set a similar distance away from the boundary as the extension he was considering (about 750mm). Those cases are not therefore directly comparable to the appeal scheme before me. The Council would retain control over any 2-storey side extensions to 42 Windsor Drive.

18. Drawing these threads together, I find on the main issue that, notwithstanding the limited conflict with the SPD, the proposed development would not materially harm the character and visual appearance of the street scene and the surrounding area. As the proposed scheme would be an example of good design, there would be no conflict with Policy JP-P1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan. This, amongst other things, expects development to be distinctive with a clear identity that respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used. The scheme would also accord with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
19. Moreover, the Framework indicates that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and involves creating better places in which to live. It seeks to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. It is an important material consideration in favour of the appeal proposal that it would enhance the quality of life and amenities for the occupiers of no. 40, especially for those who would use the more suitably-sized Bed 3.
20. Within the questionnaire, the Council suggests 3 conditions in the event of the appeal succeeding. In addition to a condition setting a time limit for the commencement of development, a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the relevant approved drawings is necessary as this provides certainty. I have also imposed the Council's other suggested condition on materials to ensure that the proposed development would safeguard the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area.
21. For the reasons given and having regard to all other matters raised, including the lack of objections from local residents, I conclude that this appeal should succeed.

Andrew Dale

INSPECTOR