



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 November 2025

by **Ian McHugh DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P2365/D/25/3373980

43 Vines Cross Way, Skelmersdale, WN8 6HN

- 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 Harry Mitchell against the decision of West Lancashire Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/0555/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a single-storey rear extension extending 3.5m, timber construction, clad in composite boards, slight pitched roof with asphalt shingles.
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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 dwelling;
 - Whether adequate rear garden/amenity space has been retained for use by the occupants of the dwelling.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property is a new semi-detached dwelling, which is situated within a modern residential estate. It has a relatively small rear garden, with open land beyond.
4. The proposal is to retain an existing single-storey flat-roofed rear extension, which covers most of the width of the plot and extends some 3.5m into the rear garden. The extension has been clad in composite boarding with a shingle roof.
5. Policy GN3 of the West Lancashire Local Plan (LP) seeks to ensure (amongst other things) that the design of new development is of high quality and that, in the case of extensions, proposals should relate to the existing building in terms of design and materials. Further guidance is contained in the Council's Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This states that rear extensions should not compromise the style or character of the existing property. These are consistent with paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2025, which contains similar provisions.

6. The Council considers that the extension is not in keeping with the existing property or the streetscene and that it conflicts with both Policy GN3 of the LP and the guidance contained in the SPD. I share these concerns.
7. Although it is often the case that the design of rear extensions and the materials used in their construction differs from the main dwelling, in this case, the overall size and design of the extension, including the dark cladding material has resulted in a structure that appears visually discordant and at odds with the scale and design of the original dwelling.
8. I have considered the fact that the part of the extension projecting beyond the side wall of the dwelling is partially screened by fencing and that cladding has been used on some of the nearby houses. However, the other cladding is generally a minor feature that is in keeping with the design of the estate as a whole.
9. Consequently, I conclude on this issue that the proposed extension conflicts with the provisions of the LP and with the Council's SPD.

Rear Garden/Amenity Space

10. The Council considers that the reduction in the depth of the rear garden results in an amenity that is substandard. It refers to Policy GN3 of the LP, which states that proposals should retain sufficient rear garden/outdoor space for occupiers of the property. Furthermore, the guidance contained in the Council's SPD is that rear gardens should have a depth of at least 10m. The Council states that the depth of the retained rear garden space is 8.2m.
11. Whilst the retained rear garden length is shorter than the recommended 10m, I am not persuaded that the area is insufficient. I observed during my site visit that the garden is a regular rectangular shape and relatively flat. It included items of play equipment, together with space for sitting out and for drying washing etc. Furthermore, the open aspect at the rear gives a feeling of relative spaciousness. Consequently, I do not share the Council's concerns on this issue

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above in relation to character and appearance, it is concluded that the appeal be dismissed.

Ian McHugh

INSPECTOR