

Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 18/02/14

**gan Melissa Hall BA(Hons) BTP MSc
MRTPI**

Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru

Dyddiad: 18 Mawrth 2014

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18/02/14

**by Melissa Hall BA(Hons) BTP MSc
MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Date: 18 March 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/H6955/A/13/2209447

Site address: 43 Gerald Street, Wrexham LL11 1EL

The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Dr S Sasi against the decision of Wrexham County Borough Council.
- The application Ref WRR P/2013/0456, dated 27 June 2013, was refused by notice dated 28 August 2013.
- The development proposed is a bedroom extension over existing lounge.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a bedroom extension over existing lounge at 43 Gerald Street, Wrexham LL11 1EL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref WRR P/2013/0456, dated 27 June 2013, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. This is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Gerald Street is characterised predominantly by rows of terraced and semi-detached dwellings which, for the most part, retain a traditional appearance. However, the appeal property is one of three modern detached dwellings situated in this part of the street, which each differ significantly in terms of their design and external appearance; one neighbouring dwelling is a bungalow with a front facing flat roof dormer and the other is a more symmetrical two storey dwelling incorporating bay windows and a canopy over the entrance door. The appeal dwelling is also viewed in the context of a modern residential development to the rear of the site, known as Grosvenor Gardens, which has a three storey massing at its closest point and

incorporates features such as half hipped roofs, front gable projections and front dormers. Overall, therefore, the surrounding area comprises residential development of varying periods, design, style and external appearance.

4. I accept that the appeal dwelling occupies a prominent position adjacent to the turn in the road, and that it therefore draws the eye on the approach from Grosvenor Road. However, it is separated from the closest traditional terraced properties to the south by an access road leading to Grosvenor Gardens, to the east by a highway and to the north by the existing modern dwellings. In this context, it does not identify solely with the traditional dwellings in the street scene.
5. The design of no.43 is like no other dwelling in Gerald Street. It has a strong horizontal emphasis due to its considerable width, relatively low pitched roof and single storey element which projects beyond the main two storey side elevation. The single storey element incorporates a large expanse of flat roof which is highly visible from the access road serving Grosvenor Gardens, and a rendered finish which is not entirely compatible with the otherwise red facing brick finish of the dwelling.
6. The ridge, pitch and shape of the roof of the proposed extension would match the existing dwelling. I note the Council's contention that the ridge should be set down from that of the existing, so as to appear subordinate. However, the design of the extension such that it would project forward of the main front elevation would interrupt the horizontal emphasis that I have described, much to its benefit. Furthermore, it would not dominate the dwelling given its limited width in relation to that of the original property. As such, I do not consider that the alignment of the ridge with that of the host dwelling would have a significantly harmful visual impact when weighed against the positive design features of the proposal.
7. The use of facing brick in place of the existing rendered finish would match the existing dwelling and would be more akin to the red brickwork finish predominant in the surrounding development. As there are gable features and dormers of various forms in the vicinity, I do not consider that the detailed design would be so at odds with the established character and appearance of the surrounding area as to represent unacceptable harm.
8. Consequently, I am of the view that the proposed development would be of a simple design and form, and of an appropriate scale and finish, which would relate satisfactorily to the existing dwelling and to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
9. I note that the Council's reason for refusal refers to the cumulative impact of extensions on the property. However, I have been provided with evidence which appears to show that the original dwelling was designed with the front projecting single storey element, and the Council does not disagree that it may be 'as built'. Although the proposal may not therefore be unacceptable or undesirable for the reason cited, I have nonetheless had regard to the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and that of the surrounding area.
10. For the reasons outlined above, I do not find conflict with Policies PS2 and GDP1 of the adopted Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 2005 which state that all new development should accord with the character of the site and make a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.
11. I have also been provided with an extract from the Local Planning Guidance Note 20 '*House Extensions*' which *inter alia* advises on matters of design. Whilst I

acknowledge the Council's view that front extensions would not normally be acceptable, in this particular case I consider that the proposed development would be sympathetic to the form, scale, proportion and design of the original dwelling. As such, it would reflect the appearance of the existing dwelling and would not have a harmful impact on its setting, consistent with the advice contained in the LPG.

Other Matters

12. I note that other parties have raised concern regarding the impact of the proposed development on the living conditions of neighbours. However, the Council has not taken issue with this matter in its determination of the application and I have no reason to disagree. Whilst concern has also been raised regarding the need for this extension, there is no requirement for the appellant to demonstrate such a need.

Conditions

13. Other than the standard time limit, the Council has suggested a condition requiring the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension to match those used in the existing building. Having regard to the advice contained in Welsh Office Circular 35/95: *The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions*, such a condition would be reasonable and necessary to ensure a satisfactory appearance.

Conclusion

14. For the above reasons, and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Melissa Hall

INSPECTOR