

Planning Committee

27 March 2012

Reference:
APP/11/01501

Area Team:
North Team

Case Officer:
Miss K Elliot

Ward:
**West Kirby and
Thurstaston**

Location: 22 BROUGHTON AVENUE, WEST KIRBY, CH48 5ER
Proposal: Erection of a two storey side extension, single storey rear extension with internal alterations.

Applicant: Mrs S Gray
Agent : SDA Architects & Surveyors

Site Plan:



Development Plan allocation and policies:

Primarily Residential Area

Planning History:

None.

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:**REPRESENTATIONS**

Having regard to the Council's Guidance on Publicity for Applications, eight letters of notification were sent to the occupiers of adjoining properties. A Site Notice was also displayed. At the time of writing this report, ten separate letters of objection had been received from No.24, No.20, No.19, No.18, No.15, and No.8 Broughton Avenue, No.65 Grange Road and No.25 Jubilee Drive. A qualifying petition of objection containing 28 signatures was also received. These representations can be summarised as follows:

1. The design and size of the extension is out of character with the rest of the road;
2. As the property is situated at the top of the cul-de-sac, by the turning circle, the proposal will result in increased parking congestion in the road as the proposed garage is not big enough to accommodate a car;
3. If other properties in the road were to do the same it would make the locality unattractive and cramped;
4. The site is situated on a main pedestrian route used by school children and cars parked on the pavement/road would be hazardous;
5. Parking between properties is limited and the proposal will prevent neighbours from using their drives;
6. Council policy states that flat roof extensions will not be permitted and a 5 metre gap should be retained to the front boundary;
7. The proposal leaves no space on either side for the extension to be maintained;
8. The extension will set a precedent that goes beyond acceptable levels of development and will affect the character of the street scene;
9. The proposal represents a 'brutal transgression' from the simple character of housing in the area to something alien that should not be allowed;
10. The extension is unneighbourly and overbearing to neighbours and represents an over-development of the site, almost doubling the size of the existing house;
11. Access for emergency vehicles and the refuse wagon will be nearly impossible;
12. There is not enough space to accommodate the applicant's own vehicles;
13. The proposed rear extension will compromise the neighbour's right to light;
14. Most properties in the road have extended at the rear which has not affected the look of the road in the same way that this will;
15. The owner of the property will not have space to park their vehicles once the extension has been built and the proposed garage can not accommodate a car;
16. Broughton Avenue is a busy road used by cyclists and pedestrians, especially at school times;
17. The party boundary fences should remain as they are;
18. No consideration has been given to the fact that the extension is right up to the boundary with No.24 and will impact on the enjoyment of that property;
19. The wall of the extension will make parking at No.24 difficult;
20. The owners of No.22 already appear to have made preparations for the extension including brick up an existing window;
21. There are other examples in Wirral of extensions similar to the proposal which have been refused on the grounds of it being detrimental to neighbouring properties;
22. There is no point in issuing guidance if it is not adhered to.

CONSULTATIONS

The Director of Technical Services (Traffic and Transportation Division) - no objections.

DIRECTORS COMMENTS:

The application was deferred from Planning Committee on 6th March 2012 for a site visit.

REASON FOR REFERRAL

The application is submitted by SDA Architects and Surveyors, a partner and architect of which is an elected Member of the Council. A qualifying petition of objection containing 28 signatures has also been received.

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for the erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension with internal alterations.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The principle of the development is acceptable subject to Policy HS11 (House Extensions) of Wirral's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and SPG11.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site comprises a semi-detached property in a road of similar design houses. Broughton Avenue is a narrow cul-de-sac which allows on-street parking on one side as the majority of properties do not have private driveways. Other properties in the road have been extended but mostly at single storey and to the rear. The application property has a driveway at the side of the property and a hard surfaced area directly in front of the house which is used for off street parking. The adjoining neighbours at No.20 and No.24 have existing single storey rear extensions of some description.

POLICY CONTEXT

The proposal relates to a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension, therefore Policy HS11 and SPG11 are directly relevant in this instance. In its criteria for development of this nature it outlines that to avoid the effect of 'terracing', where two storey side extensions are added to the sides of semi-detached houses of similar style with a consistent building line and ground level, the first floor of a two storey side extension should be set back at least 1.5 metres from the common boundary; or at least 1 metre from the front elevation and 1 metre from the common boundary; or at least 2 metres from the front elevation. This is supplemented by SPG11 which recommends that they have a lower ridge height and retains 1 metre to the side boundary for maintenance purposes. SPG11 also recommends that garages should retain a driveway of at least 5 metres clear of the highway and if this is not achievable then the extension should be set further back. Policy HS11 also states that flat roofs should be restricted to the rear or side of the property and only on single storey extensions, which is also relevant to the proposal. In relation to the proposed single storey rear extension, SPG11 states that those within 1 metre of the party boundary should not project more than 3 metres from the original rear wall do the property. In more general terms Policy HS11 and SPG11 state that the scale of the extension must be appropriate to the size of the plot, not dominating the existing building and not so extensive as to be unneighbourly.

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The proposed two storey side extension will occupy the gap between the existing gable wall of the property and the common boundary with No.24, measuring 2.2 metres in width. The entire extension is set back 1 metre from the front elevation of the property and comprises a garage with utility at ground floor and a bedroom above. The plans originally submitted included a flat roof on the two storey side extension which was considered to detract from the character of the house and the general street scene. This has since been amended to incorporate a more traditional pitched roof which is in keeping with the style of the main roof. It also remains lower than the existing ridge line in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy HS11 and SPG11 and is clearly subordinate to the original property. The proposed single storey rear extension occupies the full width of the property and projects no more than 3 metres in depth which is acceptable in the context of SPG11. Whilst the rear extension has a flat roof, this is acceptable in the context of Policy HS11 as it will not be visible from the general street scene.

A number of objections were raised in relation to the proposal having an adverse visual impact on the street scene of Broughton Avenue and it creating a cramped and unattractive appearance. As outlined above, following the amendments made to the roof design on the two storey side extension, it is considered to meet the criteria set out in Policy HS11 and SPG11 and is appears as a clear, and subordinate addition to the property. The extension is less than half the width of the house, is set back from the main face of the property and does not over-dominate the site, which retains ample amenity space. The proposal represents an increase in the original floorspace of the dwelling by approximately 69% and does not double its size as suggested in the objections. The proposal does not set a

precedent for further development in the road as each proposal is assessed on its own merits. Reference is also made to the erosion of the character of the area by such development. However properties in Broughton Avenue are characteristically close together and the application is one of few sites in the road which benefits from space at the side.

The proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact on the amenities which the occupiers of neighbouring properties can reasonably expect to enjoy, as suggested in the representations received. The projection of the single storey rear extension is in accordance with SPG11 and ensures that No.20 retains an adequate outlook. The neighbouring property has a single storey rear extension set away from the boundary with a window between this and the party boundary. This window is not considered to suffer a greater loss of outlook of daylight than is already created by the fence and existing extension. In addition to this the only window facing the two storey side extension from No.24 is an obscurely glazed hall window which already faces a gable wall. There is no requirement for either the single storey rear extension or two storey side extension to be set away from the boundary for maintenance purposes as this is not a planning matter. Development abutting the common boundary is commonplace and to reduce the width of the extension any further would make the proposal unusable in terms of inside floor space. Therefore it would be unreasonable to expect the proposal to be reduced any further than as it is presented.

The other predominant issue raised in the objections received was that of the loss of parking space at the site as a result of the extension and that the garage proposed would not be big enough to accommodate a car. Whilst the proposal does not appear to accord with the recommendations of SPG11 in respect of retaining 5 metres to the highway, there is space immediately in front of the dwelling for one car. The fact that the applicant may have more than one vehicle is not a planning issue and it would be unreasonable to insist that they maintained provision for more than one vehicle. A single storey garage could be built on the same footprint as that proposed, without requiring planning permission, and would have the same effect. Parking space within the road is limited but residents do not have an automatic right to park on the public highway. The Council's highway engineers have considered the objections raised but conclude that there are insufficient grounds on which to object to the proposal.

In summary, the proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties. The revised proposal is in keeping with the design of the original dwelling and remains subservient. The proposal is not considered to result in an increase in on-street parking. The proposal is acceptable in terms of scale and design, complies with Policy HS11, SPG111 and is recommended for approval.

SEPARATION DISTANCES

SPG11 states that habitable room windows directly facing each other should be at least 21 metres apart. Main habitable room windows should be at least 14 metres from any blank gable. The proposed rear facing windows retain approximately 25 metres to properties at the rear in Anglesey Road. The front facing bedroom window does not face directly on to properties opposite, but equally is no closer than the existing windows in the front of the house. There are no side windows proposed in any part of the extension. The proposal is therefore not considered to result in direct overlooking to neighbouring properties.

HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

Several objections have been received with regards to the increase in on-street parking that will adversely impact on highway safety, with particular reference to access for emergency vehicles, inadequate space for the applicant's cars and the impact on the pedestrian route through Broughton Avenue. The proposals have been assessed by the Council's engineers who have confirmed that the proposals are unlikely to result in any significant increase on-street parking and are satisfied that highway safety will not be affected. As such, it is not considered that the proposals represent any adverse impact on highway safety that would warrant a refusal of planning permission.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

There are no Environmental/Sustainability issues relating to these proposals.

HEALTH ISSUES

There are no health implications relating to this application.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is not considered to have a significantly detrimental impact on the amenities which the occupiers of the neighbouring properties can reasonably expect to enjoy in terms of loss of light or outlook. The proposed extension is not considered detrimental to the character of the area. The proposal is acceptable in terms of scale and design, complies with the provisions of Policy HS11-House Extensions of the adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan and SPG11-House Extensions.

Summary of Decision:

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the decision to grant Planning Permission has been taken having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national and regional policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

The proposal is not considered to have a significantly detrimental impact on the amenities which the occupiers of the neighbouring properties can reasonably expect to enjoy in terms of loss of light or outlook. The proposed extension is not considered detrimental to the character of the area. The proposal is acceptable in terms of scale and design, complies with the provisions of Policy HS11-House Extensions of the adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan and SPG11-House Extensions.

Recommended Decision: Approve

Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on the plans received by the Local Planning Authority on 6th February 2012.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

Further Notes for Committee:

Last Comments By: 10/02/2012 13:45:19

Expiry Date: 01/03/2012