
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 October 2016

by Gareth Wildgoose BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 10th November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/16/3156832
90 Altrincham Road, Wilmslow SK9 5NG

- 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 Mr Kaelan Travis against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 16/1539M, dated 29 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is a single storey extension to the front elevation, 2 storey extension to the side and single storey extension to the rear elevation to connect the house with the existing detached outbuilding.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The appellant has expressed a willingness to amend the design of the proposal if required. However, a revised proposal is not before me and therefore, I determine the appeal on the basis of the drawings submitted and refused by the Council.

Main Issue

3. The effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two storey dwelling on the northern side of Altrincham Road with a rendered front elevation and a hipped roof. The property forms a pair of semi-detached dwellings with 88 Altrincham Road (No 88) to the east. The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of predominantly semi-detached and detached two storey dwellings with a variety of architectural styles, scale and materials. This includes the detached dwelling at 92 Altrincham Road (No 92) to the western side that has a brick facade with a distinctive dual gable roof form linking to a pyramid hip roof.
 5. Although plot sizes vary, significant gaps exist between most of the dwellings along Altrincham Road and are often wider at first floor level. The set back position of front building lines and the space to the side of dwellings contributes to the spacious character of the northern side of Altrincham Road, notwithstanding the presence of intermittent trees and landscaping to some front boundaries.
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6. The appeal proposal would extend two storeys at the side of the dwelling with a continuation of the main front building line and hipped roof form. The two storey side extension would be within approximately 0.6m of the boundary with No 92 at the front with the gap narrowing to approximately 0.3m at the rear. The proposal also includes a single storey front extension to the full width of No 90, together with a single storey rear extension also of full width and linking an existing detached outbuilding at the rear.
7. Saved Policies BE1, DC1, DC2, DC38 and H13 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan (MBLP), adopted January 2004, when taken together seek to ensure that development is of a high standard of design, which reflects local character and respects the form, layout, siting, scale, design, height and massing of the site, surrounding and adjoining buildings, and the street scene. In addition, Saved Policy DC43 of the MBLP states that "side extensions to houses should not normally encroach within 1 metre of the site boundary to prevent the creation of a terraced street effect" by reason of loss of space between buildings. Although the saved policies of the MBLP significantly pre-date the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) they are broadly consistent with its design objectives and are afforded considerable weight.
8. The side elevation of No 92 is currently located approximately 0.7m from the boundary with No 90 at the front and the gap narrows to approximately 0.6m towards its rear elevation. This separation distance from No 92 to the side boundary is less than ordinarily required by Saved Policy DC43. However, the siting of No 92 does not currently compromise the perception of spaciousness between the properties due to the more substantial gap that exists from No 90 to its side boundary. The existing detached outbuilding at No 90 is sited in close proximity to the boundary but does not have a significant influence in this respect, due to its set back position behind the rear building lines.
9. The two storey side extension would significantly reduce the overall gap between No 90 and 92 at ground and first floor level to around 1m at its closest point. In addition, the extension along its full length would be closer than the 1m to the side boundary normally required by Saved Policy DC43. In this regard, the different character and architectural style of the properties would lessen the perception of a terraced appearance. However, the limited gap remaining between the dwellings would have a detrimental impact on the character of the site and the Altrincham Road street scene through a harmful loss of the characteristic spaciousness between dwellings. The harmful effect could not be mitigated through use of materials or additional landscaping.
10. The proposed extensions would alter the appearance of the front elevation of No 90, including a continuation of the main front building line and roof ridge line, resulting in an imbalance of the semi-detached pair. The resultant increase in roof width, scale and massing of No 90 would disrupt the existing symmetry with No 88 above ground floor level where the adjoining property has not been extended at the side. The varied character of properties in the surrounding area somewhat reduces the importance of a regularity of appearance of individual properties. Nevertheless, the contrasting appearance of the semi-detached properties would draw attention within the street scene, an effect that would not be mitigated by use of matching materials.
11. Having regard to the above, when taken together with the harmful relationship to No 92, the unbalancing effect of the front and side extensions upon the

semi-detached pair would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

12. The Council have not expressed any specific concerns relating to the design of the proposed single storey rear element of the extension. Based on the evidence before me and my observations of the site, I have no reason to take a different view given its scale and proportions would remain subservient to the existing rear elevation.
13. The addition of a link to the detached outbuilding would result in a substantial cumulative depth of single storey built form at the rear of the existing dwelling. However, on balance, this would not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area. In reaching this view, I have taken account of the limited prominence of the extension at the rear, its modest height, the demarcation of the glazed link section and the diversity of other rear extensions in the surrounding area. The absence of concern in this respect does not, however, justify the harm otherwise identified.
14. The appellant referred to an example of a two storey side extension at No 128, recently granted planning permission by the Council, which is built close to the boundary of a neighbouring property. I also observed a small number of properties further to the west along Altrincham Road with close relationships of extensions to side boundaries. However, the characteristics of those properties, the extensions and the relationship to surroundings are different to the proposal before me. Consequently, the existing extensions do not justify a development that I consider to be harmful.
15. I conclude that the development would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. The proposal would, therefore, conflict with Saved Policies BE1, DC1, DC2, DC38, DC43 and H13 of the MBLP and the Framework.

Other Matters

16. The Council raised no concerns with respect to the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties, the availability of amenity space or highway safety. Based on the evidence before me and my observations, I have no reason to take a different view. However, the absence of any concern in these respects or objections from neighbours is a neutral factor.
17. The proposal would provide additional living space to assist the property in meeting modern family living requirements, including additional bedroom space and an office for home working. I understand and sympathise with the wishes of the appellant to provide additional space for his family. However, these personal circumstances are not sufficient to outweigh the harm identified.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above and taking all other matters into consideration, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

Gareth Wildgoose

INSPECTOR