
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 February 2017

by A J Mageean BA (Hons) BPI PhD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 15 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/16/3165609

3 Rectory Cottages, Audley Road, Barthomley CW2 5PL

- 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 Mrs S Starkie against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 16/4974N, dated 12 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 9 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is a two storey rear/side extension with detached garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey rear/side extension with detached garage at 3 Rectory Cottages, Audley Road, Barthomley CW2 5PL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/4974N, dated 12 October 2016, 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: Location Plan; STA_01; STA_02; STA_03; STA_04; STA_05; STA_06; STA_07.
 - 3) 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.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council's reason for refusal contains reference to Policies MP1, PG5, SD1, SD2 and SE1 of the emerging Cheshire East Local Plan-Submission Version. Having regard to paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), as this is a pre-examination document and I have not been informed of any subsequent changes to its status, I attach limited weight to these policies.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the host building and local area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a modest, two-storey semi-detached dwelling located on a rural lane close to the small village of Barthomley, in an area designated as open countryside. It is set back from the road frontage within a generously
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sized plot. It has a driveway on its southern side, mature and semi mature trees within the garden area and is bound by a combination of hedging and timber and wire fencing. The dwelling itself appears to have been largely unaltered, though the other half of the semi-detached pair has significant side and rear extensions, and alterations to its front elevation.

5. This proposal would include a two storey side extension which would wrap around to the rear, and which would be set back from the front building line by around 4.3m, extending around 4.5m towards the southern boundary. Its roof would have a ridgeline slightly below that of the main roof, and it would have a three quarter hip to its gable end. Additionally there would be a tiled canopy between the ground and first floors, reflecting that on the existing building frontage. The rear projection would span most of the width of both the existing building and the side extension, with the existing main roof ridge being extended to the rear to create a large rear facing gable. The proposals also include an oak framed double bay garage which would be located in front of the property.
6. Saved Policy RES.11 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2005 (the Local Plan) requires that within open countryside "*the original dwelling must remain as the dominant element with the extension subordinate to it*". The supporting text further states that the resulting dwelling should not be more than double the size of the original. In this case there is some disagreement between the parties as to the increase in building volume the extensions would create. However, it is accepted that the increase in the footprint of the building would be somewhat less than double the size of the original dwelling, whilst the increase in the Gross External Area would be a little over double the original figure.
7. I accept that the proposed additions would significantly alter the appearance of this modest dwelling. However, the side extension would be positioned substantially behind the front building line, ensuring that the frontage appearance of the original dwelling would remain clearly visible. This would help to assimilate the appearance of the extensions. The additions would be clearly visible from the south along Audley Road though I accept that, with the removal of existing outbuildings, the resulting building mass would not be unreasonable.
8. The Council states that the position of the proposed side extension would imbalance the semi-detached pair. However, the existing alterations to No 2 include a significant side extension, and whilst I accept that the proposed addition to No 3 would be stepped further back from its frontage than that at No 2, my view is that as the scale of these additions would be similar, a reasonable degree of balance would be achieved.
9. I also accept that the proposed additions would be bulkier to the rear than those at No 2. However, my view is that this would be managed through the proposed alterations to the roof form, which would ensure that the additions would be effectively integrated with the existing building. Overall, my view is that whilst the proposed additions would substantially increase the size of this dwelling, their position, form and detailing would respect the main qualities of the original form of this dwelling, and on balance appear subservient to it.
10. The proposed garage addition, whilst being placed forward of the dwelling, would be an open fronted structure, and traditional in appearance. Whilst I

accept that it would be in a prominent position, its presence would be somewhat concealed by existing conifers and other trees. The Council states that this would conflict with guidance in the Supplementary Planning Document (the SPD)¹, which advises that "*garages or outbuildings should not be sited forward of the existing dwelling, forming a group of buildings rather than being in an isolated position*". In this case my view is that the garage would be a reasonably discrete and appropriately designed addition to the streetscene.

11. I conclude that the proposals would not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the host building or local area. In these respects they would not conflict with the Local Plan Policies NE.2, RES.11 or BE.2, or the SPD, which, amongst other things, seek to protect the open countryside, ensuring a high standard of design which respects local character.

Conclusion

12. The proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the building or surrounding area and would accord with the development plan. Therefore the appeal should succeed, subject to a condition specifying the approved plans which is required for certainty. Also, a condition is required to ensure that the external materials used match the existing building in the interests of the character and appearance of the building and local area.

AJ Mageean

INSPECTOR

¹ Borough of Crewe and Nantwich *Extensions and Householder Development* Supplementary Planning Document 2008
