
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 February 2017

by Louise Nurser BA (Hons) Dip UP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 22 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/D/16/3166203
24 Blenheim Road, Stretford M16 0GH

- 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 Haneen Yasmin Dukali against the decision of Trafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 89136/HHA/16, dated 5 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is double storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. I understand that the Council raises no objection, in isolation, to the design of the extension. However, due to the size of the plot the main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the street scene along Blenheim Road; the effect of the proposed extension on the living conditions of the occupants to the rear of the property, with particular reference to privacy; and the effect of the proposed parking arrangements on the living conditions of residents.

Reasons

Street scene

3. Blenheim Road is a traditional residential area. The majority of the housing in the immediate area consists of modest, semi-detached properties which for the most part have not been extended. This gives an open spacious character. The proposed extension would reduce the existing gap between the house and the boundary with no 26 Blenheim Road to around 0.3 m. This would be significantly less than the metre gap suggested within the Council's A Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations, Supplementary Planning Document 4, (SPD4) adopted 2012, which has been subject to public consultation and to which I accord significant weight.
 4. I note that the guidance within the SPD4 is only a guideline. Nonetheless, the objective of ensuring that adequate space remains around an extended property so that the plot does not appear cramped is consistent with the principles of good design contained within Policy 7 of the Trafford Core Strategy (CS) adopted 2012. This requires development to be appropriate in its context and in scale.
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5. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed extension by virtue of its scale would result in a development that would appear cramped and would have a significantly adverse impact on the spacious open character of the street scene of Blenheim Road and would therefore be contrary to Policy L7 of the CS, and the guidance contained within SPD4.

Privacy

6. The first floor rear window in the proposed development would be around two metres closer to the rear garden boundary of no 239 Kings Road than the existing bedroom window, which is already closer than the 10.5 m distance between first floor windows and neighbouring rear gardens recommended as good practice within SPD4. Nonetheless, in normal circumstances it is unlikely that people would spend significant periods of time in the bedroom and therefore the opportunity for overlooking would be limited. Moreover, from what I observed, notwithstanding that the trees to the rear of no 239 Kings Road are deciduous, in the summer they would provide screening and privacy.
7. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the living conditions of the occupants of the neighbouring property as a result of loss of privacy within their garden.

Parking

8. My site visit, which by its very nature must be a snap shot in time, took place in the afternoon when it would be reasonable to infer that residents would be at work. At the time, there appeared to be adequate levels of available on street parking. However, I noted that there were signs relating to parking restrictions during 'events'. Nonetheless, I have not been provided with any details relating to the parking restrictions.
9. I note from the information which has been provided to me that the parking standards set out within the Supplementary Planning Document 3: Parking Standards and Design, adopted 2012, (SPD3) are that a three bedroom property should have a maximum of two off street parking spaces. From what I observed the existing property has only access to one off street car parking space as the garage at the rear is inaccessible to a car due to the narrowness of the gap between the drive and the boundary.
10. I am aware that the number of bedrooms within the property is not proposed to increase. However, given that the proposed development is to provide additional space for the appellant's family so that a married couple and child can live in the property with their parents, it is not unreasonable to suppose that a further car would be associated with the property. Moreover, in the absence of detailed drawings it is unclear whether the appellant could demonstrate that there would continue to be adequate space to park at least one vehicle off the road. As such, this would be contrary to the guidance within SPD4 that extensions should not reduce the levels of off street parking. Therefore, I conclude that the proposed development would be contrary to Policy L7 of the CS and the guidance contained within SPD3 and SPD4 as it would have an adverse impact on the living conditions of both the occupants of the host property and the nearby residents due to the inconvenience associated with an increased requirement for on street parking in an area where there is limited availability.

Other matters

11. I note that the appellant is unhappy with the way in which the Council has determined the application and considers that there has been inconsistency in the way in which this proposal and others have been considered. Nonetheless, I am only able to determine the proposed development on the merits of the case before me.

Conclusion

12. I appreciate that the appellant wishes to provide accommodation to be able to house her grown up child and family. However, for the reasons set out above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L. Nurser

INSPECTOR