



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 June 2019

by F Cullen BA(Hons) MSc DipTP MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/19/3226449

8 Beechwood, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 8AR

- 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 Andrew Ellis, Andrew Ellis Planning Consultants against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 18/4315M, dated 24 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 6 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is first floor side extension and general alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The applicant has given authorisation for their agent to act on their behalf in respect of this appeal. I have therefore included the agent's name in the banner heading above.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and
 - the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of the occupants of No 10 Beechwood, with particular regard to privacy and outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is located on the north side of Beechwood within an established residential area. The adjacent properties comprise a mix of two storey, link-detached houses and single storey bungalows. Both types of building are constructed of brick with tiled roofs and situated within moderately sized garden plots. They have little or no boundary treatment to the front which gives an open feel to the street.
5. The appeal property is a link-detached, two storey house with a single storey side extension. The building is vacant and in poor condition. It detracts from

the well-maintained character and appearance of the area. The proposal comprises an extension at first floor to the side and two separate two storey extensions to the front, with a central entrance porch between them.

6. The proposal would significantly increase the size, scale and massing of the building to the side and to the front and cause it to be discordant with the nearby houses and overly prominent on the streetscene. The existing eaves line and ridge line would be maintained, and the staggered form of the building would be retained to a certain degree. However, the introduction of an additional gable feature to the front and the substantial bringing forward of the building line, would be out of keeping with the form and design of the adjacent two storey properties.
7. Accordingly, I conclude the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. As such, it conflicts with policy SE1 in the Cheshire East Local Plan – Local Plan Strategy 2010-2030 (2017) which, amongst other things, aims to protect and enhance local distinctiveness; policy DC2 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan (2004) which states that alterations and extensions should respect the existing architectural features of buildings; and Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places, in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Living conditions

8. The proposed development includes a bedroom window on the south-west elevation of one of the front extensions which has the potential to cause over-looking into No 10 Beechwood and thus privacy issues. I agree with the appellant that, given its location, any potential over-looking would just be into the front garden area of No 10 Beechwood and could be controlled by the condition offered of installing a fixed unit with opaque glazing.
9. The elevation of the adjacent bungalow, No 10 Beechwood, facing the appeal property has windows looking out onto a small side garden which, along with the public right of way that runs between the properties, provides about 4.5m of separation between the buildings. The proposed two storey extensions to the side and front on the main south-west elevation would increase the height and massing of the building considerably and, notwithstanding the separation, would have a significant overbearing impact on the occupants of No 10 Beechwood and reduce their outlook. I note that no objections to the proposal have been submitted by the occupants of No 10 Beechwood. However, this does not change my opinion that there would be harm.
10. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would not harmfully change the living conditions of the occupants of No 10 Beechwood, with particular regard to privacy, but it would have a significant impact on the living conditions of the occupants of No 10 Beechwood, with particular regard to outlook. As such, it conflicts with saved policy DC3(2) in the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan (2004), which broadly aims to protect residential amenity.

Other Matters

11. I note the appellant contends that the falling level of the land along Beechwood and the staggered formation of the adjacent houses would cause the proposal to not appear excessively bulky and, combined with the use of matching materials, the renovated property would appear in context and significantly

enhance its surroundings. The refurbishment and reuse of the building would be a benefit. However, I consider that this would not be outweighed by the identified harm.

12. I acknowledge that nearby two storey houses have been or are being extended. However, the extensions to these properties are not as large as the appeal proposal. In any case, each appeal must be determined on its own planning merits and I have found harm.
13. The appellant has stated that the dwelling has an existing approval for a ground and first floor side extension ref 16/3366M. Be that as it may, in my judgement, that extension would not be as substantial as the proposal now before me. Consequently, this consideration would not outweigh the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of the occupiers of No 10 Beechwood.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons above and having considered all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

F Cullen

INSPECTOR