



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 September 2019

by M Savage BSc (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M3455/D/19/3225245

92 Whitfield Road, Ball Green, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 8AH

- 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 Lee Dean against the decision of Stoke-on-Trent Council.
 - The application Ref 63540, dated 26 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 1 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion and side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion and side extension at 92 Whitfield Road, Ball Green, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 8AH, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 63540, dated 26 January 2019, 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: L1.01, P1.01 Revision A, P1.02 Revision A, P1.03.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the scheme hereby approved shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matters

2. I have taken the description of development from the application form. Notwithstanding the Council's description of development on its decision notice, I have no substantive evidence that the change in description was agreed by the appellant during the Council's determination of the application.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the appeal scheme on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property comprises a semi-detached dwelling located in a generally residential area with a mix of dwelling types and design. The appeal dwelling is located along a row of similarly designed semi-detached brick-built properties, a number of which have single storey side garage extensions, including the appeal property. The adjacent property, No 90, does not have a side garage

- extension, which allows views towards the open space to the rear of the dwellings.
5. There are two main elements to the appeal scheme, a side extension above an existing single storey extension and the conversion of the loft including a dormer on the rear elevation. The side extension would be set below the ridge height of the main dwelling and would be set back from the front elevation giving it a subordinate appearance. The proposed dormer would be located on the rear elevation of the main dwelling, below ridge height.
 6. Policy CSP1 of the Core Spatial Strategy 2006-2026¹ states that new development should be well designed to respect the character, identity and context of Newcastle and Stoke-on-Trent's unique townscape. R23 of the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)(2010) states that extensions to dwellings should be well designed and contribute positively to the townscape character. Where there is a regular pattern and rhythm to the built form, with a repeated built form on a consistent building line and with consistent gaps, then any extension on the frontage must not unbalance the rhythm.
 7. Whilst there is a degree of uniformity across the row of semi-detached properties, not all of the dwellings have a single storey side extension, nor are the existing extensions themselves identical. Given the property's location between other semi-detached properties and the subordinate nature of the proposal, the extension would not appear dominant or incongruous in the street scene.
 8. R23 of the SPD states that where buildings allow views to a green backdrop that contributes to the established, positive, character of the area, extensions should not close such gaps. Although there is substantial open space to the rear of the appeal property, the single storey side extension already significantly restricts views towards it from the public domain. There would therefore be no further significant loss of views towards the green backdrop beyond and no conflict with R23 in this regard.
 9. Concern is raised that the appeal scheme would set a damaging precedent for future development of this type in the area which could lead to a terracing effect on the row of properties. However, I have no alternative schemes before me and have considered the appeal on its own merits. The adjacent property does not have a side extension which would mean that a gap between the two properties would be retained, ensuring that there would be no significant terracing effect.
 10. The appellant has drawn my attention to No 6 Whitfield Road which I was able to view during my site visit. Although not directly comparable, there are similarities between this site and the appeal site. It is not clear from the evidence before me why the Council has taken a different stance in relation to the appeal scheme.
 11. The Council has not raised concern regarding the proposed dormer. Views of the dormer would be limited from the public domain due to its location to the rear of the property and as such, there would be no significant harm arising from this element of the appeal scheme.

¹ Adopted October 2009

12. Thus, for the reasons given above, the appeal scheme would not harm the character and appearance of the area and there would be no conflict with Policy CSP1 of the Core Strategy, which seeks to ensure that development respects the character of the area, amongst other things, or R23 of the SPD, the requirements of which are set out above. There would also be no conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) which seeks to achieve well-designed places.

Conditions

13. In the interests of certainty and proper planning I have included conditions relating to commencement, plans and materials.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is allowed subject to the conditions set out above.

M Savage

INSPECTOR