



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 September 2019

by Graham Wraight BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/W/19/3226547

9 Clover Croft, Manchester M33 3PU

- 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 John Morris (Sumo Developments) against the decision of Manchester City Council.
 - The application Ref 120920/FO/2018, dated 6 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 15 October 2018.
 - The development proposed is demolition of side garage and outbuilding; refurbishment and single storey rear extension to existing property (no. 9 Clover Croft); two new build 3 bed houses to land to side of No. 9 Clover Croft.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on (i) the character and appearance of the area and (ii) the living conditions of the occupiers of 92 Ashstead Road, with regard to overlooking and loss of privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Clover Croft and Ashstead Road are characterised by dwellings of two storey height with shallow pitched roofs. The uniformity of the house types on these two roads, and their similar scale to one another, creates a consistent character and appearance which benefits the surrounding area in a positive manner.
4. The proposed dwellings would have a noticeably steeper roof pitch and greater ridge height than the existing dwelling at 9 Clover Croft. The effect of the greater scale and massing would be compounded by the proposed dwellings being set forward of the adjacent houses. Furthermore, the dwellings would be sited substantially beyond the established building line on the frontage of Ashstead Road and would be uncharacteristically close to the highway on a prominent corner location. This would look incongruous and obtrusive within the street-scene.
5. In addition, whereas existing properties on Clover Croft generally have driveways running to a garage, the proposed development would result in frontage parking for both No 9 and the proposed dwellings placing a substantial

area of hard surfacing on this prominent corner. I note that landscaping is proposed to the frontage, however this would do little to reduce the impact that would arise from the extent of the hard surfacing proposed. Furthermore, the rear gardens would also be very shallow and this tight layout would be apparent from Ashstead Road.

6. Due to their scale, bulk, massing and layout, the excessive amount of hardstanding on the frontage, and the shallow rear gardens, the development would appear cramped and visually incongruous when viewed from Clover Croft, Ashstead Road and the public open space opposite the site.
7. The appellant has drawn attention to the positioning of the existing dwellings on the opposite side of Clover Croft. However, these are not positioned on a corner and instead share a side boundary with the area of public open space. Accordingly, their positioning and general impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area is not comparable to that which would arise as a result of the appeal development.
8. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with the objectives of Policies SP1, EN1, H7 and DM1 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012 (CS), the Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance 2007 and the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance, all of which seek to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Living conditions

9. The area of land immediately to the rear of where the proposed dwellings would be constructed forms part of the curtilage of No 92. This area is enclosed by a high close boarded boundary fence, and an established hedge which runs along the frontage with Ashstead Road. These features create a private area which could reasonably be used by the occupiers of No 92 as outdoor amenity space.
10. The proliferation of windows in the proposed development and their proximity to the common boundary would result in significant overlooking on this area and a resultant loss of privacy, which would cause harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 92. Although the appellant has made reference to screening on the boundary from a mature tree, this would have only a very limited screening benefit. Furthermore, whilst I note that No 92 also has an area of outdoor amenity space to its rear, this does not mitigate against the impact that I have identified upon the area of land in question.
11. I conclude therefore that the proposed development would result in significant overlooking and loss of privacy to No 92 and would conflict with the objectives of Policy DM1 of the CS, which seeks to protect the living conditions of adjoining occupiers.

Other Matters

12. The appellant considers that the proposed development would provide valuable new homes in a sustainable location within an area of Manchester earmarked for growth and in which there are limited sites for new houses. Furthermore, the appellant considers that the proposed development would make more efficient use of an underused site with vacant and dilapidated buildings.

Although I give some weight to these considerations, they do not outweigh the significant harm to character and appearance and to living conditions that would arise.

13. The appellant has stated that the proposed development would not materially alter the density of development in the immediate area. Whilst this may be the case, it does not justify a development that would cause the degree of harm that I have found.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Wraight

INSPECTOR