
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 October 2019 by Hilary Senior BA(Hons) MCD MRTPI

by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPL MRTPI

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

Decision date: 5 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M3455/D/19/3235028

20 Finchdean Close, Meir, Stoke-on-Trent, ST3 7UT

- 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 T Mitchener against the decision of Stoke-on-Trent Council.
 - The application Ref 63837, dated 3 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 23 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension to form garage, utility, kitchen with new bedroom above.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission granted to erect a two-storey side extension to form garage, utility, kitchen with new bedroom above, at 20 Finchdean Close, Meir, Stoke-on-Trent, ST3 7UT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 63837, dated 25 March 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: Working drawing JPK/19/4197/1B and Location and Block Plan.
 - 3) The materials used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site is part of a residential development understood to have been constructed during the 1990's. The estate features properties of a design typical of that period which include bay windows, integral or attached garages and canopies which run along the front of the dwellings. A significant number

of properties on the estate have been altered or extended in various ways since the estate was built.

5. 20 Finchdean Close is a two-storey detached dwelling positioned at the end of a cul-de-sac in a row of three, one of which has been extended at the side. To the side of No 20 is a flat roof garage and to the front elevation there is a mono-pitch canopy and ground floor bay window. The property is set back from the road behind a driveway and garden area, and is at a slightly higher level than the road.
6. Policy R23 of the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design SPD requires that extensions to dwellings should be well-designed and contribute positively to the townscape character. The policy identifies key considerations to be taken into account where the area is identified as having a positive historical significance. Whilst the area has little historical significance, I have taken into consideration the guidance that extensions should be seamless to the form and scale of the original building or clearly subservient to it.
7. The proposed extension would not be seamless or flush with the original building as it would be set down and set back at the first floor level. However, this would assist in reducing the massing of the resultant building, would ensure that the extension appeared subservient to the host dwelling and would allow its original form to be read. Whilst the garage would project slightly further forward of the front elevation it would align with the bay window and would not therefore appear unduly prominent. The continuation of the canopy would ensure that the design of the extension would integrate with that of the host dwelling. Consequently, the extension would not be obtrusive but would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling.
8. Although set at a higher level than the road, and visible when entering the head of the cul-de-sac, the proposal would appear subordinate to the host property and would not be a prominent intrusion in the street scene. Moreover, from all I have seen this design approach has been adopted elsewhere on the estate and as such would not be unusual.
9. For these reasons, the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the host building or the surrounding area. As such, the proposed extension would therefore accord with Policy CSP1 of the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Strategy (2009) and Policy R23 of the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design SPD which together seek to ensure that development is of high quality and contributes positively to an areas identity.
10. My attention has also been drawn to Policy R13 of the SPD but as this refers to residential density and is not directly relevant to this appeal.

Other Matters

11. Although the Council did not object to the proposal in terms of its impact on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, I have taken into account the comments from the neighbours at 22 Finchdean Close regarding the impact of the proposal on outlook and light within the living room. Due to the orientation of the dwellings, although part of the proposed extension would be seen from the lounge window of No 22, it would not cause undue overshadowing or reduction in light. Accordingly, from all I have seen and read, the living

conditions of the neighbouring occupiers would not be significantly affected by the proposal.

12. In terms of the concern over parking, there is no evidence that the garage and driveway would not provide adequate parking space for the occupiers of the dwelling. I note that no objections have been raised by the Council in that regard. Issues relating to access during the construction period is a private matter between neighbours and therefore not relevant to the appeal. There is no evidence that the proposal will result in a loss of value and in any event this is not a planning matter.

Conditions

13. In addition to the standard timescale condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty. A condition specifying the external materials is also necessary in the interests of safeguarding the character and appearance of the property and wider area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is allowed.

Hilary Senior

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is allowed.

Susan Ashworth

INSPECTOR