
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 July 2020 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPL MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/C4235/D/20/3247459

7 Rowood Avenue, North Reddish, Stockport SK5 6SQ

- 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 Walsh against the decision of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DC/074686, dated 1 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 22 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'rear and side single storey extension, rear and side double storey extension and proposed front porch'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

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.

Procedural Matter

3. The description of development is taken from the application form, which is also used in the Council's decision notice and the appeal form. However, based on the information before me, it is clear that a rear dormer is also included within the proposed development. The Council considered the proposed rear dormer and so shall I.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - (i) The character and appearance of No 7 Rowood Avenue and the wider area, and
 - (ii) The living conditions of occupiers at No 5 Rowood Avenue, with particular regard to outlook and light.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling, located at the head of a cul-de-sac within a residential area. It is of similar character and appearance to other properties within the locality. Permission is sought for a

hip to gable roof extension, two storey side extension, single and two storey rear extension and dormer to the rear.

Character and appearance

6. The detailed guidance within the Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings, Supplementary Planning Document (February 2011) (the SPD) notes that hip to gable roof extensions are unlikely to be appropriate in areas where hipped roofs predominate due to the adverse impact on the street scene.
7. Properties within the immediate locality are semi-detached with hipped roofs, thus creating a regular rhythm and symmetrical appearance in the street scene. The proposed hip to gable extension would introduce additional massing to the roof which would significantly alter the form of the appeal dwelling and disrupt the distinct symmetry with the attached dwelling. This alteration would be readily apparent in the street scene due to the appeal dwelling's prominent location at the head of the cul-de-sac. The proposed two-storey side extension would also have a gable roof thus further exacerbating the design which would be at odds in the locality.
8. The proposed rear dormer would have a flat roof design, with a matching ridge height to the host dwelling and would span much of the full width of the rear roof plane. It would be a box-like and top-heavy structure that would be an overly dominant addition to the dwelling. The proposed two-storey rear extension would also have a flat roof design. It would therefore fail to respect or complement the characteristics and roof form of the host dwelling and would read as an incongruous addition.
9. It is acknowledged that the dormer and two-storey flat roof extensions are positioned to the rear of the appeal dwelling and there are no properties to the rear due to a railway. Whilst views of these elements of the proposed development would therefore be limited from the public realm, they would nevertheless fail to respect the original character of the host dwelling due to their scale and massing.
10. My attention has been drawn to an example of a gable roof extension and rear dormer at No 3 Barry Road. I observed this property during my site visit. Whilst I do not have the full details of that development, I noted that No 3 and the attached dwelling have undergone similar extensions and therefore continue to be a symmetrical pair of semi-detached dwellings. Additionally, the surrounding area comprises a mix of property types and roof forms. Therefore, given the varying context I do not consider that example to be directly comparable to this appeal and have dealt with the proposed development on the basis of the circumstances of this particular site.
11. Consequently, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area. It is therefore contrary to policy CDH1.8 of the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review (May 2006) (the UDPR) and policy SIE-1 of the Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, Local Development Framework, Core Strategy DPD (March 2011) (the CS) which collectively seek to ensure extensions relate well to the existing building and characteristics of the area. It would also conflict with the requirements of the SPD as noted above.

Living conditions

12. The proposed part two-storey part single-storey rear extension would project into the garden along the shared side boundary with No 5 Rowood Avenue. It would be within close proximity to a rear window serving a habitable room of No 5. The SPD advises that to avoid a loss of outlook, overshadowing or an overbearing impact to neighbouring properties, a single storey rear extension should project no further than 3 metres along a party boundary close to a habitable room window of a neighbouring property. At the point of 3 metres it may be possible to introduce a 45 degree splay to allow a slightly greater projection. It also advises that a two-storey rear extension should be avoided where they would be sited adjacent to a party boundary.
13. The proposed single storey rear extension would project beyond the recommended measurement of the SPD and would encroach on the 45 degree angle. The shared boundary between the appeal dwelling and No 5 is low, thus providing a sense of openness at the rear. This proposal would introduce a solid mass of considerable length along the shared boundary and, due to the combined depth and scale of the single and two storey extension, would result in an uninviting outlook and overbearing sense of enclosure for occupiers of No 5.
14. There is an existing single-storey outrigger at No 5 which is set off the shared boundary with the appeal site. Therefore, combined with the outrigger, the introduction of the proposed rear extension would overshadow the window and would create a tunnel effect thus resulting in a significant loss of daylight reaching the room.
15. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which replaced now deleted Planning Policy Statements, including PPS7 which has been referred to me, indicates that SPDs provide a framework for creating distinctive places with a consistent and high quality standard of design. It also requires a high standard of amenity for existing users. For the reasons noted above I have found this proposal would be an overbearing addition and would reduce the amount of light reaching the neighbouring habitable room. It would thereby fail to meet the requirements of the Framework.
16. Therefore, this proposal would harm the living conditions of occupiers at No 5 Rowood Avenue and would thereby conflict with policy CDH1.8 of the UDPR and policy SIE-1 of the CS which seek to ensure developments maintain satisfactory levels of amenity for existing neighbouring residents and do not cause damage to the amenity of neighbouring properties by reason of overshadowing or visual intrusion. It would also conflict with the advice of the SPD as set out above.

Other Matter

17. I acknowledge the correspondence between the appellant and the Council, particularly regarding the projection of the two-storey rear extension. However, this is a matter for the Council and I have determined the appeal strictly on its merits and have found it would cause harm as identified above.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

Hannah Ellison

Appeal Planning Officer

Inspector's Decision

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

Susan Ashworth

INSPECTOR