
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 August 2020

by Andrew McGlone BSc MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/A0665/W/20/3252044

8 Old Chester Road, Helsby WA6 9JY

- 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 Brian Griffiths against the decision of Cheshire West & Chester Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00710/FUL, dated 20 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is a new 3 bed detached dwelling (amendments to 12/03879/FUL).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises of the front garden of the detached two-storey dwelling of 8 Old Chester Road. The road bends around the front of the site which slopes gradually upwards towards No 8. The road is mainly characterised by detached dwellings though an allotment faces the site and there is a cemetery to the north-east. Dwellings in the area are of a varied scale, mass and type, whilst there is also a variable building line owing to the orientation of the road and roads extending off Old Chester Road.
4. Planning permissions¹ have been granted on the site by the Council for a dwelling in 2013 and 2016, but both are no longer extant. I understand that a fresh planning application² similar to the approved schemes is before the Council. This is a matter for their consideration alone and in any event the appeal scheme proposes a different design which I have considered it on its own planning merits. Nonetheless, development proposals within the defined settlement boundary of Helsby are supported subject to compliance with other development plan policies.
5. The proposed dwelling looks to follow the siting and building line of dwellings to the north of the site. Moreover, the eaves and ridge line of the proposed

¹ Council Refs: 12/03879/FUL and 16/00523/FUL

² Council Ref: 20/01537/FUL

dwelling has been designed to respond to and reflect those of neighbouring dwellings. However, the proposal would extend further forward than 2 and 4 Old Chester Road which would, in tandem with the dwelling's proposed siting forward of No 8 together with its width, scale and massing, lead to a dominant and discordant form of development. The relationship with Nos 2 and 4 would be particularly uncomfortable given that they are narrower and well-proportioned dwellings. The three-storey design proposed with a balcony at first floor would only emphasise the unsympathetic form of development that would result having regard to the layout, scale, height, massing, appearance of development immediately next to the site.

6. The proposed use of red brick and render would be acceptable in my view given the variety found locally. However, the amount of glazing proposed in the dwelling's front elevation would not be an appropriate high-quality design response that respects local character given the traditional style and size of windows in neighbouring dwellings.
7. The proposal's design includes hipped roofs, side dormer windows and a larger rear garden. Even so, these aspects of the appeal scheme along with the removal of the chimney and the promise of extra planting do not change my view that the proposal would not be of a high-quality design that respects the character and appearance of the area.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would conflict with Policy ENV 6 of the Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies, Policy DM 3 of the Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies and Policy H5 of the Helsby Neighbourhood Plan. Jointly these seek, among other things, development to achieve a high standard of design that respects the character and appearance of the area, with regards to scale, height, massing, appearance and materials.

Conclusion

9. Although the site is well located in respect of facilities and services and the proposal would not result in harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupants or lead to highway safety issues, these matters, together with the provision of a single dwelling do not alter or outweigh the harm that I have identified in respect of the development plan.
10. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew McGlone

INSPECTOR