
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 March 2021

by D Hartley BA (Hons) MTP MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/W/20/3264875

19 Meadowside Lane, Scholar Green ST7 3LE

- 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 N Hamand against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 20/3139C, dated 21 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 27 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is a new dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is triangular in shape and is positioned on the corner of Mount Pleasant Road with Meadowside Lane. The site is essentially open and green and is adjacent to a pair of semi-detached properties. The plot is sloping and due to the change in levels the site is prominent when entering the settlement. Whilst there is a variety of house styles in the area, the properties are in the main positioned within spacious plots. The existing site contributes positively to the overall sense of open and green space afforded to the cluster of properties in this part of the settlement.
4. There is some history to the appeal site including a proposal for a dwelling on the site which was dismissed at appeal last year¹. I have been provided with a copy of the appeal decision and the associated layout plan and have taken these into account as material planning considerations.
5. The proposed dwelling relating to the aforementioned appeal was larger than is proposed as part of this appeal. It was 'L' shaped and had a footprint of about 62.0 square metres compared to the appeal dwelling which would be approximately 49.3 square metres, had its principal windows facing Meadowside Lane, included most of the external outside amenity space to the side/front and was tight up to the northern boundary.

¹ Appeal Ref APP/R0660/W/19/3237350 dated 15 January 2020.

6. The appellant has attempted to address some of the failings of the previous proposal. I acknowledge that the appeal dwelling would follow the building line of the adjacent dwellings on this part of Mount Pleasant Road and that the principal elevation would face this main road, thereby reflecting the position of the principal elevations of the adjacent dwellings. In these respects, the proposal has addressed some of the concerns raised by the previous Inspector.
7. The dwelling would have a rectangular footprint and would include the provision of a private and contained rear garden with a deck. The provision of a more private/contained garden is clearly an improvement relative to the previous proposal for the site. However, this garden would be irregular in shape and would not be reflective of the depth of rear garden space that is prevalent in the immediate area. In this respect, I consider that the dwelling would appear tight and cramped in this area and that it would fail to suitably reflect the otherwise sense of spaciousness that exists around properties on this side of Mount Pleasant Road and in Meadowside Lane.
8. In addition, the proposed south facing elevation would be in very close proximity to the angled boundary to the site and this would seek to further emphasise the cramped nature of the proposal. Relative to the dwelling dismissed at appeal, the proposed dwelling would be further away from the northern boundary and, in that sense, there would be improved space between it and the neighbouring property. However, the dwelling would appear squeezed and cramped in respect of other boundaries and the appellant's evidence relating to the proposal's density / plot development ratio does not alter these concerns.
9. The above identified harm would be compounded by the fact that the single dwelling would have a very long frontage. While others may have suggested the need for a relatively wide frontage elevation, this does not mean that any frontage elevation would be acceptable in the context of the area. I have considered this appeal on its individual planning merits and my judgement is that the development would be at odds with the narrower or sub-divided frontages associated with the adjacent semi-detached dwellings and the properties immediately opposite the site on Mount Pleasant Road (i.e. Nos 5, 7, 9 & 9a). Furthermore, the side elevations of the dwelling would depart significantly from the depth of side elevations relating to most of the other properties in the immediate locality: indeed, they would appear very narrow and out of place in comparison.
10. I note the appellant's comment that not all of the side elevations to properties in the area have exactly the same depth. However, on my site visit I was able to see that there was a general consistency and that the differences were not significant. For those travelling on foot, or by motor vehicle, in a northerly direction on Mount Pleasant Road, where the side elevations of No 9 Mount Pleasant Road, No 19 Meadowside Lane and No 1 The Break would be seen within the context of the appeal dwelling, the uncharacteristically narrow side elevation would be conspicuous and would look materially out of place. In addition, the narrow side elevation would also be apparent when viewed from Meadowside Lane where the appeal dwelling would be seen against the much wider side elevation of the adjacent No 10 Mount Pleasant Road.
11. I accept that this amended proposal has addressed some of the failings of the previous proposal, particularly in respect of privacy matters. While the

dwelling would be slightly smaller in footprint terms than the dwelling which was the subject of the dismissed appeal, in altering the design and layout of the proposal it has not resulted in a good design solution. Furthermore, the building would fail to assimilate well into the surrounding built environment and in parts would negatively contribute to the generally spacious character of the area.

12. For the reasons outlined above, the proposal would not represent good design and would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, I find that the development would not accord with the design, character, appearance and sustainability requirements of saved Policy PS6 of the Congleton Local Plan First Review 2005, policies SE1, SD1 and SD2 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy 2017 and Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework. I conclude that the proposal would not accord with the development plan for the area when considered as a whole and there are no material planning considerations which would outweigh the identified conflict with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

D Hartley

INSPECTOR