



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 13 July 2021

by R Hitchcock BSc(Hons) DipCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/A0665/D/21/3271994

26 St. Peters Way, Mickle Trafford, Chester CH2 4EJ

- 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 Mrs Helen Mitchell against the decision of Cheshire West and Chester Council.
 - The application Ref 20/02860/FUL, dated 20 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is rendering of first floor (Retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council has previously granted planning permission for a two-storey side extension at the appeal site. According to the Council, this was approved with a requirement to be finished in matching facing brickwork. At the time of my site inspection a development similar to that shown on the appeal plans was substantially complete with the upper elevations finished in white render. Some deviations were apparent between the development and the submitted plans. For the avoidance of doubt, this appeal is determined on the basis of the plans as submitted with the planning application.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the building and its locality.

Reasons

4. St Peters Way is a spinal road through a planned residential estate of modern detached bungalows and 2-storey dwellings. The road and majority of cul-de-sac offshoots include a limited number of house types at various orientations to the frontages. The estate includes common design attributes, building scaling and a limited palette of materials. These give rise to a distinctive local character and a positive sense of place.
5. A proportion of the 2-storey dwellings and bungalow gables have split elevational treatments. Of these, some feature hanging pantiles whilst others are clad with timber boarding, including the original part of No26. Some have been re-clad with consequential variations in colour finishes; however, the majority reflect the darker hue of the original treatments.
6. The white rendered extension introduces a finish that is rare within the locality and did not form part of the original palette of materials. Although there are

- examples of some small-scale feature panels of render which have emerged on the estate, these are in the minority. Furthermore, they do not have the significant prominence of the first-floor element of the extension.
7. The building lies on the inside of a bend along the main road through the estate. The extension's position is such that it lies closer to the footway than the main part of the dwelling or neighbouring development. This makes it highly prominent in the streetscene.
 8. On approach from the north, the large combined area of the new gable and the side elevation of the rear return are seen in conjunction with the rear elevation of the extension. This gives rise to views of a significant area of bright render. The extension's position is also prominent in views from the southern approach. Here the smooth render is seen to contrast sharply with the darker textured cladding on the upper part of the original building.
 9. The introduction of the render against the more harmonious mix of bricks, tiles and cladding causes the extension to draw the eye and stand out as an inconsistent and uncharacteristic element of the building and the streetscape. Although some views are partially filtered by street trees, these have a limited mitigating effect which would be reduced when leaves have fallen.
 10. In support of the proposal, the appellant refers me to a proposal for the replacement of tile cladding with render. This was allowed on appeal in a settlement elsewhere. In that instance, the relevant estate featured dwellings with large areas of white cladding. In addition, the building was described as having limited visibility in its streetscene. It is therefore distinct from the case before me, a case I have considered on its own merits.
 11. I am also directed to a later development of houses on Wayside Court which is in close proximity to the appeal site. This features a cul-de-sac of semi-detached and detached dwellings with a shallower band of render to the upper first floor elevations. However, that group is designed to establish a separate sense of place which has its own distinctiveness. The proposal is not read in the same context of that enclave of houses, nor other examples of dispersed rendered properties elsewhere.
 12. For the above reasons, I find that the external finish to the upper part of the extension contrasts significantly with the common palette of materials on the estate. It gives rise to a prominent and inharmonious form of development that relates poorly to the existing building and the consistency of the surrounding development. The development therefore conflicts with Policy ENV6 of the Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies, and Policies DM3 and DM21 of the Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies, as they seek a high standard of design that respects the character and appearance of existing buildings and contributes and responds positively to the distinctiveness, visual amenity and character of the area.

Other Matters

13. I acknowledge that the use of render may assist with energy conservation associated with the development. I also note that the extension is intended to meet the needs of a growing family. However, those aspects of the development are not necessarily exclusively dependent on the use of the

rendered finish sought. I am not therefore convinced that these matters outweigh the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

14. The development would be contrary to the adopted development plan and there are no material considerations indicating a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. For those reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Hitchcock

INSPECTOR