
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 February 2022

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 MARCH 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C4235/D/21/3285873

66B Hulme Hall Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle SK8 6JZ

- 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 Diyar Askander against the decision of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DC/079413, dated 18 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 25 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is side and front two storey extensions and remodelling, to existing two storey detached dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal on the character and appearance of the Swann Lane/Hulme Hall Road/Hill Top Avenue Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. No.66B Hulme Hall Road (No.66B) is a detached house on a corner plot fronting Hulme Hall Road with a side elevation to Claremont Road. It is within the Swann Lane/Hulme Hall Road/Hill Top Avenue Conservation Area (CA). In accordance with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, I am required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the CA. Further, paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
4. The Council's *Hulme Hall/Swann Lane/Hill Top Avenue Conservation Area Character Area Appraisal, 2005 (updated 2011)* explains that the special character and significance of the CA is defined, in part, by its diverse range of buildings, its spacious quality, with buildings set in generous plots with space between adjacent buildings, and abundant tree and hedge planting allowing glimpses of buildings.
5. No.66B itself is a two-storey brick finished house, with a gable ended pitched roof. It has a projecting integral garage with a large dormer window in the

roofslope. It is fairly typical of the character and appearance of this part of the CA being a large house, set on a spacious plot well back from the Hulme Hall Road frontage, with mature trees and landscaping on its boundaries. Architecturally the house is of its time, but I concur with the Council's Conservation and Heritage Team that it is of limited architectural or historic interest. The house shares a driveway with its neighbour at No.66A Hulme Hall Road (No.66A) which is a mirror image of No.66B. Individually, and as a composition, I found the houses make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the CA.

6. To the front, the proposed two-storey extension to No.66B would have two gables facing Hulme Hall Road. The first extends over the full width of the existing integral garage, broadly aligning with the building line of No.66A's front elevation, to provide a bedroom with Juliette balcony at first-floor. The second gable would be constructed forward of the existing front elevation by around 4.6m, and around 0.6m from the garage, across the full width of the original part of the house. The ridge of this gable would be around the height of the ridge of the original roof with large vertical glazing panels at ground and first-floor to a large double-height entrance hall and gallery.
7. Given my comments above regarding the architectural and historic interest of the house, I am not persuaded that the proposed front elevation, as suggested by the Council, needs to be such that the C20th form of the original house can be read and understood. However, because of the width of the proposed gables, both individually and as a dual gable, they would appear poorly proportioned relative to the front elevation entirely overwhelming the host house. This is exacerbated by the depth of the entrance hall projection towards Hulme Hall Road which increases the bulk and massing of the gable. The effect would be that the house would become very prominent, and dominant, in the street scene particularly when viewed from close to the corner of Claremont Road when travelling north.
8. I saw on my site visit the former Grammar School site that is being developed for housing close to No.66B on the opposite side of Hulme Hall Road. I accept that this has successfully introduced contemporary fenestration detailing in the CA, such as dark grey window surrounds and feature stone lintels, and that it incorporates large gables facing the road. In contrast, however, to the appeal proposals I found the gables to be refined in their proportions, with vertical emphasis and substantively less bulk and massing. I do not therefore find this scheme comparable to the appeal proposal before me, nor does it serve to justify its design, particularly in terms of the composition of the gables.
9. No.66B is currently set well off its side boundary by around 7.4m, its flank elevation aligning with the front elevation of 2A Claremont Road. It is proposed to extend at ground floor to the side to accommodate a living/dining area, projecting around 3.6m towards Claremont Road. The first-floor would be set back, around 7m from the Claremont Road frontage, with a large roof terrace over the ground-floor element of the extension with access from the master bedroom suite. Whilst the ground and first-floor set backs from Claremont Road would still be reasonably generous, the height of the flat roofed ground floor extension would be around 3.6m. Because of this height, and the depth of the extension parallel to Claremont Road (around 11.9m), the ground-floor would be very prominent from Claremont Road despite the landscaping on this

boundary. It would further increase the bulk and massing of the house on the Claremont Road and Hulme Hall Road corner and within the street scene.

10. I recognise that the existing trees, shrubs and hedges on the boundaries of the site, important to the character and appearance of the CA, would be retained as part of the proposal. However, in addition to significantly increasing the prominence of the house, the proposed extension would also increase its overall size by around 50%. Because of the resulting size of the footprint, No.66B would appear disproportionately large relative to the size of its plot. Despite retaining the space between No.66B and its neighbour at No.66A, the spacious quality of the plot, characteristic of the CA, would be largely lost.
11. I understand from the emails before me that efforts were made by the appellant to find a mutually acceptable design solution for extending No.66B, through discussion with the Council. However, despite the amendments made during the application process which reduce the footprint and floor area of the extension, I nonetheless find that the proposals, for the reasons given above, would cause harm to the character and appearance of the CA. The scale of the development (in the context of the CA as a whole) and the localised nature of the impact means that I find the harm to the CA would be less than substantial. Paragraph 202 of the Framework advises that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this case, no public benefits have been presented to outweigh the harm I have found.
12. As such, there would be a conflict with Policy SIE-3 of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD (March 2011) because the proposal would not maintain or enhance the locally distinctive sense of place or character, nor would it preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. It would further conflict with saved Policy HC1.3 of the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review (2006) in so far as it requires development in a CA to be sympathetic in scale, siting and design to the site and surroundings.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR