



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 March 2022

by Gareth Wildgoose BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/A0665/D/22/3291722

4 Park Lane, Hartford, Northwich CW8 1PZ

- 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 Richard Duncan against the decision of Cheshire West and Chester Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01850/FUL, dated 28 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 3 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is 'improvements to front elevation / street scene of the property by partial rendering (smooth), with retained 3No. brick courses to base - Render to be painted off white, partial timber feather edge cladding to the central recessed façade - treated / natural, retention of remaining brick elevations - as existing'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for improvements to front elevation / street scene of the property by partial rendering (smooth) with retained 3No. brick courses to base - render to be painted off white, partial timber feather edge cladding to the central recessed façade - treated / natural and retention of remaining brick elevations - as existing, at 4 Park Lane, Hartford, Northwich, CW8 1PZ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/01850/FUL, dated 28 April 2021, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans insofar as they relate specifically to the partial rendering of the front elevation and addition of partial timber feather edge cladding to the central recessed façade:
Location Plan - TQRQM21109113303653 dated 19 April 2021;
Drawing A - Existing Elevation v2 dated May 2021;
Drawing B - Proposed Elevation v2 dated May 2021;
Drawing C - Block Plan v2 dated May 2021.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development provided by the application form and the submitted plans include details of a pitched roof open porch over the garage and front door, which is denoted as to be erected under permitted development rights but was not in place at the time of my visit. The description of development has been amended by subsequent documents to include only the elements for which planning permission is sought, thereby omitting the pitched roof open porch. The Council, thereby, made its decision specifically in relation

to addition of render and timber cladding to the front elevation for which planning permission is sought, and omitted detailed assessment of the pitched roof open porch in the absence of floor plans and side elevations. Accordingly, I have adopted the description of development provided by the appeal form which I consider to be an accurate explanation of the proposal for which planning permission is sought and have determined the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue of the appeal is the effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property comprises a two-storey semi-detached dwelling located on Park Lane, close to the junction with Riddings Lane. It is one half of a pair of properties with similar brick facades and a distinctive hipped roof design. The semi-detached pair both appear to have been previously extended at first floor to the side and have existing flat roof canopies over the front entrances and integral garages. As a result, there is a degree of symmetry in terms of scale, form and materials, albeit some noticeable differences in fenestration and eaves lines of the respective roofs. The front elevations of immediately surrounding properties on the same side of Park Lane also have predominantly brickwork finishes, albeit as part of significantly different architectural styles and form. The properties immediately opposite and the wider character of the established residential area are even more varied with an eclectic mix of predominantly detached properties and bungalows with significant differences in architectural style, form, materials and some variations in building lines evident along both sides of Park Lane.
5. The visible presence of a wide range of different properties in the surrounding street scene, indicates that its character is not reliant upon a specific harmony or unified appearance of individual buildings or groups of properties. The varied architectural styles, building heights, materials, detailing and proportions of properties in the surrounding area rather provide an opportunity for appropriate change where it would not appear overly prominent, dominant or undermine local distinctiveness or sense of place. In that respect, the proposed addition of the contrast of off-white painted render to sections of the front elevation and timber cladding to the recessed section would result in a modernised front elevation of No. 4. The consequential appearance would appropriately emphasise and enhance the visual interest of the existing composition of the front elevation of the host property. In doing so, it would depart from the more subdued appearance of the front elevation of No. 2 and thereby, reduce the symmetry of the existing pair. However, when taking account of the varied character of its surroundings beyond, the proposal would not appear stark, intrusive or discordant in its particular context. On the contrary, it would assimilate appropriately with the interspersed nature of the mixed and contrasting palettes of materials of detached properties that are characteristic of the area and which include use of render and timber.
6. It follows from the above that I conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area. I, therefore, find that the proposal would not conflict with Policy ENV6 of the Cheshire West & Chester Council Local Plan Part One: Strategic Policies, Policies DM3 and DM21 of the Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Plan

Part Two: Land Allocations and Detailed Policies and Policy BELD1 of Hartford's Neighbourhood Plan 2010 - 2030. The aforementioned policies, when taken together and amongst other things, seek a high standard of design that respects the character and appearance, context and protects the visual amenity of the original property, surrounding properties and the wider setting, whilst achieving a sense of place and respecting and where possible enhancing local distinctiveness. The proposal accords with those requirements that are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which, amongst other things, requires developments to add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

Conditions

7. The Council recommended two conditions be imposed should I be minded to allow the appeal, which I have considered against the tests of the Framework and advice provided in Planning Practice Guidance. To provide certainty of the permission granted, it is necessary to impose conditions setting out the standard time limit and to specify the approved plans. In terms of the latter condition, when taking account of the pitched roof open porch on the submitted plans for which planning permission is not sought, I have included specific wording to provide certainty of the external alterations for which planning permission granted. I am satisfied that the submitted plans include sufficient details of the proposed materials that I have found to be acceptable.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted subject to the conditions set out previously.

Gareth Wildgoose

INSPECTOR