

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 May 2022

by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th June 2022

Appeal Reference: APP/A0665/D/22/3290413

3 Homewood Crescent, Hartford, Northwich CW8 1NH

- 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 E Stone against the decision of Cheshire West and Chester Council.
 - The application (reference 21/02617/FUL, dated 17 June 2021) was refused by notice dated 22 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as a “two storey side extension and single storey rear extension”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a “two storey side extension and single storey rear extension”, at number 3 Homewood Crescent, Hartford, Northwich CW8 1NH, in accordance with the terms of the application (reference 21/02617/FUL, dated 17 June 2021), subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule of Conditions.

Main issue

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located in a predominantly residential area of Hartford, which merges with Northwich, to the north-east. The houses are generally traditional in style, with pitched roofs, and are laid out in a conventional manner, with small front gardens and larger back gardens.
4. Homewood Crescent itself is a short cul-de-sac, curving round sharply to a turning head at the end of the road. The houses along the main frontages are generally detached properties, linked by their garages, with semi-detached houses at the end of the road, creating a closely built up streetscene.
5. The appeal site lies at the bend in the road, with a small front garden and a side boundary that is marked by a fence and mature hedge which largely screens the back garden. The house is set back from both the front and side

boundaries, with a small garden area between the side elevation of the house and the boundary. It is, however, constructed close up to the boundary with its neighbour at number 1 Homewood Crescent, to which it is effectively linked on the front elevation by their respective garages. The building is mainly constructed of brickwork, with decorative panels on the front and side elevations and a tiled roof.

6. The appeal proposal would involve the construction of a two-storey side extension to the building, between the existing building and its side boundary on the street frontage, together with a separate single-storey extension at the rear, adjacent to the opposite boundary. The project would create a new dining room, study and other space on the ground floor, with a new main bedroom and en-suite shower room on the first floor.
7. The 'National Planning Policy Framework' emphasises the aim of "achieving well designed places" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 12), while making effective use of land and encouraging economic activity. It is aimed at achieving good design standards generally, by adding to the overall quality of the area and being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history (while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change).
8. An emphasis on the importance of good design is also to be found in the Development Plan, notably at Policy ENV6 of the Cheshire West and Chester 'Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies' and Policies DM3 and DM21 of the Cheshire West and Chester 'Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies'. Both Parts of the Local Plan are intended to promote good design generally and to reflect local character (among other things). Policy DM21 of the 'Local Plan (Part Two)' has a particular relevance to "development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse".
9. The Council's 'Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and Domestic Outbuildings' (dated January 2021) is also relevant, though it does not have the same force as Policies in the Development Plan.
10. The proposed two-storey side extension would project forward of the front elevations of other properties along Homewood Crescent, beyond the bend in the road and behind number 3. It would create a firmer feature in the streetscene at the bend and emphasise the change of direction but it would be inset from the footpath, leaving a degree of openness at the site of the property. In the light of this, it would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the area since it would be in harmony with the street pattern generally and would not intrude to such an extent as to create an unduly cramped streetscene.
11. I am not persuaded that a denser street frontage would inevitably be unacceptable in the context of national and local planning policies and I have concluded that the scheme would not conflict with the Development Plan, in principle.
12. I am, however, concerned about the proposed roof design. The new roof would have an excessively shallow pitch by comparison with the main roof and it appears to have been drawn to mimic the elevation of the smaller existing roof over a projection on the opposite side of the house, on elevation, without

- considering the design in three dimensions. The proposed new roof would be ungainly and awkward in relation to the existing structure.
13. Nevertheless, the appellant has indicated that an alternative roof design could be incorporated into the scheme and I accept that this could be dealt with by the imposition of a condition, since it would amount to a simple amendment to the project, by the inclusion of the amended elevation drawing as an approved drawing.
 14. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is “sustainable” in planning terms, and the proposed extension would be a useful addition to the accommodation at number 3 Homewood Crescent. Indeed, the proposed extension at the rear of the existing house would have only a minimal impact on its surroundings and is not contentious. The contribution that the appeal scheme would make to the provision of residential accommodation in the locality, even though it would be limited, weighs in favour of the appeal. I have concluded that the project would not be in conflict with the Development Plan, in principle, and that the objection that has been raised to the roof pitch can be overcome by the imposition of a suitable condition.
 15. In short, I am persuaded that the appeal scheme would not have an unacceptable impact on the host building or its surroundings and that it can properly be permitted, subject to conditions. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.
 16. I have, however, also considered the need for conditions and, in imposing conditions, I have taken account of the conditions suggested by the Council in the usual way (without prejudice to their main arguments in the appeal), subject to modifications necessary, in my opinion, in the interests of clarity and enforceability. In particular, have concluded that conditions are necessary, to define the planning permission and to ensure that quality is maintained, taking account of the design issue that is identified elsewhere in this Decision.

Roger C. Shrimplin

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:
 - unnumbered Ordnance Survey Location Plan (1:1250);
 - unnumbered Ordnance Survey Block Plan (1:500);
 - drawing number 73/21/1 (existing plans and elevations);
 - drawing number 73/21/2 (proposed plans);
 - drawing number 73/21/4 (proposed elevations).
3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.