



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 July 2022

by A.Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C4235/D/22/3300519

4a The Crescent, Davenport, Stockport, Cheshire SK3 8SQ

- 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 and Mrs A Middleton against the decision of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DC/084542 dated 7 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 6 May 2022.
 - The application is for alterations to existing roof including addition of rear dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the impact of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the Egerton Road/Frewland Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached two storey house that is located within the Egerton Road/Frewland Conservation Area. The property has previously been extended and presents a Mock Tudor style timbered gable towards the property frontage that matches several such houses nearby.
4. The Egerton Road/Frewland Conservation Area was adopted in 1987 and updated and reviewed in 2005. The area encompasses speculative building plots laid out following the sale of the historic Davenport Estate and then sold as building plots for the emerging middle classes attracted to the area due to the railway station nearby. The conservation area is significant due to it being both a good example of Victorian and Edwardian early suburban development as well as exhibiting high quality architectural forms and details associated with the Arts and Crafts movement of the early twentieth century.
5. Such architectural details include the use of Neo Vernacular forms such as hipped and simple gabled roofs, pantile and brick materials and other articulation such as brick detailing, chimneys, attractive boundary treatments and robust and mature landscaping. Whilst some houses are large, equally there is an abundance of more modest homes whose simple scale, details and consistent materials considerably enhance and add to the character of the conservation area as a whole. Also notable are the simple, uncluttered roof

forms to be found throughout the area where the pantile shapes of hips and Mock Tudor gables predominate.

6. The appeal property occupies a plot fronting onto The Crescent and is one of four properties along this stretch of road. The property was originally a similar house design to that of number 2 The Crescent which sports a similar Mock Tudor Gable and two storey side element that is set back from the front elevation. Currently the appeal property has a two storey side extension to its front side elevation that obscures this original form from the front and sits flush to the front elevation. Despite this, this later addition can be observed through the visibility of the two tandem hipped roofs that are both visible from The Crescent and are both set down from the original ridgeline of the house thereby maintaining a level of subservience and chronology to the property.
7. The proposal before me seeks permission to unify the past extension through the removal of the side hipped roofs and associated valley roof forms. In their place would be constructed a second, slightly smaller, Mock Tudor gable to the front and the overall roof form would culminate in an area of flat roof. This flat roof would presumably be to retain something like the ridge height of the existing building but in so doing it would introduce an unusual feature into the area.
8. Supplementary to this, two new pitched roof dormer windows would be positioned to the rear roof slope and a small chimney would also be removed. These two dormers would be placed relatively high up within the roof with their ridgelines almost as high as that of the new flat roof. The overall result would be a highly symmetrical building with two flanking gables and a much more simplistic roof form.
9. In considering this appeal I am required by Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to give 'Special Attention' to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Egerton Road/Frewland Conservation Area. This is reflected within The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework), which illustrates the positive contribution that heritage assets can make to the creation of sustainable and economically viable communities.
10. Whilst I consider that the general materiality and design intention to be responsive to is in evidence within this proposal, there are several elements that would be at odds with the character and appearance of the conservation area as a whole. For instance, the loss of the existing double hipped roof form to the side of the property and its replacement with a larger, less articulated replacement, would fail to preserve or enhance the area and would introduce a flat roof element to the highest point that would be inconsistent with the overall aesthetic of the conservation area in both proportion, scale and design.
11. Further to this, the proposed rear dormer windows would be located in an unusually high part of the roof, nearly touching the perceived 'ridge'. Despite the dormer windows being traditional in design therefore, their positioning in this location would be at odds with the prevailing character of the area and they would not appear to sit comfortably within the proportions of the roof.
12. Further harm would be offered through the introduction of another gable feature within the streetscene here. Although this would slightly improve the appearance of the existing extension here, I consider that by changing the

property from a simple, asymmetrical house to one of much larger, symmetrical one the overall hierarchy of buildings within the conservation would be somewhat undermined.

13. Although not all these changes would necessarily be harmful, the overall changes to the roof form, location of the proposed dormers and the loss of the more articulated hips and valleys, would cause harm to the conservation area that would undermine the special architectural and historic character of the area.
14. In finding harm to the historic environment, I have considered the potential for public benefits that may be obtained through this scheme. Although I recognise the benefits of maintaining the property through the removal of a tricky valley gutter and the potential to offer a modest improvement in terms of the new gable feature, I do not consider that these benefits are extensive enough to outweigh the harm that would occur to the Conservation Area through the removal of such distinctive features and their replacement with a more cumbersome replacement.
15. As such I consider that the proposal before me does not conform to Policies SIE-1 'Quality Places', SIE-3 'Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment, and saved Policy HC1.3 'Special Control of Development in Conservation Areas of the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review, all of which encourage a high quality of design and a sensitive and contextual architectural response to the local area. The proposal also fails to take account of the special architectural and historic character of the area as described within the Conservation Area Appraisal.

Other Matters

16. I note the Appellant's concerns over the reference to a previous appeal decision¹ it is my understanding that this appeal was referred to due to the discussion over the principle of new dormer windows into an area where such features are lacking and not necessarily included to support this case per se. As such, although I note the previous Inspector's comments I have not given this previous decision any weight other than to note the Inspector's findings that I consider would echo any reasonable assessment of such a scheme within a such a sensitive location.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons above, taking into account all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

A Graham

INSPECTOR

¹ Appeal reference APP/C4235/A/08/2090216 102 Cheadle Old Road, Stockport