



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 February 2023

by Gareth Wildgoose BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/22/3311031

25 Irwin Drive, Handforth, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 3JS

- 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 Ian Deasha against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 22/2190M, dated 27 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 26 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing single storey side garage, and construction of new double storey side extension with attached single storey side extension. Loft conversion with rear dormer. Additional accommodation includes extended kitchen & utility, study, bedroom, and loft bedroom, with external covered garage/storage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Cheshire East Local Plan Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (LP-SADP) was adopted in December 2022 after the Council made its decision. The parties have had an opportunity during the appeal to comment on the relevant policies of the development plan, including those within the LP-SADP. Accordingly, the Council have confirmed that Policy DC2 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan has now been replaced by Policy HOU11 of the LP-SADP. I proceed to determine the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property consists of 25 Irwin Drive (No 25), a two-storey semi-detached house close to the junction of Irwin Drive with Marlow Drive. It has a hipped roof with distinctive bay windows to the upper floor and ground floor below which are typical features of pairs of semi-detached properties and detached properties nearby. As such, No 25 currently makes a positive contribution to a rhythm of predominantly semi-detached dwellings, interspersed with complementary detached properties displaying a broad consistency of front building lines, scale, massing, proportions and pattern of predominantly main hipped roof forms along Irwin Drive.
5. The location of No 25 adjacent to a semi-detached pair with a different alignment towards the corner (No 27 Irwin Drive and No 11 Marlow Drive) also

results in it forming an important part of the transition from the more evident variety of property styles, roof forms and extensions on the opposite side of Marlow Drive. In that regard, the positive contribution that No 25 offers to the more distinctive coherence and rhythm of properties along the Irwin Drive street scene prevails despite the presence of some two-storey and first floor side extensions nearby at No 27 and Nos. 24, 30 and 32 on the opposite side of the road. It is also not undermined by existing alterations to some hipped roofs such as the intermittent presence of side dormer additions, including at No 26 opposite, and a gable extension further along the street at No 11 that remain very much in the minority.

6. The proposal includes demolition of an existing side garage and replacement with a two-storey side extension and a further single storey side addition wrapping round at the front to incorporate a porch, together with a loft conversion with rear dormer. The design of the two-storey side extension would maintain the front building line at first floor level, continue the eaves and expand the width of ridge line of the main roof of No 25 and in doing so, would replace the original hipped roof form with an extended pitched roof with side gable end to provide additional living space within the roof. As a result, the extension would significantly extend the property frontage and would dominate the host dwelling, particularly by subsuming its modest hipped roof proportions resulting in a large, bulky and insubordinate addition which would also harmfully unbalance the semi-detached pair when viewed from Irwin Drive. The harm would not be overcome by the use of matching materials.
7. It follows from the above that the proposal would also result in an unacceptable erosion of the character of the Irwin Drive street scene in this location. The harm would be worsened by the cumulative effect of being viewed together with the existing large extension with side gable at No 27 which turns the corner and is only separated from the shared boundary by a detached side garage. When taking account of the potential for a relatively close relationship of large extensions with side gable designs, the existing transition to the rhythm of predominantly hipped roof properties in Irwin Drive would be harmfully disrupted by the combination of the prominent existing extension at No 27 and the development proposed.
8. In reaching the above findings, I have taken into account that there is a significant variation of property designs and styles visible in the wider area, particularly within Marlow Drive where conversions from hipped roofs to gable ends and prominent roof alterations within semi-detached pairs are more common features. Other examples of extensions and Council decisions to grant planning permission have also been drawn to my attention in Kingston Road, Windermere Road and Ullswater Road. However, these different forms of development in the wider area have little influence on the prevailing character of Irwin Drive and therefore, do not justify the harm identified where the host property is located. In that respect, the appellant has also referred specifically to a number of examples of existing extensions and permitted extensions in Irwin Drive, including large two-storey side extensions to Nos. 30 and 32 on the opposite side of the road whereby each similarly extend the frontage and continue the rooflines but retain a hipped roof form, and the side dormer roof addition at No 26. However, I observed that the characteristics of those properties, extensions and the relationship to their surroundings are different to the proposal before me and I consider that they do not offer precedent for or justify the harm identified.

9. Based on the evidence before me, the property already benefits from an extant planning permission for a two-storey side extension, single storey side extension and loft conversion with rear dormer (Council ref: 21/4844M) which reflects a fallback position that I afford considerable weight. However, the material difference in the proposal before me is the harmful inclusion of a gable ended roof on the two-storey extension rather than a hipped roof, which is the influential factor in the harm that I have identified on the character and appearance of the property, the semi-detached pair and the Irwin Drive street scene.
10. I conclude that the development would harm the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would, therefore, conflict with Policies SE1 and SD2 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy 2010 - 2030, adopted July 2017, and Policies GEN1 and HOU11 of the LP-SADP. The policies, when taken together and amongst other things, seek that the design of proposals make a positive contribution to their surroundings to ensure a sense of place and to an area's character, identity and creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness including scale, form, grouping, relationship to neighbouring properties and the street scene, and be subordinate to the existing dwelling. The policies are consistent with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework

Other Matters

11. The proposal would achieve adequate separation distances to neighbouring properties to preserve the living conditions of their occupiers in terms of outlook, light and privacy, including appropriate relationships to habitable windows of adjoining properties and neighbouring gardens. It would also maintain suitable access and parking arrangements for two off street parking spaces on an existing hardstanding area. However, the absence of concern in those respects is a neutral factor.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons above, having had regard to the development plan as a whole and to all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gareth Wildgoose

INSPECTOR