



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 February 2023

by Eleni Randle BSc (hons) MSc FRICS FAAV MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/D/22/3313038

1, Huntsham Close, Trafford, Altrincham, WA14 4UR

- 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 Ms Laura Dewsbery against the decision of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 107936/HHA/22 dated 25 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 24 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is erection of a single storey side and rear extension and part two/part single storey rear extension and other associated external alterations.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have utilised the Council's description of the development as per the decision notice as I feel it more concisely describes the development.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the impact of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the street scene and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a two-storey detached dwelling located on Huntsham Close which is a cul-de-sac accessed off Bickerton Road. The site is a corner plot on the junction of these two roads. The proposal seeks permission for a single storey side and part single part two storey rear extension which would result in the demolition of an existing conservatory. The Council's refusal reason is specific to the cumulative impact of the proposed single storey side and rear extension. The proposal has been found acceptable in all other regards and from the evidence before me I have no reason to conclude differently on other matters so, for the avoidance of doubt, the appeal will focus on the proposed single storey side and rear extension in the context of the refusal reason.
5. At the time of my site visit I noted that the building line is varied due to the general layout of the estate which, in the immediate area, curves around a central play area. Despite this most notably I find that there is a consistency in the fact that properties are, regardless of their orientation or number of storeys, spaced back from the pavement along Bickerton Road and Thurstlestone Road. This allows for landscaping and generally soft boundary treatments which create an overall well-spaced, verdant, setting which is a quality that forms the character for the area and positively enhances the visible qualities of

- the area in terms of its appearance. Given that the appeal site is on a corner plot such sites can be more sensitive to change due to their general prominence and greater visibility within the streetscene.
6. The proposed single storey side and rear extension would retain a negligible amount of space (0.2m) to the side elevation of the property and pavement on Bickerton Road and would extend, cumulatively, at depth of around 9.9m. Whilst the front set back is noted I find that this is of limited benefit to what would still present as a large, deep, brick wall immediately adjacent to the pavement which would be prominent in views within the streetscene.
 7. I also note that the appeal site currently benefits from a mature hedge along the Northern boundary with Bickerton Road which is attractive within the streetscene as can be seen from figures 11 and 12 of the appellant's submission. Whilst this could be replaced at any time by the householder, its proposed removal is currently intrinsically linked with the deliverability of the appeal proposal before me. The removal of what is currently an attractive, verdant, feature would be replaced with the side wall of the extension at a depth of almost ten metres. It would result in immediate change that would further exacerbate the proposal's visual impact within the streetscene.
 8. The host dwelling is already slightly forward, in terms of built form, than properties to the West and East due to the curve of the development pattern. As a result of this the proposal would bring built form notably forward of 2 Huntsham Close and 17 and 19 Bickerton Road and immediately contrast with the general set back, and space about, properties in the vicinity. Whilst the building line is not uniform, the key characteristic is the consistent setbacks from the pavement. To build up to the pavement by 0.2m would be unusual and would detract from the streetscene and spacious character. The proposal, immediately adjacent to the pavement, would present as cramped, visually intrusive and incongruous when considering the immediate setting within which the proposal would be viewed.
 9. I note within the appellant's original planning statement, and statement of case, that images of other properties are included. Each case must be considered on its own merits, the information as to these sites is limited to Google Street View images only which limits the weight I can apply to them within this appeal. No further details such as plans, or details of approvals of extensions, are provided. Despite this, and most notably, none of the examples appear to be of comparable cumulative depth combined with being immediately adjacent to the pavement as is the case with the proposal before me – some spacing is generally maintained. Notwithstanding this the examples submitted are not within the vicinity of the appeal site, which I observed during my site visit, which is the context within which this proposal is, and should be, assessed as outlined above as this is the context within which it would be viewed.
 10. Overall I find that the proposal would have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the area and the streetscene as a result of the depth of the proposed side extension, immediately adjacent to the pavement with essentially no space left to the side of the dwelling which would also require removal of a hedgerow within the streetscene. The proposal would be contrary to Trafford Local Plan: Core Strategy 2012 Policy L7 which requires proposals to enhance the street scene or character of an area by appropriately

addressing scale, hard and soft landscaping, make best use of opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area and be appropriate in its context.

11. The proposal would also be contrary to guidance within the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD4): A Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations 2012. The guidance is clear that care should be taken not to protrude past prominent building lines in the street scene, particularly on corner sites, so as not to appear out of character and that sufficient space should be left around the extended property to retain a degree of spaciousness within the property's curtilage that is in-keeping with the surrounding area.
12. The SPD also notes that existing features within the street should be complemented such as hedges and that extensions that appear too large in the street scene can reduce the sense of spaciousness and can harm the character of the area. Finally the guidance notes that extensions on corner properties, between the side of the house and the road, can appear unduly prominent and obtrusive particularly if these come forward of the general line of the fronts of neighbouring properties as is the case with this proposal. Whilst the SPD is guidance, and not policy, it is clear that non-compliance with the SPD in this case leads to material planning considerations and policy conflict as outlined.

Other Matters

13. I have considered the implication of conditions as suggested by the appellant with regard to landscaping. I am not convinced, based upon the evidence before me and my site visit, that landscaping could be satisfactorily achieved via condition within an area of 0.2 metres between the extension and the pavement that could mitigate the visual issues I have identified. Even if landscaping could be provided, to lessen the impact of the existing hedge being lost, it would not alter my finding that the proposal would build forward of the general building line and into space up to the back of the pavement which would be uncharacteristic for the area as outlined above.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons outlined above, and taking account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Eleni Randle

INSPECTOR