



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 July 2023

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/D/23/3318658

3 Elizabeth Road, Partington, Trafford M31 4PU

- 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 Victoria Smith against the decision of Trafford Council.
 - The application Ref 108324/HHA/22, dated 9 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is a first floor extension and single storey porch to the front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The properties in Elizabeth Road are arranged in semi-detached pairs on both sides of this cul-de-sac. They typically have a very similar two storey, hipped roofed form, and are laid out in a regular pattern, some with garages or car ports to the side, but with an even gap between their opposing first floor flank walls. These characteristics give the road a sense of rhythm and cohesion, and its own distinct character.
4. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document No 4: A Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations 2012 ('SPD') sets out, amongst other things, that gaps between buildings make an important contribution to an area's character, and that sufficient space should be retained within a plot so that it does not appear cramped or over-developed, and to ensure that the streetscene retains its prevailing residential pattern. In that regard, it advises at paragraph 3.1.2 that first floor additions should seek to retain a minimum one metre gap to the side boundary.
5. The proposed extension would be located above the host's garage, and would abut the boundary with 5 Elizabeth Road. In so doing, it would significantly close the gap between these properties at first floor level. As a result of that, whilst its front face would be recessed behind the host's front wall to help alleviate any potential terracing effect, it would disrupt the rhythm of the streetscene, and it would significantly harm one of the road's distinguishing characteristics.

6. I have no details of the approved extension at 29 Elizabeth Road, as referenced in the appellant's statement, but there is a first floor side extension at No 31. However, that is the only similar existing example that I observed on Elizabeth Road, and as that dwelling, and indeed its neighbour at No 29, is on a wedge-shaped plot, angled to the road at the head of the cul-de-sac, compared to this scheme, it is not seen in the context of a long straight row of similar dwellings.
7. Whilst the appellant cites other nearby examples of first floor extensions, these are on different roads, where they do not impact this cohesive streetscene, and according to the Council some may pre-date the adoption of the SPD, when the advice on extensions was significantly different.
8. For the above reasons, the scheme would conflict with Policy L7 of the Trafford Local Plan: Core Strategy 2012. Amongst other things, this requires development to be appropriate to its context and to enhance the streetscene or the character of the area, by addressing matters such as scale, massing and layout; and with the similar stance on good design in the National Planning Policy Framework. It would also conflict with the advice in the SPD.
9. I note that no neighbours objected to the scheme, and that the appellant is disappointed with the Council's stance and with its perceived failure to negotiate. However, I have dealt with the proposal before me on its planning merits.
10. In its favour, the scheme would provide more living space for the appellant and her family to address their cramped living conditions, and to enable family members to live with them during a cost-of-living crisis. In that regard the scheme finds some support from the development plan and the Framework.
11. Nevertheless, that benefit to the appellant and her family does not outweigh the significant and lasting harm that the scheme would cause. The scheme would conflict with the development plan when considered as a whole and, having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is therefore dismissed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR