



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 June 2023

by N Duff BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3425/D/23/3320259

30 St Michaels Mount, Stone ST15 8PZ

- 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 G Banks against the decision of Stafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/35243/HOU, dated 17 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 26 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is Demolition of existing garage. New single and two-storey side and rear extension with internal alterations.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. St Michael's Mount is a quiet residential cul-de-sac within a wider housing estate within Stone. It is characterised by mainly semi-detached and detached properties with a generally consistent pattern of development with gaps between buildings, particularly at first floor level. Several properties have side extensions in the immediate vicinity. The appeal property and its immediate neighbours are set at a higher level than the highway with sloping driveways.
4. No. 30 is a semi-detached property with a detached single garage set at the end of the driveway which would be removed to accommodate the proposed two storey side extension. The non-adjointing neighbouring property has been extended in the form of a two-storey side extension which has partially eroded the original gap between the properties.
5. The proposed extension to the side would see the loss of the gap between the properties with a very modest gap of 0.4m remaining. This gap would not provide the visual break between the properties that is consistent with other development in the immediate vicinity and is especially prominent due to the site levels. The proposal would see the loss of the glimpses between host dwelling and neighbouring property which adds to the character of the area. The loss of the gap particularly at first floor level would cause a terracing effect and would erode the dominant pattern of development, and as a result would have cramped appearance. This would have an unacceptably detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area.

6. The development would only be viewed from limited vantage points due to the position of the property in the cul-de-sac, nonetheless, the proposal would be visible from neighbouring properties and the immediate vicinity and would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area.
7. Examples of other two storey side extensions exist in the area, including the immediate non-adjoining neighbour and opposite the appeal site. However, a reasonable gap has been maintained at first floor level in local examples. Therefore, these have not had the same detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the area as would the development.
8. The proposed extension would be subservient to the main dwelling due to the lower ridge height and set back design. The extension would also be constructed in appropriate materials including those proposed for the fenestration. Whilst these elements may be acceptable for the dwelling itself, in the context in which it sits the erosion of the gap and cramped appearance would still exist. Accordingly, the subservient nature of the extension and appropriate materials do not overcome my concerns with the overall scheme and the harm it would cause to the character and appearance of the area.
9. The development would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with parts (g) and (h) of the Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough (2014) and Policy H2 of the Stone Neighbourhood Plan - made July 2021 which seek to ensure development has regard to local character and delivers a high quality of design. It also conflicts with the Council's Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)(2018) which states that side extensions will not be permitted where little or no space is left between adjacent buildings and that side accesses should be retained to ensure adequate visual separation between buildings.
10. Finally, it would conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework, which requires developments to respond to local patterns of development and be sympathetic to their surroundings.

Other Matters

11. The site has been referred to in the officer's report as being within the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), no other information has been provided in respect of this matter. However, as I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons, I do not need to consider this matter any further.
12. The extension would make efficient use of the land by extending a property on a sustainable brownfield site. The scale of development is such that this only attracts limited weight in favour of the development and does not outweigh the harm identified.
13. The proposed development would not result in harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, highway safety and is outside of any special character or conservation areas, the lack of harm is neutral and weighs neither for nor against the development.
14. The appellant has referred to their permitted development rights as a potential fall-back position. The parties have confirmed that a Prior Approval for a Proposed Larger Home Extension was granted at the property for a larger single storey rear extension. The appellant has put forward permitted development options in the form of CGIs in their evidence relating to a two-

storey rear extension and single storey side extension using two different designs. I have no certificates of lawfulness or evidence before me that these could be carried out as per the drawings and the appellant has stated that it would not be their preference. Nonetheless, even if there was a reasonable prospect of the permitted development extensions being carried out, the effect would be less harmful than the proposal before me as it would not result in the harm caused by closing the gap between the appeal property and neighbouring property at first floor level. Accordingly, this matter does not weigh in favour of the development.

Conclusion

15. The appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight that would indicate a decision otherwise. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

N Duff

INSPECTOR