



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 July 2023 by Andreea Spataru BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

Decision by S. Ashworth BA (Hons) BPL MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C4235/D/23/3318124

13 Whitelea Drive, Adswood, Stockport SK3 8PF

- 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 Munsur Suleman against the decision of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DC/087032, dated 8 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 8 February 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as "retrospective planning 2 storey side extension and dormer across the back".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary matters

3. The description of development as outlined above has been taken from the application form. The submitted plans also show a single storey rear extension, which has been included in the Council's assessment of the development. The appellant has used an amended description of development on the appeal form, which includes the rear extension element. I have followed the same approach, and considered all the retrospective elements of the development, including the rear extension.
4. Notwithstanding the retrospective nature of the appeal development, as I observed during my site visit, the size of the windows and their alignment for all 3 elements of the development do not match the fenestration details as shown on the submitted plans. Nevertheless, I have considered the appeal development as illustrated on the plans.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are the effect of the development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene; and
 - the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring dwelling No 15 Whitelea Drive, with particular regard to loss of outlook and light.
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Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and appearance

6. The appeal site relates to a semi-detached, two-storey, gabled roofed dwelling located on the western side of Whitelea Drive. There are similar semi-detached dwellings within the street scene, with small gaps between them. There is consistency in terms of building and roof line, as well as separation distances between the pairs of dwellings. The rhythm of the pairs of semi-detached dwellings, and their uniform appearance are positive features of the street scene.
7. The Council's planning officer report informs that permission has been previously granted for a two-storey side extension and a single storey rear extension. The Council's report outlines the differences between the approved scheme and the retrospective development, which include the lack of a set-down from the main ridge for the two-storey side extension.
8. The single storey part of the two-storey side extension extends across the full depth of the house and projects beyond the main front elevation. Its first floor is set back from the main elevation. The side extension fills in the full gap between the host dwelling and the southern side boundary of the appeal site, and it follows the ridge line of the host dwelling, thus the roof of the original dwelling has been extended across the full width of the plot. Due to a combination of a lack of set-down from the main ridge, and its siting next to the side boundary shared with neighbouring property No 11 Whitelea Drive, the two-storey side extension fails to appear subservient to the original house, reduces the space between dwellings and disrupts the rhythm of the pairs of semi-detached dwellings.
9. The flat roofed rear dormer has a box-like form and projects across the full width of the original roof of the dwelling and that of the side extension, without being set down from the main ridge, nor set up from the eaves level. Thus, it covers a significant proportion of the rear slope of the property, and it forms a top heavy, dominant feature that does not reflect the style or form of the original roof.
10. The dormer is clad in white UPVC. Such material does not reflect the materials used in the construction of the host dwelling and its extensive use adds to the discordant appearance of the structure to the rear of the property. I note that the appellant is willing to have the materials of the dormer changed to match those of the host dwelling. Whilst this would be an improvement, it would not be sufficient to make the dormer acceptable, as it would not mitigate the harmful effect of its massing, form, and siting in relation to the host dwelling.
11. Accordingly, given the secluded position of the dormer to the rear of the property, its harmful impact is limited to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. The siting, design and form of the two-storey side extension, affect both the character and appearance of the host dwelling and those of the street scene. Therefore, these extensions do not comply with the requirements of Policy SIE-1 of the Core Strategy DPD and Policy CDH1.8 of the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review, which state that, amongst other things, developments should complement the existing dwelling in terms of design,

scale and materials and should not adversely affect the character of the street scene.

Living conditions

12. One of the Council's reasons for refusal, as stated within their Decision Notice, refers to the effect of the two-storey side extension and the rear dormer on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring property/properties. However, the Council's assessment of the development, as outlined within the Planning Officer Report, found no issues in terms of residential amenity with these two elements of the proposal. From all I have seen and read, I agree that the two-storey side extension and the rear dormer do not have an adverse impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
13. Notwithstanding the above, the living conditions issue relates to the effect of the single storey rear extension of the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring property No 15 Whitelea Drive, with particular regard to loss of outlook and light.
14. The single storey rear extension extends across the full width of the original dwelling and that of the two-storey side extension and sits next to the side boundaries shared with neighbouring properties Nos 11 and 15 Whitelea Drive. The extension is located to the south of No 15 and projects approximately 3.6m along their common boundary.
15. Planning permission has been previously granted¹ for a single storey rear extension. That extension has a total projection along the side boundary shared with No 15 similar to the one proposed as part of the appeal development, but the corner of the approved extension, which has a depth of approximately 0.6m, is slightly set in from the boundary.
16. The Council referred to the requirements of the adopted Extensions and Alterations of Dwellings SPD 2011, which state that single storey rear extensions should project no further than 3m along a party boundary close to a habitable room window of a neighbouring property. It also says that at the point of 3m it may be possible to introduce a 45-degree splay to allow a slightly greater projection.
17. Neighbouring dwelling No 15 has two openings on the rear elevation. There is a large opening, which appears to serve a habitable room, close to the shared boundary with the appeal site. Given that the extension has a mono-pitch roof that decreases in height towards the rear of the extension, and that the large opening of the dwelling No 15 is set in from the shared boundary with the appeal property, the effect of the proposal on outlook and light within that property, and the garden, is likely to be limited.
18. Accordingly, given the site-specific circumstances of this case, including the planning history of the site, I consider that the single storey rear extension is acceptable in terms of its effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring property No 15 Whitelea Drive. Consequently, this part of the appeal development accords with the requirements of Policy SIE-1 of the Core Strategy DPD and Policy CDH1.8 of the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review, which state that, amongst other things, developments should not cause damage to the amenity of neighbouring properties. However, this does

¹ LPA ref: DC/066822

not negate the adverse impact that the other two elements of the proposal have, as outlined in the section above.

Other matter

19. I have taken into account the circumstances in which the extensions were built, as set out in the appellant's statement. However, it is incumbent on me to determine the appeal on its own merits and the matters raised do not indicate that planning permission should be granted.

Recommendation

20. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andreea Spataru

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

21. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's recommendation and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

S. Ashworth

INSPECTOR