



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 January 2024

by G D Jones BSc(Hons) DipTP DMS MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th January 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/23/3334707

39 Harpur Crescent, Alsager ST7 2SX

- 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 Jacqueline Brazendale against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 23/3130C, dated 16 August 2023, was refused by notice dated 15 September 2023.
 - The development proposed is a double storey side extension to form ground floor storage and utility area and first floor bedroom and shower room.
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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 appeal site is located in a section of Harpur Crescent which is principally characterised by two-storey semi-detached houses of a similar design that are set back from the street following a fairly consistent alignment. Although these houses have been the subject of alterations and extensions, there remains a strong consistency and coherence to the streetscene, which stems primarily from the broadly consistent scale, height, alignment and spacing of the buildings. While a few of the properties have been extended to the side, a notable characteristic of this part of Harpur Crescent are the gaps at first floor which give the streetscene a strong visual rhythm.
4. The appeal property forms the right hand half of a pair of two-storey semi-detached houses. Although the other half of the pair, No 37, has a single storey side extension, the pair has retained a pleasant, balanced appearance. The appeal development would extend the pair to the side close to the boundary at ground and first floor level.
5. As the other neighbouring house, No 41, has previously been extended at two storeys to the side, the effect of the proposed development would be to almost entirely close the gap between the two houses. While less visible in oblique views, the development would, nonetheless, be readily apparent. This significant loss of gap between the two houses would harmfully disrupt the rhythm and coherence of the streetscene described above, to the significant detriment of the character and appearance of the area.

6. I acknowledge that thought has been given to how the effect of the extension might be softened. For instance, through setting back the front elevation and setting down the roof ridge, as well as via the use of sympathetic materials and fenestration. Nonetheless, for the reasons outlined above, the proposed development would cause harm to the local townscape.
7. In summary, therefore, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, in that respect, it would be contrary to Policies SE1 (Design) and SD2 (Sustainable Development Principles) of the Cheshire East Local Plan, Policies HOU11 (Alterations and Extensions) and HOU13 (Residential Standards) of the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document, and Policy H6 (Housing Design) of the Alsager Neighbourhood Plan.

Other Matters

8. Another appeal decision is referred to in the evidence. It relates to proposed development in another local planning authority's area such that the development plan policies at play would have differed to those in the case that is before me. Moreover, I am not familiar with all of the wider circumstances of that case. While I am mindful of the importance of consistency in appeal decision-making, it is also important that each decision is made on its individual merits. In the circumstances, therefore, it has had little bearing on the outcome of this appeal.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

G D Jones

INSPECTOR