



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 March 2024

by K Mansell BA (Hons) MPhil TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/C4235/D/23/3335034

14 Wilton Avenue, Heald Green, Cheadle SK8 3LY

- 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 Senghore against the decision of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DC/086911, dated 24 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 27 October 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as 'resubmission of planning application DC/082587 – two storey side & rear extension with dormer loft conversion and single storey rear extension'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. On 20 December 2023, the Government published an updated revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). In relation to the main issues in this appeal, Government policy has not materially changed, other than a modification to relevant paragraph numbers. For this reason, I have not sought the parties' comments upon it, but neither party has been prejudiced by my having regard to it.

Main Issues

3. The Council has raised no concerns in respect of the two-storey side and rear extensions or the single storey rear extension. From the submitted evidence, I see no reason to disagree with that assessment. Therefore, the matter in dispute relates solely to the proposed dormer as part of a loft conversion. For this reason, the main issues in this appeal are the effect of the dormer on:
 - the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area;
 - the living conditions of the neighbouring occupier at 12 Wilton Avenue, with regard to any overbearing impact.

Reasons

Character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area

4. Wilton Avenue is a 'u' shaped residential street that connects to Outwood Road at each end. The houses mainly comprise two-storey semi-detached dwellings that have a consistent gap between their flank elevations as a result of a driveway to

the side of each house. They follow a broadly uniform building line to the road, set back behind a small garden or hardstanding and largely delineated by a hedge or fence. The dwellings are mainly constructed in a similar materials palette of red brick with a tiled roof and detailed with a ground floor bay window. The main entrance doors are typically positioned on the side elevation. These elements give the street a reasonably consistent character.

5. The appeal property at No 14 forms a semi-detached pair with No 16 and is separated from the flank elevation of No 12 by their respective driveways. The appeal proposal forms part of a wider scheme to extend the house, which is a re-submission of an earlier extant permission for a two-storey side and rear extension¹. In its entirety, the proposal of which the appeal scheme is a part, was amended during the period that the Council was considering it. This included relocating windows from the side elevation of the roof dormer to the rear gable. The Council determined the application based on these amended plans, and so have I.
6. The dormer window that is the subject of this appeal would be sited on the south side facing roof slope of the two-storey rear extension. It would cover approximately half the width of the extension roof as it projected from the original main dwelling. Being entirely covered in grey uPVC cladding and with a flat roof, the dormer would broadly have the appearance of a large blank box addition to the side elevation at roof level. It would add both to the bulk and massing to the host property and represent an unduly dominant addition that would be unsympathetic to the scale and form of the original host dwelling and fail to complement its appearance. It would be visually harmful as a result.
7. Furthermore, because of the size, form and position of the dormer, the side elevation of the host dwelling would effectively extend to three storeys. This would contrast with the two-storey scale of the original host dwelling and that of surrounding houses. I recognise that because of its location on the side elevation of the rear extension to the appeal property and being set down from the ridge of both the main house and extension, that the dormer would not be particularly visible from Wilton Avenue. Nonetheless, it would be discernible from the gardens of surrounding properties, particularly to the south and east. On my site visit, I observed no other dwellings with a similarly designed dormer to the appeal scheme. It would therefore represent a discordant and incongruous feature in the surrounding area.
8. For these reasons, I find that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. As such, it would conflict with the requirements of Policy SIE-1 of the Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2011) (SMBC CS DPD), and saved Policy CDH1.8 of the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review (2006) (UDP). These policies seek, amongst other matters, to ensure that residential extensions complement the existing dwelling in scale and design and secure high-quality design that responds to the site's specific character. It would also be contrary to guidance within the Council's Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (2011) (EA SPD), which broadly requires extensions to be appropriately designed in relation to the host dwelling and contribute positively to the character of an area. In this regard, it would further conflict with paragraph 131 (formerly paragraph 126) of the Framework that

¹ DC/082587

promotes the importance of good design, and the National Design Guide (NDG), which broadly seeks to ensure that development is well-designed, relates well to the site and responds positively to context.

Living conditions of neighbouring occupiers

9. The proposed dormer would face the adjoining property to the south at 12 Wilton Avenue. The two-storey rear extension upon which it would be sited would extend up to the boundary that the appeal property shares with No 12. Whilst the plane of the roof to the extension would slope away from this boundary, the appeal scheme would project vertically from a position just above the eaves to the extension. In width, it would also occupy a significant proportion of the roof space of this rear projection, and it would have an entirely blank façade. As a consequence, with the proposed dormer in situ, the flank elevation of the rear extension to the appeal property facing No 12 would appear to be three storeys and positioned adjacent to their boundary. As a result, the appeal proposal would create a sense of enclosure from this neighbouring property, be visually dominant and harmfully overbearing.
10. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would lead to harm to the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers at 12 Wilton Road as a result of its overbearing effect. It would therefore conflict with Policy SIE-1 of the SMBC CS DPD (2011) and saved Policy CDH1.8 of the UDP (2006). These policies seek, amongst other matters, to ensure that development protects the amenity of neighbouring properties and existing residents. It would also be contrary to the Council's EA SPD (2011), which includes general guidance on house extensions and the preservation of the living conditions of neighbouring residents. It would further conflict with guidance at paragraph 135 of the Framework (formerly paragraph 130), which highlights the need for developments to create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, as well as the NDG, which broadly seeks to ensure that development is well-designed.

Other Matters

11. I recognise that in the course of assessing the application, the Council may have indicated support for the appeal proposal as a whole. I have nothing before me to explain the basis for that view and ultimately, the application was refused. In any event, I must consider the scheme before me and in my determination of the appeal, I must have regard only to the planning merits of the scheme.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, I find that the appeal scheme would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area, and it would also result in harm to the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers at 12 Wilton Road as a result of its overbearing effect. It would therefore conflict with the development plan as a whole. There are no material considerations that would outweigh these conflicts. Accordingly, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Mansell

INSPECTOR