



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 May 2024

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24.05.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/C4235/D/24/3339725

89 Brown Lane, Heald Green, Stockport SK8 3SF

- 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 Mr Muhammed Azam Naeem against the decision of Stockport Council.
 - The application DC/090554, dated 12 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 19 January 2024.
 - The development proposed is bungalow conversion into 2-storey house. 2-storey side extension, accommodation within loft space and front porch including an outhouse replacing existing garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The description of development in the banner heading above has been taken from the Council's decision notice as it is a fuller description than the description provided in the planning application form.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are:
 - the effect of the proposed upward extension and two-storey side extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and streetscene.
 - the effect of the two-storey side extension on the living conditions of No.91 Brown Lane, with regards privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. No.89 Brown Lane (No.89) is a modest, detached bungalow situated on the north side of Brown Lane on the corner with Brandon Avenue.
5. I observed on my site visit that Brown Lane is characterised by a mix of bungalows and two-storey semi-detached dwellings of varied designs. The roof forms of dwelling are relatively traditional comprising pitch, facing gables, hipped or pyramid roof forms (or a mixture of these) which typically relate well in scale and proportions to their host.

6. The guidance in the Council's *Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document (2011)* (SPD) is that any extension or alteration to a property should respect the form, shape, symmetry and proportions of the existing dwelling and complement the character of the surrounding area. In this case, the roof of the upward extension has been designed with a steep hip (around 45 degrees) which meets a 'hidden' flat roof. Whilst I acknowledge that the design seeks to minimise the overall ridge height of the dwelling to around 8.5m, it results in significant bulk and massing to the roof that unbalances the composition of the dwelling, appearing 'top heavy.'
7. I saw on site that the dwelling opposite the appeal site (on the corner of Brown Lane and Fern Lea) has a flat roof side extension, but I have no information before me regarding the context in which this was found acceptable, nor do I find it positively contributes to the streetscene. The bulk and massing and flat expanse of the proposed roof would appear overly prominent and out of character with the prevailing roof forms, which on the north side of this part of Brown Lane comprises facing gables. I note that a proposed upwards extension to No.89, designed by the same architect as the appeal proposal, was granted planning permission in 2021 (DC/076332). In contrast to the proposal now before me, that upward extension included a traditional pitched roof with gable facing Brown Lane, so sympathetic to the character and appearance of the streetscene.
8. On both the front and rear, a dormer window is proposed, positioned broadly centrally within the roofslope. The dormers have a pitch roof design set around 0.15m lower than the ridge of the proposed flat roof. Although on the front elevation it would sit comfortably within the proposed roofslope, the proposed dormer would be around 2.2m wide and 2.0m high projecting outwards by around 2.3m, larger than any of the ground and first floor windows. It would therefore further unbalance the composition of the dwelling and would add to the bulk and massing of the roof form, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the streetscene.
9. A two-storey extension is proposed which would project around 3.0m from the flank elevation of No.89 toward Brandon Avenue, along the full depth of the dwelling. The extension has been designed with a two-storey, relatively narrow gable feature which would project around 0.78m from the proposed principal side elevation facing Brandon Avenue. This would incorporate a second (side) entrance to the dwelling, with a first floor void, and full height glazing to the eaves of the pitched roof. This would present a very prominent and unduly grand frontage, which would starkly contrast with the modest semi-detached dwellings and bungalows which characterise Brandon Avenue.
10. I therefore conclude on the first main issue that the proposed roof form, front dormer and two-storey side extension would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and streetscene. Consequently, in addition to the conflict with the SPD, the proposals would conflict with Policy SIE-1 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2011) (CS) and saved Policy CDH1.8 of the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review (2006) which together require development (including residential extensions) to have regard to the site context in relation to the surrounding buildings, to complement the existing dwelling in terms of design, scale and to not adversely affect the character of the streetscene. It would further conflict with the

principles of good design in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

Living conditions

11. No.89 is currently offset from its boundary with Brandon Avenue by around 6.3m. I observed on my site visit that No.91 Brown Lane (No.91), a detached bungalow on the opposite corner of Brandon Avenue, is offset from its boundary by a similar distance to No.91. The proposed two-storey side extension would project a maximum of around 3.78m closer to Brandon Avenue, reducing this separation distance, and would include two first floor windows (to a bedroom and dressing room to the master bedroom) facing the road.
12. There is disagreement between the parties as to whether, or not, the resulting separation distance would meet the standard 21m separation distance between habitable room windows on the public or street side of dwellings, as set out at paragraph 3.2.1 of the SPD. However, whilst these windows would directly face No.91, I was satisfied on site that there would remain a good level of separation (over the road) and I am not persuaded that there would be direct overlooking from the proposed first floor windows to the ground floor windows on the side elevation of No.91.
13. I therefore conclude on the second main issue that the proposals would not result in overlooking or loss of privacy, such that it would cause harm to the living conditions of the neighbours. In this regard, there would be no conflict with CS Policy SIE-1 or saved UPD Policy CDH1.8 in so far as they require development, including residential extensions, to maintain satisfactory privacy and amenity for neighbouring residents. There would also be no conflict with the guidance at paragraph 135 of the Framework that development create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Conclusion

14. Although I have found no harm to the living conditions of neighbours, for the reasons given, I have concluded that the proposals would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and streetscene. The appeal is, therefore, duly dismissed

R Jones

INSPECTOR