



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 May 2024

by Eleni Randle BSc (hons) MSc FRICS FAAV MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31st May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/24/3340572

16 Parkhouse Drive, Sandbach, Cheshire East, CW11 1YW

- 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 & Miss C & R McGregor & Leadbetter against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 24/0256C dated 23 January 2024, was refused by notice dated 26 February 2024.
 - The development proposed is alterations and extensions to existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the impact of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the streetscape and character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a two storey, detached, dwelling which is located on Parkhouse Drive, which is predominantly characterised by two storey detached dwellings with uniform external materials. The proposal seeks permission for alterations and extensions to the existing dwelling and I note the proposal follows the grant of a similar planning permission under reference 23/4575C. Copies of documentation, relating to this application, have been submitted as part of the appeal and I note that the Council's delegated report, and appellant's submissions, confirm that the proposal which is before me only differs from 23/4575C in terms of the external materials proposed.
4. In that regard, the principle of the extensions is not, realistically, a key consideration within the determination of this appeal as if this appeal failed, then the proposal could, and likely would, be implemented in accordance approval 23/4575C for the same extensions. For the avoidance of doubt, this appeal will therefore focus upon the main issue, outlined above, in the context of the external materials now proposed within the revised submission.
5. Approval 23/4575C proposed that the main dwelling's principal elevation would be completely finished in vertical black timber cladding as would the first-floor rear elevation and the proposed enlarged front dormer. The proposed single storey flat roofed rear extension would be fully rendered in off-white and the existing facing brickwork to the main dwelling side elevations would be retained. The proposal which is the subject of this appeal seeks to render the main dwellings principal, rear, and side elevations completely with an off-white

render along with the proposed single storey flat roof rear extension. The proposed enlarged front dormer would be vertical black timber cladding as per the existing permission outlined above. The proposal therefore seeks to render all external elevations of the dwelling except for the front dormer.

6. At the time of my site visit, I noted some examples of properties utilising white render/off-white render on the Congleton Road to the north of the appeal site with Parkhouse Drive connecting to the main Congleton Road as well as two residential spurs which run parallel, off Parkhouse Drive, to the north. Driving down Parkhouse Drive, towards the appeal site, I saw very limited examples of utilisation of white render. I find that there is, around the appeal site, a notably strong uniformity and consistency as a result of the external materials. Whilst beyond the appeal site there may be a mix of brick and render, and other materials, such examples of render are not isolated within a currently uniform street scene as the proposal before me would be.
7. There are no examples of rendered elevations within the street scene within which the appeal proposal would be viewed, and the proposed off-white render would be clearly visible from within views along Parkhouse Drive. I note the appellant's submission of examples which are stated to be within the locality of the appeal site, however, they do not stand within the same visual context within which the proposals that are before me would be viewed. As a result of this I do not find that the use of render, particularly for an entire dwelling with the exception of the front dormer, can be said to be characteristic and the proposed render would, I find, appear visually incongruous within the street scene and that this would result in a significant adverse impact to both the character and appearance of the locality.
8. The appellant asserts that neighbourhood, in relation to application of Cheshire East Local Plan Site Allocations and Development Policies Document 2022 (LP) Policy SD2, refers to an area within 500 metres as a minimum and a maximum of 1 kilometre of the site, citing examples of partial and fully rendered dwellings within 500 metres of the site as per further photographic examples set out within the appellant's Statement of Case. I do not find these examples support the use of render on the dwelling as being fully in keeping with the local character and aesthetic. With the exception of one example on Congleton Road noted as being visible from the site, there are no consistent examples which suggest that render is part of the character of the immediate vicinity within which the appeal site would be viewed. I do not find that there is justification for use of render on the whole of the dwelling as proposed.
9. The appellant acknowledges the uniformity within which the appeal site stands, within their correspondence with the Council within the previous application, in so far as it was stated that the proposal would add variation to the street scene and eliminate the uniformity of the scene. I note examples, submitted by the appellants, and within their correspondence with the Council, demonstrating rendered dwellings within other street scenes, however, I do not find that those street scenes in question share the uniformity which I see along Parkhouse Drive with particular regard to the consistency as to brick and tile colours and overall finish.
10. The use of darker cladding, within the previous approval, was combined with retention of the existing facing brickwork to the side elevations which was notably more sympathetic than the current proposals and I do not find this sets

a clear precedent for further change or revision of the proposals. I do not find the proposal appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of appearance and materials.

11. The proposal would be contrary to LP Policy SD1 which seeks to achieve sustainable development which provides a locally distinct and a well-designed environment, LP Policy SD2 which expects all development to contribute positively to an areas character and identity, creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness in terms of choice of materials and LP Policy SE1 which requires proposals to make a positive contribution to their surroundings by protecting and enhancing the character of settlements. The proposal would also be contrary to LP Policy GEN1 which outlines that development proposals should reflect local character and LP Policy HOU11 insofar as the proposal would not be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surroundings and the local area.
12. The proposal would also be contrary to Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan 2022 Policy H2 which requires development to meet high standards of design which is in keeping with the character of the local area and contribute positively to local distinctiveness, being appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of appearance and materials.
13. The proposal would also be contrary to paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 which outlines that decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character including surrounding built environment. I acknowledge that it also sets out that there should not be a prevention or discouragement of appropriate innovation or change, however I do not, in this case, find that the proposal would represent appropriate change taking into account the setting within which it would be viewed on a day-to-day basis within a uniform street scene.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons outlined above, and taking account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Eleni Randle

INSPECTOR