



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 April 2024

by Alison Hartley, LLB(Hons), Solicitor, MBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/M3455/D/24/3338056

9 Sudgrove Place, Stoke on Trent, ST3 7TL

- 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 Lee Steele against the decision of Stoke on Trent City Council.
 - The application Ref 70284/FUL, dated 8 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 27 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is for the demolition of existing garage, extension to side and front of existing property including internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the demolition of existing garage, extension to side and front of existing property including internal alterations to 9 Sudgrove Place, Stoke on Trent, ST3 7TL, in accordance with the terms of the application reference 70284/FUL dated 8 September 2023 subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

"Site Location Plan", ref: 23072-PL-100 ; "Parking Provision" (Amended), ref: 23072-PL-107; "Proposed Elevation" (Amended), ref: 23072-PL-104, REV.A; "Proposed Floorplans" (Amended), ref: 23072-PL-103, REV.A; "Block Plan" (Amended), ref: 23072-PL-101, REV.A.

Procedural Issues

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been updated since the appeal was made. However, as the revisions do not affect the matters under consideration in this appeal, it was not considered necessary to seek further comment from the parties.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area and highway safety.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal property is situated in an established residential estate known as Meir Park. The area is characterised predominantly by two-storey detached dwellings of varying design with differing external features such as brick, render and timber finishes, porches, extensions and window treatments. The Sudgrove Place carriageway has a curved alignment, leading to two opposing cul-de-sacs surrounded by detached dwellings. I did not perceive a distinctive building line or rhythm along Sudgrove Place that would be disrupted by the proposal. Overall, the area has a diverse street scene.
5. The appeal site comprises a corner plot in a prominent position within the street scene. The present garage extension to the two-storey brick-built host dwelling does not make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the street scene, as is acknowledged by the Appellant. I consider the proposed, wraparound single storey extension to be of good design, being subservient to the host dwelling and in keeping with the character of both the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Having regard to the diverse range of finishes and designs within the surrounding area, I also find the use of render in this instance will make a positive contribution to the host building by adding interest through contrast and being an improvement on the negative quality provided by the existing brick extension, which is not an exact match to the brick of the host dwelling.
6. I find the separation distances between the host dwelling and other dwellings within the cul-de-sacs, together with the removal of the existing garage extension would provide sufficient space at the side and front to accommodate the proposal without resulting in harm to the existing degree of openness evident within the cul-de-sac.
7. In light of the above, I conclude that the proposal would make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area by virtue of its good design and appropriate scale within a generous corner plot. It would not appear incongruous in the street scene. Accordingly, I find that the proposal complies with Policy CSP1- Design Quality of the Newcastle under Lyme & Stoke on Trent Core Spatial Strategy (2006-2026)(CSS), Policy R23 of the Newcastle under Lyme & Stoke on Trent Urban Design SPD (2010) and C1 of the National Design Guide, all of which seek high quality design appropriate to its context.

Highway Safety

8. I find that there would be adequate space to the front of the property to park three vehicles. Although the Council has some concern that the vehicles would need to park close together, the likelihood would be that vehicles parking on a residential driveway would be residents or visitors to the property and drivers would be accommodating in parking close together. Although neighbours have raised concerns about the impact of the proposal on highway safety, I have no reason to disagree with the Highway Authority that the proposal would not adversely affect visibility for drivers using the cul-de-sac to the extent it would amount to a reason for refusal. Indeed, the Council did not refuse the application on those grounds.

9. I conclude that the proposal complies with Policy CSP1(10) of the CSS in that there is no adverse impact on highway safety.

Other Matters

10. Neighbours have expressed concern about the effect of the proposal on their privacy. However, I agree with the main parties that there is a substantial distance between the proposal and neighbouring properties so as not to cause undue harm to neighbours' existing levels of privacy.

Conditions

11. I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council. I have not imposed a condition requiring matching materials, as I find that the contrasting rendered finish is appropriate in this case. I have imposed a condition specifying the approved plans, which set out the approved materials, as this provides certainty.

Conclusion

12. Having taken into account all representations made, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal accords with the development plan as a whole and therefore the appeal should be allowed subject to conditions.

A Hartley

INSPECTOR