



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 May 2024

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/D/24/3342599

17 Ledbury Avenue, Davyhulme M41 7AL

- 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 Norton against the decision of Trafford Council.
 - The application 112757/HHA/24, dated 29 January 2024, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2024.
 - The development proposed is erection of a first floor side extension.
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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 because it is a fuller, more accurate description of the development before me than the description provided in the planning application form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed first floor extension on the character and appearance of the streetscene.

Reasons

4. No.17 Ledbury Avenue (No.17) is a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling situated on the east side of Ledbury Avenue. To the side, No.17 benefits from a single storey extension which projects close to the common boundary with its non-attached neighbour at No.15 Ledbury Avenue (No.15). It is proposed to construct a first floor extension above this to provide additional bedroom space.
5. The guidance in the *Council's Supplementary Planning Document 4: A Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations (2012)* (SPD4) is that side extensions can have a prominent visual impact on the appearance of a dwelling and can remove gaps from the streetscene that help to define local character. It therefore advises (at paragraph 3.1.2) that 'a gap of a minimum 1m should be retained between the side elevation of an extended property and its side boundary, to retain the impression of space to the side of the dwelling. This is particularly important within a row of closely spaced detached, or semi-detached houses.'

6. The proposed first floor extension to No.17 would leave a gap of only 0.77m from its side boundary with No.15, so would clearly conflict with the SPD4 guidance. I observed on my site visit that Ledbury Avenue comprises fairly regularly spaced semi-detached dwellings of similar design, many of which have been extended, notably at ground floor. There is however a characteristic gap between the dwellings at first floor (aided by the hipped roof design) that gives a general sense of spaciousness; this is notable between No.17 and its neighbour at No.15. The proposed first floor extension, by projecting so close to the boundary, would all but remove this characteristic gap, and No.17 would appear cramped on its plot. This, I find, would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene.
7. I recognise that other dwellings on Ledbury Avenue have been extended at first floor close to their side boundary, including No.17's attached neighbour at No.19 Ledbury Avenue. However, the Council's evidence is that those extensions closer to the site boundary than 1m pre-date the SPD4 guidance and I have nothing before me to counter this. I also observed that where the side extension has been well set off the site boundary (No.12 is an example) it is more successful in both assimilating within the streetscene and retaining the spacing between the semi-detached pairs.
8. Consequently, in addition to the conflict with SPD4, the proposed first floor side extension would conflict with Policy JP-P1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (2024) which requires all development to respect and acknowledge the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, scale and materials used. It would further conflict with paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework in so far as it seeks to ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and are sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

9. I have given careful consideration to the appellant's need for extra space in order to foster, and the costs associated with moving house. Whilst I have sympathy, unfortunately these other matters do not outweigh the harm that the proposed extension would cause to the character and appearance of the streetscene.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR