



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 June 2024

by R.Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23RD July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/D/24/3343957

9 Melrose Crescent, Hale WA15 8NN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Dr Usamah Kader against the decision of Trafford Council.
 - The application Ref is 112669/HHA/24.
 - The development proposed is erection of first floor extension and alterations to elevations including remodel of front elevation and render to side and rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of first floor extension and alterations to elevations including remodelling of front elevation and render to side and rear at 9 Melrose Crescent, Hale WA15 8NN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 112669/HHA/24, and the plans submitted with it, 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: Location Plan – PL-101; Existing Site Plan – PL-103; Existing Floor Plans – PL-102; Existing Side and Front Elevation – PL-104; Existing Side and Rear Elevation – PL-105; Proposed Ground Floor – PL-106; Proposed First Floor – PL-107; Proposed Roof Plan – PL-108; Proposed Front and Side Elevation – PL-109; and Proposed Elevations and Sections – PL-110.

Preliminary Matter

2. The description of development in the banner heading above has been taken from the description provided on the Council's decision notice as it is a more accurate description of the development before me than the one provided on the planning application form.
3. The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) was adopted in March 2024. PfE Policy JP-P1 replaces Policy L7.1 (design quality) of the Trafford Core Strategy (2012) (CS) referred to the Council's decision notice. As PfE Policy JP-P1 is also referred to in the Council's decision notice, it has not been necessary to seek further views from the parties on this matter.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed front extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and streetscene.

Reasons

5. No.9 Melrose Crescent (No.9) is a two-storey detached dwelling located on the east side of Melrose Crescent. Melrose Crescent is characterised by detached dwellings built in the 1970s and arranged in a relatively linear fashion, on a similar front building line, set behind modest front gardens and driveways. There are a variety of different dwelling styles and these are generally typical of the 1970s design, with simple pitched roof forms, some with a single, or double facing gable, integral garages and finished in a combination of brick, pebble-dash or render. I observed on my site visit, however, that several dwellings on Melrose Crescent and the adjoining Woburn Drive have benefitted from contemporary extensions or alterations and there is therefore clearly an evolving architectural narrative in the wider area.
6. The guidance in the Council's *SPD4: A Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations (2012)* (SPD4) is that front extensions should be designed to respect the character and style of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. At paragraph 3.7.2, SPD4 further advises that front extensions may be acceptable if, amongst other things, they harmonise with the character of the dwelling, and neighbouring dwellings, by reflecting the design, detailing and proportions of existing dwellings; and are modest in scale, restricted in width in so far as not to detract from the design of the original dwelling.
7. No.9 itself has an integral garage and part catslide roof, with a front dormer window to the family bathroom. A two-storey front extension is proposed which would project toward Melrose Crescent, accommodating a large first floor master bedroom with ensuite, but would align with the existing ground floor building line. The proposed extension would be intentionally contemporary in its design with an asymmetrical offset pitched roof and facing gable, with eaves which would effectively project beyond one flank end into a side pergola. It is accepted that the proposals would see the complete remodelling of the front elevation of No.9 and consequently the design, detailing and character of the original 1970s dwelling would be lost, which would be contrary to the SPD guidance above.
8. I am not, however, persuaded that the conflict with the SPD4 guidance necessarily results in planning harm. The facing gables of existing dwellings on Melrose Crescent are typically more traditional in design, either single and offset to one side of the principal elevation, or a double gable either side of the front entrance. The proposed asymmetrical, offset design is clearly an intentional alternative interpretation of such traditional facing gables, but rather than appearing an incongruous addition, I find it an imaginative, contemporary design approach, with the pergola adding further interest to the front elevation.
9. Although extending the width of the front elevation, the proposals would not project beyond the existing front building line of No.9, or substantively closer to Melrose Crescent than neighbouring dwellings. On one side of the proposed gable, the eaves would align with those of the original roof of No.9, whilst on the other the eaves of the roof and pergola have been designed such that they

would align with the garage of the neighbouring dwelling at No.7 Melrose Crescent. Whilst the proposed gable would extend the ridge of the host roof, I find it would nonetheless be sympathetic in scale and proportions to its host and neighbours, and, although clearly visible, it would not appear unduly prominent in the streetscene.

10. The proposed extension would be constructed of brick, with a through-colour render proposed to the existing side and rear walls, which broadly reflects the materials of its neighbours. An integral garage would be retained and the fenestration would include a large (full height) window at ground floor to the lounge, a large vertically glazed panel above a recessed front entrance, which would extend to the eaves, and two narrow, vertical first floor windows. The proportions and colour of these (a dark grey UPVC) would differ from those of No.9's neighbours, but they would not appear incongruous in the context of the wider area where, as I have described, other dwellings have had contemporary alterations.
11. I therefore conclude on the main issue that the proposed front extension would not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or wider streetscene. Consequently, it would accord with PfE Policy JP-P1 in so far as it would be visually stimulating, creating an interesting and imaginative environment through quality design, and it would respect and acknowledge the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used. It would also accord with paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to ensure that development is, among other things, visually attractive as a result of good architecture and sympathetic to local character while not preventing appropriate innovation or change.

Conditions

12. In addition to the standard timescale for implementation of the planning permission, I have imposed a condition specifying the approved drawings in the interests of certainty. Because the materials are specified on the approved drawings (and differ from the existing) it is not necessary to impose a condition requiring the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted to match those of the existing dwelling.
13. Finally, the Council have suggested a condition requiring the proposed first floor window on the north elevation facing No.7 to be non-opening and fitted with textured, obscure glazing. I observed on my site visit that No.7 has an existing window, with obscure glazing, on its flank gable facing No.9. The proposed first floor window on the north elevation of No.9 would serve the second bedroom and would be offset a reasonable distance from the window of No.7. As such, any intervisibility between the two would not be direct, rather at an angle, and I do not therefore find the proposed condition necessary in the interests of protecting amenity.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR