



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/24/3344482

4 Essex Way, Trafford M15 4GF

- 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 Mr Fazal Mohammad Naseri against the decision of Trafford Council.
 - The application Ref is 112705/HHA/24.
 - The development proposed is a erection of single storey rear extension and formation of rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development in the banner heading above has been taken from the Council's decision notice because the description on the planning application form refers to a front porch, which has now been omitted from the proposal.
3. The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) was adopted on 21 March 2024 by nine Greater Manchester authorities, including Trafford Council. PfE Policy JP-P1 replaces parts of Policy L7 of the Trafford Core Strategy (2012) (CS) referred to the Council's decision notice, in so far as it relates to design quality. 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 Issues

4. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposed rear dormer on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding setting; and the effect of the proposed single-storey rear extension on the living conditions of neighbours, with regards outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. No.4 Essex Way (No.4) is a brick-built two-storey dwelling situated within a short row of five terraced dwellings on the western side of Essex Way. I observed on my site visit that No.4 forms part of a wider development of dwellings, either side of Essex Way and returned to Cornbrook Grove, which have a similar simple design, pitched roof form and pattern of fenestration.

There is therefore a uniformity to the appearance of the terrace that No.4 forms part, and a cohesiveness to the character of the wider development.

6. The guidance in the Council's *SPD4: A Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations (2012)* is that dormers should be proportionate to the scale of the property and reflect the style and architectural character of the original dwelling. Further, they should not: sit above the ridge of the existing dwelling; appear dominant or top heavy due to siting or design; sit too close to the edges of the main roof; or be wider than the original elevation. A flat roof dormer is proposed to the rear of No.4 which would be consistent with part of this guidance, in that it would be offset from the ridge of the host roof. It would, however, occupy much of the roof plane, set in only slightly from the outer edge with both neighbours and close to the eaves. Because of its scale and proportions the proposed dormer would fail to appear subservient to its host. Rather, it would dominate the roof plane and rear elevation appearing an unsympathetic 'top heavy' addition, and is therefore clearly in conflict with parts of the SPD4 guidance.
7. It is recognised that there is some variety in architectural styles in the area, including a three storey apartment building adjacent the terrace fronting Stretford Road. I am also mindful of the guidance at paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), albeit in reference to design guides and codes, that allowance should be made for a suitable degree of variety. However, in this case, rather than adding to diversity of architecture at the rear, the dormer would cause harm to the otherwise uniform and cohesive character and appearance of the rear of the terrace. It would be clearly visible, and unduly prominent, from the adjoining apartment block (and its parking area), from Cornbrook Grove, and from the semi-detached pair of dwellings to the rear.
8. The appellant has drawn my attention to a similar, flat roof dormer, on the rear roof plane of a dwelling, similar in type to No.4, on the corner of Erskine Street and Blackbrook Road. I observed on my site visit that this dormer is very prominent from Blackbrook Road, even though it's proportions appear more modest than the appeal before me. I have no evidence before me as to the planning history of this dwelling, or the Council's consideration of the dormer, and I am not persuaded that it provides justification for the harmful development before me.
9. I therefore conclude on the first main issue that the proposed dormer would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding setting. In addition to the conflict with the SPD4 guidance, it would conflict with PfE JP-P1 because it does not respect the character and identity of the locality in terms of siting, size and scale. It would further conflict with paragraph 135 of the Framework insofar as it seeks to ensure development adds to the overall quality of the area and is sympathetic to local character.

Living conditions

10. A single storey extension is proposed, which would project around 3.6m from the rear elevation of No.4, accommodating an open plan living and dining room. The proposed rear extension has been set minimally off the party boundary with its neighbours either side at No.2 and No.6 Essex Way, the boundary formed by a part concrete, part close boarded fence around 1.8m in

height. The extension would have a flat roof, to minimize its overall height, but its height to eaves would be around 2.7m along its length. It would project up to the underside of the first floor window cill of No.4 and would be clearly visible above the boundary fence. Given the combination of the height, depth and distance from the boundary, it would appear visually intrusive and overbearing from the neighbouring properties. This would cause particular harm to the living conditions of No.2 Essex Way, who I observed have patio doors to their main living area (and therein principal outlook) very close to the shared boundary.

11. Because the proposed rear extension would prejudice the amenity of occupants of adjacent properties by reason of overbearing and visual intrusion, it would conflict with CS Policy L 7.3. It would further conflict with the SPD4 guidance that all rear extensions should avoid physically dominating neighbouring dwellings, and normally, a single storey extension close to the boundary should not project more than 3m from the rear elevation of terraced properties. Finally, it would conflict with guidance at paragraph 135 of the Framework that developments create places that have a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Conclusion

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

R. Jones

INSPECTOR