



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 October 2024

by L C Hughes BA (Hons) MTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/W/24/3344048

Ivy Cottage, Wythenshawe Road, Manchester M23 9DD

- 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 John Copeland against the decision of Manchester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 139044/FO/2024.
 - The development proposed is erection of three bed detached two storey dwelling house within the grounds of Ivy Cottage and creation of new vehicular access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the description of development from the decision notice and appeal form as it more succinctly describes the proposal.
3. Shortly after the Council issued its decision notice, the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (PfE) was adopted on 21 March 2024. During the course of the appeal, the appellant and the Council have commented upon the relevance of PfE policies to the proposed development. Policy DM1 of Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012 (CS) referenced in the Council's reason for refusal, has not been superseded by PfE. A section of Policy SP1 of the CS, which was also referenced in the reason for refusal, has been superseded by PfE Policy JP-S1. I have had regard to this when determining the appeal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. Ivy Cottage is an attractive detached property, situated relatively centrally within its plot fronting Wythenshawe Road. The appeal scheme would see the development of a two-storey detached dwelling within the existing garden to the west of Ivy Cottage.
6. Ivy Cottage, along with the terraced properties on the opposite side of the road, and its neighbours No 410 and 412 Wythenshawe Road (No 410 and No 412) are some of the earliest properties in the vicinity, which the evidence before me suggests date from the Victorian period. Housing from different periods has developed around this historic core, which vary in design, type

and size, providing an eclectic and diverse mix of dwelling types with no one consistent pattern of development.

7. There are terraced properties and examples of infill developments in proximity, with three new dwellings having been permitted to the rear of Ivy Cottage. However, the gap which lies between Ivy Cottage and its neighbour, No 410, makes an important contribution to the street scene. The gap enhances the setting of both Ivy Cottage and No 410, giving the properties, which are attractive features within the street scene, a spacious appearance and allowing an appreciation of the traditional dwellings when viewed from vantage points along Wythenshawe Road. The gap allows for views not just of the frontages of the properties, but due to the slight bend in the road and the positioning of No 410 at a slight angle away from the road, views of Ivy Cottage can be appreciated on its approach from the west.
8. The proposed new dwelling would erode the spaciousness between Ivy Cottage and No 410, almost filling the gap between them. Due to the lack of space to the sides of the proposed dwelling, it would appear as cramped within its proposed plot, regardless of the removal of the conifers and mature vegetation along the western boundary of the appeal site. The proposal's erosion of the gap would detract from the setting of the dwellings, and in so doing would diminish their positive contribution to the streetscape.
9. As the dwellings in the locality differ in age, design, architectural detail and materials, the proposed materials and fenestration details would not be significantly jarring in this context. However, whilst the surrounding area has a variety of roof forms, the rooflines of properties with continuous frontages are generally uniform in design, giving a pleasant degree of visual continuity. As the proposed new dwelling would follow the building line of Ivy Cottage, with the limited space between them giving the impression of a continuous frontage, the difference in eaves height and roof form from Ivy Cottage would give the proposal a disjointed and inharmonious appearance to the detriment of visual amenity.
10. I conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would not comply with Policies DM1 and SP1 of the CS which seek to ensure that development has regard to the character of the surrounding area and protects and enhances the built environment. It would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to ensure that development is sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment.

Other Matters

11. I note that there were no objections from the Council's highway officers, environmental health officers and United Utilities, and that the Council considered that the impact of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers would be limited. Nevertheless, the lack of harm in these matters is a neutral factor that does not outweigh the harm that I have identified arising from the main issue.

Planning Balance

12. The proposed dwelling would contribute to the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The proposed dwelling would have

social benefits through the provision of a new home for a local person. It would be in an accessible location reducing the need to drive to amenities and services and would reduce the need for greenfield development. The development would generate economic activity during the construction of the property and provide a home to residents who would contribute to the local economy and support local facilities and services. There would therefore be economic, social and environmental benefits to the scheme. As the proposal is for only one dwelling, I give these benefits moderate weight.

13. The appellant contends that the Council is unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply. However, the Council has submitted a position statement which disputes this, with the evidence indicating that there is a 6.12 years land supply. Even if this was not so and paragraph 11d of the Framework applied in this case, the moderate benefits identified above would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

Conclusion

14. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.
15. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

L C Hughes

INSPECTOR