



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 May 2025

by R Morgan BSc (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/W/24/3358018

Land adjacent to Danemere, 21 Harrop Road, Hale, Cheshire, WA15 9DA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr James Taylor against the decision of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 113150/FUL/24.
 - The development proposed is construction of one infill dwelling with associated landscaping.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal site is within the South Hale Conservation Area (CA). In considering this appeal, I have had special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA, as required by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
3. The proposed house would be located in the garden of Danemere, which is identified as a 'positive contributor' in the South Hale Conservation Area Appraisal 2017. A Local Heritage List has been approved by the Council, which includes Danemere and the other buildings identified in the CA Appraisal as positive contributors. It is common ground that Danemere is a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA), and I have treated it as such in this appeal.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the South Hale Conservation Area, including the effect on Danemere as a non-designated heritage asset, and
 - the effect on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, with particular regard to noise and disturbance.

Reasons

Heritage assets

South Hale Conservation Area

5. The CA is an affluent residential suburb of South Manchester which developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is characterised by high quality buildings, some of which were designed by prominent architects.
6. The appeal site is located within an area of predominately Edwardian housing identified as Character Area B in the CA Appraisal. Development in this area is less dense than in other parts of the wider CA, with houses set back from the street within generous plots, with well landscaped gardens. Mature trees and planting provide a spacious and verdant quality to the area. There is significant variation in the appearance of the buildings within the Character Area, but there is commonality in the use of materials and design features, and this, together with the verdant setting, provides an attractive and harmonious environment.
7. The significance of the CA derives from the architectural quality and integrity of the buildings, within a spacious, landscaped setting.

Danemere, non-designated heritage asset

8. Danemere is a substantial two-storey house which dates from the turn of the twentieth century. It has design elements and materials which are characteristic of the wider CA, including oriel windows, prominent chimneys and a timber framed porch. Whilst lower than many of the other properties nearby, Danemere has a large footprint and is clearly visible from the street. It can be seen in views which the CA Appraisal identifies as being important, including those along Harrop Road and Park Drive.
9. Danemere is set within a large plot, with attractive, well-maintained gardens. Its architectural quality, landscaped setting and intact boundary treatments give Danemere heritage significance in its own right. It also makes a positive contribution to the wider CA.
10. Historical records indicate that a separate house, known as Brondalar, once existed between Danemere and Eagle Lodge. Brondalar was demolished at some point during the early-mid twentieth century, and the site where it once stood was incorporated into the garden of Danemere.
11. During the early years of the last century, Danemere itself was enlarged and subdivided, and a motor house/garage constructed in the grounds. The former chauffeur's cottage later became a separate dwelling, 23 Harrop Road (No. 23). Its original function remains apparent, and with no formal subdivision of the wider plot, No. 23 retains a close, subservient relationship with Danemere. Whether or not No. 23 is considered to be a NDHA in its own right, it contributes to the significance of both Danemere and the wider CA.

Effect of the proposals

12. The proposed house would be constructed in the existing garden to the side of Danemere. It would make use of the existing, historic access which runs along the

western boundary of the site, adjacent to the modern apartment block at Eagle Lodge.

13. The CA Management Plan 2017 says that the subdivision of an existing plot into multiple plots will generally not be permitted due to the impact on the spacious character of the CA, and the prevalence of surviving historic plots.
14. Compared with surrounding properties, Danemere has particularly large grounds, but it is a very substantial house, and the plot also contains No. 23. By subdividing the plot, the large house would lose some of its landscaped setting. This would detract from its significance as a NDHA, and, by association, that of the wider CA.
15. The plot was formerly occupied by Brondalar, which stood alongside Danemere and the former house at Eagle Lodge. Brondalar was demolished a very long time ago, and since then there have been changes to both Danemere and Eagle Lodge, as well as development to the rear, on Chiltern Drive. The altered context means that the former existence of Brondalar does not in itself justify a new house here.
16. That said, when subdivided, the two resultant plots would be broadly comparable with those of other properties nearby, in terms of both size and plot ratio. Taking account of these factors, as well as the presence of a separate, historic access, an additional dwelling could be acceptable here.
17. However, the new, rectangular plot would be relatively narrow compared with others in the immediate vicinity, and the proposed house would be a large building. Together, the house, garage and access would occupy most of the plot width. The proposed house would be sited towards the rear of the plot, so the large, landscaped front garden would remain. This would help to retain the sense of spaciousness when viewed from Harrop Road and Park Drive, but little space would remain at either side of the new house.
18. The adjacent three storey apartment building, Eagle Lodge, is sited close to the shared boundary, and the side elevation of Danemere would also be close to the edge of its new, reduced plot. As a result, the three buildings would appear close together, particularly when viewed from immediately surrounding properties, including the houses at the rear of the site on Chiltern Drive. From there, the appreciation of the spacious character of this part of the CA would be diminished.
19. The siting of the new house, towards the back of the site, would reflect the building line of No. 23. However, because of its scale and original function, No. 23 will have always been a subservient building to Danemere. In contrast, the proposed house would be a completely separate, unrelated dwelling. Its position at the rear of the plot, behind Danemere and the apartment building at Eagle Lodge, would fail to reflect the surrounding context, in which houses are generally sited centrally or towards the front of their plots, with rear as well as front gardens.
20. The lack of a back garden would further contribute to the loss of the green and spacious character of the area when viewed from surrounding properties, including Danemere and Eagle Lodge. I acknowledge that other nearby properties have parking at the rear, including Eagle Lodge and its immediate neighbour on Leicester Road. However they both appear to be modern apartment blocks, which may require more space for parking than a single houses. The use of the rear part of the plot for parking, would not reflect the predominant character of the

surrounding area, in which driveways and garages tend to be at the side and front of the houses.

21. The garden setting is an important feature of Danemere, and contributes both to its significance as a NDHA and to the character of the wider CA. As well as reducing the overall amount of garden space, the proposal would impede upon the character of the remaining area of garden associated with Danemere. The detached garage and side elevation of the proposed house would be sited very close to the rear garden of Danemere. Whilst the distance between the houses would be sufficient to maintain privacy, the scale and massing of the new property, with its substantial roof, would be a highly dominant feature when viewed from Danemere. The result would be harm to the setting of the NDHA.
22. The existing garden summerhouse is an attractive feature, with its overhanging eaves, attractively tiled roof and timber panelled sides. A structure in this position appears on a 1936 OS map, suggesting that it dates from at least that time. The structure is in need of repair, and may not need any permission to demolish. However, it forms an interesting element of the garden design, which would be lost as a result of the proposed development. The structure is not visible from the public domain, and the harm resulting from its loss would be minor. Nevertheless, its removal would add to the wider erosion of the garden setting, and the associated harm to the setting of Danemere. In turn, this would detract from the contribution that Danemere makes to the significance of the wider CA, albeit by a small amount.
23. I note the appellant's comment that a Greek Temple, which existed in part of the former grounds of Danemere, was not required to be retained when the land was redeveloped to form Church Coppice. However, no details have been provided about the quality or condition of the Temple structure at the time when permission was granted for the houses. Without further information which might explain why the Council made the decision it did, I give little weight to the loss of the former Greek Temple in this appeal.
24. The garden contains a large number of trees, many of which are in good condition according to the submitted Arboricultural Implications Assessment. Whilst most of the trees in the front garden and along the boundaries would remain, the proposal would involve the loss of some of the lower quality trees. Compensatory planting is proposed, and if the scheme was otherwise acceptable, a condition could be imposed requiring the agreement and implementation of a detailed landscaping scheme. Given that, I agree that the loss of trees to facilitate the development would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the CA.
25. The proposed elevational treatment of the new house, its design and use of materials, takes cues from features characteristic of the wider CA. This includes the use of brick and render with an appropriate colour palette, and the prominent gables and chimneys. However, the inclusion of a large, classical style porch appears overly heavy, despite the balustrade feature, and does not relate well to other elements of detailing, such as the decorative brickwork and the use of timber on the front gable in a mock Tudor style. The result is a mix of styles that does not present a cohesive design. Owing to its appearance, the new house would not preserve or enhance the character of the CA.

26. The appellant has referred to several examples of developments which have been allowed within the CA. The additional dwelling allowed at 247 Hale Road¹ involved a site which was considered to make limited contribution to the significance of the designated heritage asset. Importantly, the development left the Hale Road frontage intact, and whilst there was a loss of spaciousness, the position of the site at the edge of the CA meant this was not critical. The particular context of that site led the Council to make the decision it did, but those considerations do not apply here.
27. The appeal at Oakbank, Hill Top, involved demolition of an existing building and construction of 2 dwellings². The Inspector in that case found that the architecture of the two houses, supplemented by comprehensive landscape and planting, would sit agreeably in the CA. By contrast, I have found that the proposed building would not be of high architectural quality, and, unlike in Oakbank case, the spaciousness of the wider CA would be diminished.
28. The new dwelling allowed at 15 Murieston Road³ was adjacent to a building identified as a positive contributor within the CA. Unlike the appeal before me, that case involved the replacement of an existing dwelling, so did not involve the subdivision of a plot. Although it was deeper, higher and further forward on its plot than the building it replaced, the impact on the CA was considered to be acceptable. That is not the case in the appeal before me, for the reasons set out above.
29. To conclude, the proposed siting and scale of the proposed house would detract from the spacious quality of the CA, albeit by a small amount. This, together with the deficiencies in the design of the house, would mean the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of this part of the CA, detracting from its significance.
30. In addition, the loss of part of the garden, including the summerhouse, would cause harm to the setting of Danemere, which as a non-designated heritage asset contributes positively to the wider CA. By diminishing the significance of Danemere, the proposal would further detract from that of the CA.

Heritage balance

31. The harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset would be less than substantial, but even so, paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to its conservation.
32. The proposal would provide an additional family home, and I note that the Council has identified a shortfall in 4 bed houses. The proposal would contribute to the supply of housing in the area, and would make efficient use of land. It would be located in an existing residential area, close to local services and facilities in Hale, with easy access to larger centres by public transport. There would be minor economic benefits during construction, and additional demand for local services by future occupiers.

¹ Application ref 87933/FUL/16

² Application refs 77433/CAC/2011 and 77431/FULL/2011

³ Application ref 101590/FUL/20

33. These would be public benefits, but they would be modest in extent. The benefits would not outweigh the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset which would result from the construction of the proposed new house in this location.
34. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy JP-P1 of the Places for Everyone Plan 2024 (PfE Plan), which requires that development should be distinctive, with a clear identity that conserves and enhances landscape features and the historic environment.
35. Policy JP-P2 of the same plan requires that proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets are considered having regard to national planning policy. In considering this matter, I have applied the relevant tests set out in Framework paragraphs 215 and 216. In both cases, I find that the benefits would not outweigh the harm to the heritage assets.
36. Core Strategy Policy R1 has slightly different wording to the Framework but its overall objective of protecting the historic environment is consistent with that of national policy. The proposal has not demonstrated how the development will complement and enhance the existing features of historic significance, so the proposal does not comply with the policy.
37. The Council's decision notice also refers to Core Strategy Policy L7, but the Council has advised that the elements of this policy which relate to matters of design have been superseded by Policy JP-P1 of the PfE Plan.

Living conditions

38. The Council's supplementary planning guidance 'New Residential Development' 2004 (PG1) notes that new development on small sites can make an important contribution towards the supply of new housing, but the way in which new buildings relate to those existing will be of paramount importance. New development should not be at the expense of the amenity of surrounding properties.
39. The proposed house would be served by the existing historic access from Harrop Road, which follows the western boundary of the site. The driveway would be surfaced and extended, to lead to a new turning and parking area at the rear of the site, in front of the proposed double garage.
40. The northwestern corner of the appeal site cuts into the L-shaped rear garden of 29a Chiltern Drive (No 29a). The proposed parking/turning area would be located close to the shared boundary with No. 29a, and the new garage would be sited near to the rear garden of 29 Chiltern Drive (No. 29).
41. The boundaries with Eagle Lodge and Nos. 29 and 29a are formed of hedges interspersed with mature and semi mature trees. This helps provide screening and privacy, particularly during the summer months. The boundary vegetation would largely be retained, but the proposal would introduce activity, including vehicular comings and goings, close to neighbouring properties.
42. In particular, the proposed turning/parking area would be sited very close to the rear garden of No. 29a. I note that the current occupiers of that property are supportive of the scheme, but future residents may not feel the same.

43. Use of the existing access would result in vehicles would passing alongside the apartment building at Eagle Lodge. There are a number of windows in that building which face towards the access, which may well serve habitable rooms. I note there is an existing parking area at the rear of Eagle Lodge, but that is not on the same side of the building as the proposed access. The proposal has the potential to introduce disturbance resulting from vehicle movements, where currently there is none.
44. The level of activity and number of vehicle movements associated with one house is likely to be small. Nonetheless, the proposal would result in the movement of vehicles deep into an area of existing gardens, which residents would reasonably expect to be quiet and peaceful. There is no guarantee that future occupiers of the proposed house would have electric vehicles, despite the direction of change from government.
45. I conclude that, owing to the proposed layout of the scheme, noise and disturbance from additional comings and goings has the potential to detract from neighbours' enjoyment of their gardens, causing harm to their living conditions. The harm would be modest, but nonetheless, the scheme would prejudice the amenity of occupants of adjacent properties, so it would fail to comply with Core Strategy Policy L7. The proposal would not offer a high level of amenity, so there would also be conflict with paragraph 15. A. of PfE Policy JP-P1.

Other Matters

46. The scheme would be acceptable in terms of drainage, highways and access, with sufficient space for parking. Subject to conditions requiring further details of landscaping and an ecological enhancement scheme, it would meet the requirements of policies in respect of trees and biodiversity. These matters, which represent a lack of harm, are neutral in the planning balance.

Conclusion

47. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would fail to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the South Hale Conservation Area, diminishing its significance. It would detract from the setting Danemere, a non-designated heritage asset, and there would be further harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.
48. The proposal does not comply with the development plan, the Framework or the Act, and I have identified no material considerations which outweigh these harms. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

R Morgan

INSPECTOR