
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 June 2025

by **R Gravett BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/W/25/3364208

Land adjacent to 32 Milwain Road, Stretford, Manchester M32 9BY

- 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 J Martucci against the decision of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 114603/FUL/24.
 - The development proposed is change of use from garage to 1-bed bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The address in the banner heading above has been taken from the decision notice because, with reference to '*Land adjacent to 32*', it more accurately identifies the location of the appeal site than the address used on the planning application form. It is also the address that was used by the appellant on the appeal form.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character of the area; and
 - whether the proposed development would provide an acceptable standard of residential accommodation for future occupiers, with regard to outlook and external amenity space.

Reasons

Character

4. The appeal site comprises a large, detached garage building which is located toward the end of Milwain Road, a residential cul-de-sac. Milwain Road is cohesive and uniform in its character consisting of 1930s semi-detached two-storey dwellings which are constructed in a red brick with a ground and first-floor bay window below a mock Tudor boarded gable.
5. The garage building has recently been constructed and is sited alongside two other detached garages. Several other properties along Milwain Road benefit from integrated or detached garage buildings of various sizes and design. The garage building on the site is larger than others in the surroundings, with a relatively wide frontage. Nevertheless, it has the visual characteristics of a subservient building to the two-storey dwellings at this end of Milwain Road.

6. The conversion to a bungalow would involve the large opening on the front elevation of the garage building being replaced with a front door with gabled porch canopy and a single ground-floor bay window. This design would draw some reference from the ground and first floor bays of neighbouring dwellings. However, it would completely alter the subservient character of the building in this visually sensitive location at the end of the cul-de-sac. It would appear as a small, detached single-storey dwelling which would be an incongruous form of residential development entirely at odds with the prevailing cohesive character of two-storey 1930s semi-detached dwellings in the area.
7. Therefore, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character of the area. It would conflict with Policy JP-P1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (2024) (PfE) and Policy L7 of the Core Strategy (2012) (CS). Together, amongst other things, these require that all development is appropriate in its context and respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the locality.

Standard of living accommodation

8. The proposed bungalow would be 42sqm in size and would meet the minimum gross internal floor area for a 1-bedroom, 1-person single-storey dwelling as set out in the 'Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard' (2015). It would have a practical, usable layout and internally would not be unduly cramped.
9. The open plan living, kitchen and dining area of the bungalow would be to the front of the building. A high-level window on the flank elevation would provide some very limited outlook. A large bay window is also proposed on the front elevation which would face the driveway. However, as the driveway is of limited length a vehicle would need to park very close to this bay window to fully clear the pavement. Consequently, at times, the outlook from this window, and therein from the principal living area of the bungalow, would be restricted. The outlook from the bedroom of the bungalow would also be compromised because of its close proximity to the existing close boarded fence along the side boundary of the appeal site.
10. A rear garden is proposed which would be around 2m in depth and accessed only via the side passageway. Whilst the garden would be private, it would be enclosed by a high boundary fence and there is a mature holly tree in the neighbouring garden. Taken together, the space would get very little light and feel enclosed and uninviting. As a result, and exacerbated by its minimal depth, the proposed garden would not be a user-friendly space which future occupiers of the bungalow could enjoy. The appellant's suggestions that the proposal would be attractive to a particular demographic where small, low maintenance gardens will be preferred is pure speculation. I am not persuaded that the space proposed to the rear would adequately perform the role of a garden, even a small one.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not provide an acceptable standard of residential accommodation for future occupiers, with regard to outlook and external amenity space. It would conflict with PfE Policy JP-P1 and CS Policy L7 in so far as they require development to be comfortable and inviting, with indoor and outdoor environments, and not prejudice the amenity of future occupiers.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

12. The proposal would have a harmful effect on the character of the area and would not provide an acceptable standard of residential accommodation for future occupiers. Development plan conflict arises from the harm that amounts to conflict with the plan as a whole.
13. It involves the conversion of an existing building, making use of previously developed land. It would deliver an additional dwelling which would make a small, but valuable contribution to the supply of housing and to the size and type of accommodation available in the area. However, given the small scale of the proposal and that the benefits come at the cost of demonstrable planning harm, I have afforded these matters only little weight. They are not sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified above.
14. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

R Gravett

INSPECTOR