

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 June 2024

by Andrew Dale BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 July 2024

Appeal Ref. APP/H1033/D/24/3340663

67 Meadow Lane, Dove Holes, High Peak SK17 8DB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Nicola Parsons against the decision of High Peak Borough Council.
 - The application ref. is HPK/2023/0536.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as "*Re submission (sic) of HPK/2022/0455 - Two storey side extension*" but more accurately on the Council's decision notice as "*Two Storey Side Extension, Sunk Patio, and Associated Engineering Operations*".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a 2-storey side extension, sunk patio and associated engineering operations at 67 Meadow Lane, Dove Holes, High Peak SK17 8DB in accordance with the terms of the application ref. HPK/2023/0536, 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 numbered (titled): 101 (Existing Plans) and 200 Rev. A (Proposed Plans).
 - 3) The materials (natural stone for the front and rear walls, render for the gable end wall and blue slates for the roof) to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the terraced property, the street scene and the wider locality.

Reasons

3. Nos 57-67 Meadow Lane comprise a traditional 2-storey terrace of 6 cottages of simple design with natural stone and slates. The terrace is positioned close to the roadside on rising ground at the north-western edge of Dove Holes. The appeal property, no. 67, is at the northern and higher end of the terrace. The
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cottages are modest in size and narrow in width with the exception of no. 57, at the opposite end of the terrace, which is double-fronted. It is unclear whether the extra width of no. 57 came about from its original construction or from an extension. I saw no obvious physical signs of an extension. Its white rendered gable end matches the finish to the gable end of no. 67.

4. Given the elevated location, the terrace can be seen in more distant views from the public footpath that progresses through countryside off Meadow Lane and from the A6 and Hallsteads Close further to the east in the core of the settlement below. In these views, it is primarily the upper half of no. 67 that is visible given the shape of the rising landform in the foreground of the terrace.
5. It is proposed to add a 2-storey side extension that would be about as wide as the existing cottage by extending the main pitched roof across. The patio would be sunk into the banking at the rear spanning across the dwelling as extended. The Council seemed content with the patio at the rear as opposed to its original position to the side. I have no objections to the rear sunken patio.
6. Whilst the Council supported the general principle of extending the dwelling, it considered that the proposed 2-storey side extension, by virtue of its scale, height and massing, would not be subordinate to the existing terraced property, eschewing the guidance in the High Peak design guide and Residential Design Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) for extensions to be subordinate to the main form of the house which is aided by setting them back from the building line and keeping their ridge and eaves heights lower.
7. The SPDs clearly carry weight as material considerations in decision making but they contain recommendations as opposed to planning policy and should not be applied prescriptively to the exclusion of all other factors, including the physical circumstances and context of a site.
8. That the side extension would match the width of the original dwelling is more a reflection of its very limited existing width than a grossly oversized extension. Importantly, the resulting 2-bedroom dwelling would be well designed in itself and would be simply seen to bookend and balance the terrace with a double-fronted design that appropriately reflects the double width of no. 57 at the other end of the terrace, without adopting the overly wide front windows of that cottage which stand out as somewhat incongruous features in near and distant views. As the appellant points out, this context is overlooked by the Council; the Delegated Decision Report refers incorrectly to no. 67 sitting at the end of a row of 4 similar terraced cottages and does not mention no. 57.
9. The scheme would respect the building typology and key characteristics of the host terrace which include a flat-fronted façade, a continuous roofline with the ridge punctuated by 6 chimney stacks, front doors set in stone surrounds and little by way of adornment. As such, I see no reason why the extension cannot be laid out as a simple continuation of the main roof as proposed without being set lower than the parent building or set back from the building line. The new rendered gable end would have a new chimney on the ridge to reflect the current design. The appellant's description of a seamless addition is apt.
10. The extension would replace a small single storey lean-to structure attached to the gable end that currently contains an internal porch, the front entrance door and a store. The front of the lean-to has a white rendered finish. This contrasts

with the natural stone at the front of the terrace. It is also visually awkward for the front entrance door to be in this minor side wing and without a proper stone surround. The appeal scheme would resolve these issues.

11. Whilst *The Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard* deals with internal space within new dwellings, it seems clear that if the existing dwelling was being proposed today, it would fall significantly short on internal space when assessed against those standards. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) seeks to create places that promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. The amount of internal floor space is an important design issue. The additional floor space the appeal scheme would provide is more than a private benefit for the current occupiers. It would represent an improvement to the housing stock that will benefit future occupiers and generations.
12. I consider overall that the proposed extension, although not strictly subordinate to the main form of the house, would otherwise display very careful design as it would result in a dwelling that is well designed in itself and in relation to the wider terrace of which it is a part and that contributes positively to the area's character, history and identity more generally. Rather than detract from the character of the cottage, the extension would harmonize sufficiently with the parent building and host terrace in terms of its size, design, materials and roof pitch and the style, position and proportions of the windows and doors, so adhering to some of the principles of design as set out in the SPDs. It would make a visually positive contribution to its context and location and be respectful of local character and the established street scene along Meadow Lane as seen in near and more distant views.
13. I find on the main issue that, whilst there would be conflict with some parts of the SPDs, the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the terraced property, the street scene and the wider locality. It would display the high design quality and the respect for the character, identity and context of High Peak's townscapes and landscapes that is required by Policies EQ 6 and S 1 of the High Peak Local Plan 2016. Those policies are consistent with the Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed and beautiful places.
14. The Council has suggested 3 conditions in the event of the appeal being allowed. I have considered these. In addition to the standard commencement condition, a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the relevant approved drawings is necessary as this provides certainty. A condition is also necessary to require the use of external materials that match those of the existing building to ensure that the development respects the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area.
15. My finding on the main issue is decisive to the outcome of this appeal. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised and the lack of objections from local residents and organisations and technical consultees, I have concluded that this appeal should succeed.

Andrew Dale

INSPECTOR