



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 October 2025

by J Moore BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/W/25/3370167

239 Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton, Manchester M21 7QL

- 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 & Mrs Tadman against the decision of Manchester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 142871/FO/2025.
 - The development proposed was originally described as: single storey side & rear extension to existing detached garage and conversion to form a new 1 bed detached dwelling with associated landscaping, parking & boundary treatment to the rear of 239 Barlow Moor Road & formation of dropped kerb to allow off-street park at the front of the existing property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area; and
 - whether the proposal would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers, with particular regard to private amenity space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Barlow Moor Road is a classified 'A' road of a substantial length, where the northerly side comprises the extensive grounds of a cemetery. The southerly side displays a mixed character, to include not only two storey residential dwellings and some three-storey flatted development, but also commercial development near Princess Road and some commercial premises/parades. The streets running perpendicular to the southerly side of Barlow Moor Road appear as established residential areas, largely comprising interwar, two storey semi-detached dwellings with front and rear gardens, giving a suburban, spacious and open character, with a sense of rhythm and some degree of uniformity.
4. No 239 Barlow Moor Road (No 239) is a corner plot serving a detached, two-storey dwelling, at the junction with Aldermay Road. A commercial parade begins at the opposite corner to the appeal site at 241 Barlow Moor Road (No 241), which includes a café/restaurant at the corner, and a rear two storey extension forming two flats (Nos 2A and 2B Aldermay Road).
5. No 239's semi-detached neighbours at Nos 235-237 (odds) are similar to those on Aldermay Road in terms of two-storey form, footprint, shared hipped roofs, plot size

and plot shape. Although No 239 occupies a wider plot than Nos 235-237, its hipped roof form creates a degree of harmony with its neighbours along Barlow Moor Road and Aldermay Road. In plan form, the combined plot widths of Nos 235-239 (odds) align with the plot depths of properties along the easterly side of Aldermay Road. These factors lead me to conclude that Nos 235-239 have a strong relationship with the interwar residential character of Aldermay Road, even though their main elevations face on to Barlow Moor Road, and despite the commercial parade with rear flatted development at the opposite corner.

6. The existing detached garage at No 239 is sited at the rear boundary of the plot and set back from the highway, such that its 'front' building line is in general alignment with neighbouring semi-detached forms along Aldermay Road. Due to its siting, scale and single storey form it appears subservient to both to No 239 and the neighbouring semi-detached dwelling at No 1 Aldermay Road (No 1). It reads as an ancillary structure within the rear amenity space of a corner plot, as part of the rear garden setting of Nos 235-239. Consequently, it does not detract from the suburban, open and spacious character of the wider interwar residential character.
7. The proposal would result in the extension of the garage building to form a single storey dwelling within its own plot fronting Aldermay Road. Within its proposed frontage, the driveway to the existing garage would serve as a parking space and part of the rear garden serving No 239 would form external amenity space.
8. The sub-division of the plot at No 239 would result in two smaller plots, neither of which would be commensurate with the prevailing plot size and shape. The resulting dwelling would be in general alignment with the building line along Aldermay Road and retain the narrow separation gap of about 1m to No 1. However, it would appear tightly sited between the flank and rear boundaries of its plot. The absence of a rear garden space would not conform to the prevailing pattern of interwar residential development, where plots include both front and rear garden space. Consequently, the proposal would result in a higher ratio of built form to plot, which would be incongruous to the prevailing pattern of residential development.
9. While the pitched roof form of the existing garage would remain, the flat roofed extension would reach just above eaves height of the existing roof. Such a roof form would not follow the prevailing hipped roof forms at Nos 235-239 and along Aldermay Road. The proposed extension to the existing garage building would face the street and include wide folding glazed doors. The existing garage elevation facing the street would include a proposed 'automatic false garage door'. This door would screen wide folding glazed doors, but only when closed. Such glazing proportions would not reflect those of the host nor those of neighbouring properties along Aldermay Road.
10. Given the absence of glazing treatments to other elevations, the door at the side elevation, and some roof lights, it is highly likely that the automatic false garage door would be left open to allow light into the resulting dwelling and provide an outlook from its living area. The proposed glazing to the existing elevation when the automatic false garage door was open would appear in prominent view within the street scene. While the proposed extension would be largely screened by existing hedging above an existing low wall, it would be visible when travelling along the street towards Barlow Moor Road.

11. Drawing all the above together, the resulting dwelling would appear in sharp contrast to the prevailing scale, form, and architectural details of dwellings in the wider area. It would appear as a highly discordant dwelling form in a tight plot within a rear garden setting, incongruous to the prevailing pattern and form of development.
12. In reaching my findings, I have taken account of two appeal decisions, including a previously allowed appeal Ref: APP/B4215/D/12/2171360 to extend the host property at No 239 by way of a two-storey side and single storey rear extension. The appellants contend that this decision recognises the transitional character of eastern most end of Aldermay Road. However, read as whole, the Inspector refers to the mixed residential and commercial character of Barlow Moor Road and recognises some larger scale recent developments of 3 or more storeys. It does not 'recognise' a transitional character as such, and I consider that my own reasoning provides a finer grain of analysis.
13. In addition, I note the Inspector's findings that the plot width and depth at No 239, and the presence of street trees would result in the extended house not looking out of place in its wider context or cramped within its plot. It is not clear from the appeal decision whether the detached garage was in place at that time. In any event, the Inspector recognised that the depth of the plot at 239 allowed visual separation from Aldermay Road, such that the scheme was found acceptable. In my view, the introduction of further built form within the depth of the host plot would undermine this visual separation and result in a cramped appearance.
14. Appeal Ref APP/B4215/W/18/3219012 granted permission at No 241 for the demolition of an existing rear extension, and the erection of a two-storey rear extension to form two flats and three floors of commercial space. However, the approved plans are not before me, and therefore I cannot be certain as to the extent of the scheme permitted on appeal. In any event, the appellants seek to draw my attention to the absence of a character and appearance reason for refusal by the Council for this scheme and suggest that it represents an infill development of significant scale.
15. The appellants have provided a series of images from Google Street View over time (the images), including before the development allowed on appeal took place. On the evidence before me and having regard to the description of development allowed on appeal, the scheme appears to include what is now a three-storey corner building to include the Sky Lounge café/restaurant, and the flats within the rear extension appear to be Nos 2A and 2B Aldermay Road.
16. While I accept that the character of the site at No 241 is different to the host plot and the remainder of Aldermay Road, the development allowed on appeal is in the immediate context of a commercial parade and included the demolition of an existing rear extension. The decision does not refer to an infill scheme. The Council advises that the separation distance between the rear of the development and the semi-detached forms at Aldermay Road (Nos 2-4 evens) is about 3m, which is greater than the appeal scheme before me. Moreover, the Inspector concluded that the proposal would rejuvenate the site and visually tidy up the rear of it. On this basis, the effect upon character and appearance was found to be a positive factor, weighed in the overall balance. The appeal site before me, however, does not display an untidy appearance, nor does it appear to be in need of rejuvenation.

17. I note that the image dated November 2022 indicates the development was available for let and appeared largely complete. The images from September 2023 onwards demonstrate the introduction of further structures along the flank elevation and canopies to the flank and front elevations. Having regard to the description of development together with these images, and in the absence of a detailed planning history for No 241, I cannot be certain as to the circumstances which led to their construction. I am not bound by previous decisions, and it seems to me that the combination of the roof form and height, the flanking structures and heavy appearance of the canopies results in a somewhat dominating presence at this corner. This appears in contrast to opposite end of the parade, which is of a much shorter height and includes a hipped roof form.
18. For the reasons above, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. It conflicts with Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy 2012 (CS). Taken together, these policies seek to ensure that development makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice, including by creating well designed places, and having regard to the character of the surrounding area, taking account of various factors including siting, layout, scale, form, materials and detail, and detailed guidance. I attach significant weight to this conflict.

Living Conditions

19. The Council's position is partly founded on the fact that the proposal would not include a rear garden. However, nothing I have read in the Manchester Residential Quality Guidance 2016 (MRQG) or the Council's Guide to Development 2007 (GTD) indicates that private amenity space serving a dwelling should be located to the rear. The MRQG requires that sufficient private amenity space is provided in the most appropriate location. The GTD refers to new development being designed to provide on-site amenity space which is fit for purpose and which is informed by and relates to the character of the area; and states "simply this means the provision of gardens that perform well as multi-functional space". In this regard, the effect of the absence of a rear garden in terms of character is addressed in the previous main issue.
20. The quantum of private amenity space would be about 25m², located within the frontage. This would be much greater than the 5m² sought for one bed units in the MRQG and it would be usable for multiple purposes by future occupiers, including space to dry laundry and to relax. Cycle storage would be located outside of this space, within the frontage near No 1.
21. The space would be enclosed by an existing low wall and tall hedging along Aldermay Road, with fencing of 1.8m height along the shared boundary with the host property. A further fence and gate of about 1.2m height would separate it from the car parking space within the frontage. The private amenity space would therefore be physically enclosed and largely screened from public view. However, it would appear in view above the 1.2m fence when travelling along the footway towards Barlow Moor Road, with some further screening provided by a vehicle if it were present in the frontage.
22. The amenity space could be accessed directly from the glazing treatment serving the proposed bedroom. The gate within the 1.2m fencing would facilitate access from the proposed living area, providing the automated false garage door was open. A further route from the door in the flank elevation near No 1 would be available via the gate. However, these arrangements would not be convenient if carrying items between the

dwelling and the garden. Such a route would be via the bedroom; or alternatively via automatic false garage doors and folding doors within the open frontage or via the door within the flank elevation, each of which would require the opening and closing of a gate and navigation near a parked vehicle.

23. Drawing all the above together, the proposal would provide a sufficient quantum of useable private amenity space, but due to the layout of the development, it would not be fit for purpose. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would not provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers, with particular regard to private amenity space. It conflicts with CS Policy DM1, which seeks to ensure that all development has an appropriate layout, and adequate external amenity space.

Other Matters

24. The proposal would support the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) to significantly boost the supply of homes and meet wider housing needs, although one unit would be a small contribution. The proposal would support the efficient use of land. However, such support is not unfettered, as the Framework also seeks to ensure that the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places is taken into account. Temporary economic benefits would arise during the construction phase, with permanent benefits thereafter through additional household expenditure. Collectively, these matters attract limited positive weight in favour of the scheme, but they would not outweigh the harms that I have found. While the proposal is supported by third parties, this matter does not render the proposal acceptable.
25. The appellants draw my attention to the Council's advice following a previous refusal for a two-storey scheme. The advice indicates that a single storey structure might be acceptable subject to its effects upon the character of the area and amenity. In the appellants' view, the advice constitutes a reasonable expectation that a single storey form and smaller plot size would be acceptable. However, such advice is not binding, and there are other factors besides form and plot size which affect the character of the area. It is clearly unfortunate if proposals are amended taking account of advice and the outcome is an adverse one. Such matters do not warrant allowing the appeal, which I have determined on its individual planning merits.

Conclusion

26. 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. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

J Moore

INSPECTOR