The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 March 2020

by C Dillon BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/20/3245313
8, Canterbury Crescent, Middleton M24 2TJ

- 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 Mr Mark Urwin against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
- The application Ref 19/01312/HOUS, dated 4 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 15 January 2020.
- The development is described as 'proposed 2 storey side extension on domestic semi-detached house'.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a 2 storey side extension on a domestic semi-detached house at 8, Canterbury Crescent, Middleton M24 2TJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/01312/HOUS, dated 4 November 2019, 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 approved plans Nos 2019 09 02-01/-02/-03/-04 and 2019 09 02-05 Rev A.

    3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development differs between the planning application form and the decision notice and appeal form. The latter two include reference to 'alterations to existing rear elevation.' I am satisfied that these alterations to reduce the size of an existing rear window opening formed part of the proposals formally advertised and that the appeal can proceed on that basis. The Council has not raised any objections to these works and from the evidence before me I have no reason to disagree.

3. It is noted that whilst the planning application form identifies Mr and Mrs Urwin as the applicants, the appeal has been lodged by Mr Mark Urwin. I am satisfied that the appeal can be determined on this basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed 2 storey side extension on the character and appearance of the street scene, with particular regard to siting, design, size, any consequential terracing effect, and also with regard to implications for refuse bin storage.

Reasons

5. The host building is a semi-detached dwelling located within a well-established 20th century residential housing estate. It sits within a mixed street of semi-detached and terraced 2 storey dwellings. These generally share a common principal front elevation building line and are similar in their overall design and materials. Front gardens and parking areas tend to be contained by a variety of low means of enclosure.

6. The proposed extension would be situated at the side of the appeal dwelling, abutting the common boundary with No 10, an end of terrace property. Though the front elevations of these properties are similar in appearance, there is a differential in eaves and ridge heights between them; No 10, being the higher of the two properties. Currently, there is an intervening visual gap which extends the full depth of the host property. This would be infilled by the proposal. No 10, has a corresponding gap, though a single storey extension takes up part of this spacing. Whilst this type of spacing reflects the original pattern of development, it has been eroded throughout the estate over time by single and two storey side extensions and is no longer a significantly prevailing feature in this particular street scene.

7. Variations in the design of existing extensions are evident. Whilst the principal elevations and ridge lines of some are recessed to varying degrees, others are not. This proposal does have a recessed front elevation at first floor level, a reduced ridge height and a corresponding recessed front roof plane. In design terms the proposal is consistent with the appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings. The proposal would not be in accordance with the level of set-back prescribed by the Council's Guidelines and Standards For Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (adopted June 2016). Nevertheless, the proposal would still be subservient to the host dwelling and also to the adjacent end of terrace property in light of the design and changes in existing eaves and ridge heights.

8. For these reasons, although the proposal would be built up to the common boundary, the objective of the Council's SPD to maintain an adequate differential between properties would still be achieved in this particular instance. This differential would remain should the occupiers of that property ever extend in a similar manner. This reduces the significance of retaining the intervening gap between these properties. Terracing is unlikely to occur for the reasons outlined. Thus, the particular circumstances of this case justify an exception to the strict adherence with the SPD which is allowed for in paragraph 5.13 regarding the requirement for the setting back of an extension from its host.

9. The proposal preserves a reasonable sized front garden, parking and rear garden area. Although the external access to the rear garden would be lost, there is ample opportunity for the storage of refuse bins within the enclosed front garden area and in a way that would not be visually intrusive. It was

observed that opportunities for the location of refuse bin storage are not consistent in the immediate street-scene, varying between the front, rear and side of dwellings. The proposed arrangement would not be dissimilar from many properties within the immediate vicinity and wider estate. As such, it does not present an alien feature within the street scene. Neither would this arrangement result in such a cumulative impact that would tip the balance and cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the street scene. The SPD is guidance and in the absence of harm on this particular occasion an exception to it is justified.

10. Overall, the proposal does not represent poor design. No harm has been identified to the character and appearance of the street scene with particular regard to siting, design, size, any consequential terracing effect and refuse bin storage arrangements. Thus, there is no conflict with Policy DM1 or Policy P3 of the Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (October 2016) or to the development plan as a whole. Policy DM1 sets out general development requirements to ensure that all development is of a high quality, is compatible with its surroundings and provides adequate servicing arrangements. Policy P3 refers to the SPD relating to residential development and seeks to enhance place by developments respecting their context, having regard to matters including scale and massing. Neither is there any conflict with those principles of the National Planning Policy Framework that seek good design.

Conditions

11. In addition to the standard time limit, Condition 2 is necessary as it provides certainty. I have imposed a condition specifying materials as this is necessary to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, the appeal should be allowed subject to the conditions as identified.

C Dillon

INSPECTOR