The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 May 2021 by Darren Ellis MPlan

Decision by Chris Preston BA (Hons) BPl MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/21/3266642
1 Dale View, Littleborough, OL15 0BP

- 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 Simon Hill against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
- The application Ref 20/01119/HOUS, dated 14 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 6 November 2020.
- The development proposed is a first floor side extension and single storey rear extension, along with replacement of existing front porch and application of render.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Background and Main Issue

3. Planning permission[1] has been granted for a smaller first-floor side extension, single-storey rear extension, a replacement front porch and the application of render to the property, although construction of these extensions had yet to begin at the time of my site visit. In effect, the difference between that approval and the current proposal is the increased scale of the now proposed first floor addition. The Council has raised no objection to the other elements of the proposal and I see no reason to take a different view, having regard to the similarities with the extant permission.

4. The main issue is therefore effect of the development on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the street scene, with particular regard to the first-floor side extension.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal property and surrounding properties were built to the same original design, with gable roofs, stone around the ground-floor front windows, render at the first-floor level and brick elsewhere. Many of the properties have since been extended with a range of side extensions, front extensions and front porches. However, the properties have retained their original character and

[1] Planning application ref. 19/00716/HOUS

form a rhythm and pattern in the street scene. Overall, they positively contribute to the character and appearance of the area. The appeal property is located on a corner plot and the space surrounding the dwelling contributes to the generally low density feel of the estate. That sense of openness is evident on other corner plots in the immediate vicinity and is a positive feature of the area.

6. Paragraph 5.1 of the Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development Sustainable Planning Document (June 2016) (SPD) states that house extensions should be in keeping with the host property and generally should be subservient to it.

7. The introduction of built form at first floor level above the existing garage would add substantial mass to the dwelling. That massing would be set only a limited distance back from the main front elevation of the dwelling and as such the apparent bulk of the building would be substantially increased. The extension would be almost the same width as the main house and would fail to respect the proportions of the main house and therefore would not be subservient to it.

8. Furthermore, the design of the first-floor extension with regards to the fenestration on the front elevation would result in an expanse of render that is not in keeping with the existing ratio of render around the windows. The result of the overall scale and fenestration would be an excessively elongated property, the proportions of which would not respect the modest scale of the original dwelling. In addition, the pleasant sense of space surrounding the property would be diminished and this would have a harmful effect on the open character of the estate. I recognise that the presence of the sub-station would avoid any terracing effect but, nonetheless, the gable wall would extend close to the boundary of the property and the feeling of openness would be notably eroded.

9. In contrast, the previously approved side extension would be of a width that respects the proportions of the existing dwelling and would retain a visual break at first floor level adjacent to the boundary of the site. The existence of this fallback position therefore does not justify the additional bulk and mass of the proposed side extension.

10. My attention has been drawn to other side extensions in the vicinity of the appeal property. No details of any planning permissions for these extensions have been provided so I cannot be certain of the circumstances of when these extensions obtained permission or the planning policy position at the time. Nevertheless, they all appear to be of a width that respects the proportions of the original house and designed so that the fenestration and materials are in keeping with the original house. In addition, as mentioned above, the scale of development on corner plots within the surrounding area has generally maintained the spacious feel of the estate, the presence of other examples referred to does not alter that prevailing feel and does not alter my conclusion on the harmful effect of the proposal in this instance.

11. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed first-floor side extension would cause harm to the character and appearance of the appeal property and the street scene. As such the side extension would conflict with policies P3 and DM1 of the Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (October 2016) (CS), which requires development proposals to be of a high-quality design that contributes

positively to the townscape and enhances the quality of the area. The proposed side extension would also fail to accord with the guidance in paragraph 5.1 of the (SPD).

12. The appellant hasn't specifically requested that a split decision is issued in the event that the appeal is unsuccessful in respect of the first-floor addition. It appears that the existing permission already covers the other elements and the proposed rear extension is not completely severable from the proposed side extension because the pitched roof would tie in with the rear wall of the extension and could not be completed as shown on the plans unless the two storey side extension was also constructed. As such, it would not be appropriate to issue a split decision in this instance.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I therefore recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Darren Ellis

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and, on that basis, I agree with the recommendation and shall dismiss the appeal.

Chris Preston

INSPECTOR