



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 July 2024

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/24/3342753

1 Ramsden Farm, Round Thorn Road, Middleton M24 1ZB

- 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 Marcel Duffy against the decision of Rochdale Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/01341/HOUS.
 - The development proposed is a single-storey granny annex extension, separate from the existing property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed annex extension on the character and appearance of the streetscene.

Reasons

3. No.1 Ramsden Farm (No.1) is a large, detached two-storey dwelling located on the western side of Ramsden Farm, off Round Thorn Road. Ramsden Farm comprises a development of 4no. dwellings, of similar contemporary design with a hipped roof form, feature glazed facing gables, finished in a combination of facing brickwork and render with black ash-effect fenestration.
4. The 4no. dwellings have a slightly staggered front building line and Nos1 and 4 Ramsden Farm (at either end) have a detached garage sited forward of, and perpendicular to, the principal building line. No.1 is the first dwelling at Ramsden Farm as approached from the south and benefits from a large plot that wraps around the rear and side of the dwelling, sharing a common boundary to the west with dwellings fronting St Dominic's Way.
5. The proposal is to construct a detached single storey granny annex within the side garden of No.1. The annex has been designed with a hipped roof and feature glazed entrance gable and would be finished in facing brickwork with black ash effect windows; it would therefore be in keeping with the contemporary design of its host. Further, it would be a height of around 3.72m to its ridge, and only around 2.41m to its eaves, which means it would appear subservient to No.1. In this regard, it would accord with the guidance at paragraph 5.1 of the Council's *Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development SPD (2016)* that house extensions should be in keeping with the host dwelling and generally should be subservient to it.

6. However, I observed on my site visit that the layout of Ramsden Farm has been carefully and well-designed, with the large dwellings proportionate to their plot sizes, well-spaced, typically with open frontages, which results in a spacious and open character and appearance to the development. No.1 has been sited off its shared boundary with those dwellings fronting St Dominic's Way and whilst the front boundary is partly enclosed with a horizontal panelled fence and trellis, the side garden contributes positively to this open character. It also provides a clear break in built form between the new development of Ramsden Farm and older residential cul-de-sac of St Dominic's Way.
7. It is accepted that the proposed annex has been set well back (around 13m) from the road, so behind the front building line of both the host dwelling and its detached garage. However, when viewed within the street scene from the south, and notably from the double gates on the southwest boundary of No.1, the annex would appear unduly prominent. Despite its modest height, its siting and footprint (around 78sqm) means it would effectively fill the open space to the side of No.1, eroding the break in built form, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the street scene.
8. I note from the planning history of the wider development, and I observed on my site visit, that there are large existing outbuildings to the rear of Ramsden Farm, which are glimpsed from the road between the individual dwellings. In contrast, the proposed annex would, in combination with the detached garage, appear as an arrangement of multiple outbuildings to the side of No.1 which I find would be visually overbearing and unsympathetic to the well-designed wider development.
9. I therefore conclude on the main issue that the proposed annex would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling, and wider street scene. Consequently, it would conflict with policies DM1 and P3 of the Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (2016) which together require all development, including extensions and alterations, to be of high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area, respecting context, having regard to scale, density and layout. It would further conflict with the guidance at paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework that planning decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment.

Conclusions

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR