The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 September 2019

by D Peppitt BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/19/3232863
76 Hardfield Road, Middleton M24 1JB

- 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 M Doswell against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
- The application Ref 19/00432/HOUS, dated 12 April 2019 was refused by notice dated 6 June 2019.
- The development proposed is two storey side and single storey rear extensions.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The site is located on Hardfield Road, a residential street characterised by 2-storey properties and bungalows. The houses within the vicinity of the host property are predominately pairs of 2 storey semi-detached dwellings. This pattern is only altered after the junction with Leominster Road, where there are semi-detached bungalows on the opposite side of the road. Whilst there are slight variations to the properties along the road, due to changes that occupiers have made over time, there is a strong rhythm to the street scene, which is the principal contributor of the area's pleasant character and appearance. The street frontage is reasonably open such that the appeal property, like many of the neighbouring houses, is readily visible from along Hardfield Road, particularly when entering the road from Leominster Road.

4. The host property is a 2-storey semi-detached house. It is set back from the road with a lawn and driveway to the front. The driveway runs between No 76 and the neighbouring property, No 78, and leads to a detached garage at the rear of the property. The proposal seeks to add a 2-storey side extension and single storey rear extension.

5. The neighbouring property No 78 has an existing side extension which extends to the shared boundary with No 76. Therefore, the proposal would considerably reduce the gap that currently exists between the two properties. Although there would still be a gap, it would be reduced to such an extent that it would give a terracing effect when viewed from along the street. The Guidelines and

Standards for Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document 2016 (GSRDSPD), states that where a side extension is within one metre of the shared boundary, the front elevation of the side extension should be set back from the front elevation of the main house. The proposed extension would be positioned within close proximity to the shared boundary and would not be set back from the front elevation of the host dwelling.

6. I note that the proposal seeks to replicate the materials of the host building which would harmonise it with its context. However, this would not outweigh the harm I have found on the form, size and siting of the proposed development. Despite the matching materials, the proposed development would still be at odds with, and harmful to, the character and appearance of the host building and the wider area.

7. The proposed development would, therefore, have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area. Consequently, in that regard, it would be contrary to Policies DM1 and P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, adopted October 2016 and the Supplementary Planning Document Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development, adopted June 2016. These policies and guidance seek to ensure that new development is high quality and responds to the local context.

Other Matters

8. I note the appellant has raised that existing properties on the road have had extensions, which I observed on my site visit and have taken into account in my assessment of the street scene. However, I do not have sufficient evidence before me to confirm their planning status or the circumstances in which they may have been approved. In any case I must assess the proposal before me on its own individual merits.

9. I also note that there were no objections raised by neighbouring properties. However, this does not mean that the harm to the character and appearance is reduced or does not exist.

10. I acknowledge that the proposal would offer increased internal space for the current occupiers and could be attractive to future occupiers. However, there is no substantive evidence before me that comparable accommodation is not available elsewhere in the area. Therefore, I afford this only limited weight and it does not outweigh the harm that I have identified above.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

D Peppitt

INSPECTOR