



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 January 2024

by N Kempton BA(Hons) PGDip MA IHBC MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 February 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/23/3334464

48 Rose Avenue, Littleborough OL15 8QJ

- 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 Karl Whittaker against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 23/00582/HOUS, dated 1 June 2023, was refused by notice dated 13 September 2023.
 - The development proposed is a first floor extension with the addition of front and rear dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a first floor extension with the addition of front and rear dormers at 48 Rose Avenue, Littleborough, Rochdale OL15 8QJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 23/00582/HOUS, dated 1 June 2023, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development 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 following approved plans: Location plan; existing and Proposed Block Plans, Drawing No. 22.3023.2; Existing Floor Plans, Elevations and Section Plan- Drawing No. 22.3023.1B; Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations- Drawing No. 22.3023.SC3.1B.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development permitted shall be constructed in materials to match the external surfaces of the host dwelling.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of proposed works is taken from the decision notice, rather than the application form, in the interests of clarity and accuracy.
3. Both parties were given the opportunity to comment on the amended National Planning Policy Framework, published in December 2023 and I have taken into account representations received.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal property is located in a predominantly residential part of Littleborough. The property is a two storey, semi-detached dormer bungalow, and forms part of a residential estate which features mainly semi-detached pitched roof dormer bungalows. The estate is characterised by a close-knit grain with a regular layout of paired semis, orientated with ridgeline parallel to the street and set back from the pavement's edge behind modest front gardens and private driveways. Gardens and hedges soften the built form.
6. The proposed development would extend the dwelling with a first floor side extension above the existing single storey garage with projecting front and rear flat-roofed dormers. Consequently, at first floor level the space adjacent to the existing built form on the site would be further enclosed.
7. The appeal property occupies a corner plot adjacent to the junction of Rose Avenue and Johnston Avenue. The Council's Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD (2016) recognises that side extensions to dwellings on a corner plot can have an unacceptable impact on the street scene by eroding the space around buildings and presenting a hard edge to the public highway. The guidance in the SPD states that planning permission will not normally be granted for a two storey extension to a dwelling on a corner plot unless it maintains sufficient space between the boundary of the site and the nearest part of the extension.
8. Notwithstanding this guidance, the space to the side of the host dwelling has already been eroded by the erection of a single storey pitched roof garage, which presents a hard edge to the public highway in the form of a gable wall. The proposed first floor extension will not project further than the existing single storey extension- this moderate degree of incursion beyond the building line has previously been deemed to be acceptable in this location. It is noted that the existing space between the appeal property's side boundary and the gable end wall of the extension will be maintained, thereby retaining sufficient space and allowing access to the rear garden.
9. Whilst the proposed development would enclose the existing space at first floor level, I do not consider that the additional enclosure would erode the space to a harmful degree or negatively impact on the character and appearance of the area given the particular situation of the host property in an open part of the street. The appeal property and the adjacent property, 2 Johnston Avenue are separated by the rear garden associated with the host property and the private driveway which extends down the side of 2 Johnston Avenue. The proposed development would not significantly erode this sense of space between the adjacent dwellings, rather an appreciable degree of openness would be retained.
10. I observed a number of incremental alterations, additions and comparable extensions peppered amongst the strongly established uniform pattern of development on the estate and along Rose Avenue specifically- in close proximity to the appeal site. The proposed extension would not substantially undermine this pattern of development, limited as it is to the area above the ground floor. The loss of spaciousness on this particular corner plot would not

result in an incongruous form of development in its spatial context, given its configuration.

11. The roof pitch of the existing extension is a shallower gradient than the main house, which appears incongruous in the street scene. The proposed extension will extend to the height of the principle ridgeline and reflect the pitch of the roof of the host dwelling, such that the extension will be read as a continuation of the existing dwelling in form, height, roof pitch and alignment of dormers. Furthermore, the palette of materials will match the host dwelling. As such, whilst not subservient to the host dwelling, the proposed first floor extension would not appear as a prominent, visually intrusive or overly dominant addition to the street scene. The mass and form of the dwelling as a whole would not be obtrusive and would not have a significant and detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the street scene.
12. Therefore I conclude that the proposed development would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would not conflict with policies DM1 and P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy (2016) and the Framework. Among other objectives, these seek to ensure that all development proposals are of high quality, respect context and enhance the quality of the area.

Conditions

13. I have edited the suggested conditions in the interests of precision and clarity. Condition (1) is the statutory time condition required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Condition (2) lists the approved plans and is necessary to ensure clarity of what has been permitted. Condition (3) regards details of materials to be used in the external finishes of the development and is warranted to ensure their suitability in the interests of visual amenity, in accordance with policies P3 and DM1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy and the Framework.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal is in accordance with the development plan taken as a whole and the appeal is allowed.

N Kempton

INSPECTOR