The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 28 September 2021

by F Rafiq BSc (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/21/3279080
15 Mount Road, Middleton M24 1DY

- 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 James Kirk & Ms Catherine Fraser against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
- The application Ref 21/00247/HOUS, dated 18 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 26 April 2021.
- The development proposed is described as a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. A revised National Planning Policy Framework was published in July 2021 (the Framework). Whilst the paragraph numbers have changed in regard to those relevant to the main issue of this case, the substance thereof remains the same as the 2019 iteration. I have not therefore sought the views of the main parties. I have proceeded with reference to the 2021 Framework in my findings.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal building is a two-storey semi-detached property which is situated on the corner of Mount Road and Lever Walk. The surrounding area contains mainly semi-detached properties of varying styles and designs, although many have common features, such as bay windows and hipped roofs. The properties, particularly along Mount Road, are generally positioned along similar building lines and this consistency, as well as the presence of grass verges, street trees and planting within gardens, contributes to the verdant, cohesive character of the area.

5. The proposed two storey extension would extend towards Lever Walk which is to the side of the appeal site. It would stand forward of the building line that defines the side elevation of the appeal property and the front elevation of the nearest pair of semi-detached properties on Lever Walk. Although the development would still maintain a set back from this side boundary, the area of side garden would be significantly reduced. I was able to see the dense

hedge along the side boundary to the site which shields ground floor views of the appeal site. However, the extension to the side of the dwelling would be noticeably higher at two storeys and would thereby compromise the spaciousness in this location. The two established trees towards the rear would only provide limited screening of the proposal, and I do not consider the narrow gap on the other side of Mount Road, opposite the junction with Lever Walk, reduces the harm to spaciousness that would be caused by the development. Rather, the narrow width of Lever Walk exacerbates the loss of the open area to the side of the appeal property.

6. Reference has been made to the side elevation of No. 17 Mount Road extending beyond the front of No. 11 Lever Walk. The proposal would not however mirror this, as the building at No. 17 maintains a considerable separation to its side boundary. In this regard, the proposal would be contrary to the Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which requires, at Paragraph 5.14, for extensions on corner plots to maintain sufficient space to the boundary.

7. I therefore conclude that the appeal development would have an unacceptable harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would conflict with Policies DM1 and P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, which seek, amongst other things, for developments to adhere to high standards of design and have regard to scale, massing, height and layout of surrounding buildings and areas. Notwithstanding the conflict with the SPD, the proposed development would also be at odds with Paragraph 130 of the Framework, which seeks to ensure that development is sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

8. My attention has been drawn to other extensions, including those at Nos. 11, 13, 14 and 26 Mount Road. Those properties are not however positioned in corner locations and therefore have limited relevance to the appeal scheme before me. A previous approval on the appeal site has also been referenced by the appellant dating from 2004 and a comparison has been made with this appeal scheme. This previous approval however significantly predates the current development plan and the SPD which were adopted in 2016. I am only therefore able to afford limited weight to this matter.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above, having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the Framework, and all other material considerations, the appeal is dismissed.

F Rafiq

INSPECTOR