
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 October 2016

by Gareth Wildgoose BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 17 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/U4230/D/16/3157228
16 Wellington Street West, Salford M7 2FH

- 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 Mrs R Pruim against the decision of Salford City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/68188/HH, dated 9 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of a single storey rear extension and construction of front and rear roof dormers to accommodate a loft conversion.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to construction of front and rear roof dormers to accommodate a loft conversion.
2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted insofar as it relates to a single storey rear extension at 16 Wellington Street West, Salford M7 2FH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/68188/HH, dated 9 May 2016, and the plans submitted with it, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted, insofar as it relates to the single storey rear extension only, shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: DA16019.001. (Site - Location and Block Plan), DA16019.002. (Existing GA Plans and Elevations) and DA16019.003 Rev A (Proposed GA Plans and Elevations).
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matters

3. The main parties made reference to a previous planning application (application Ref 16/67740/HH) for a similar proposal which was refused planning permission and has not been subject to an appeal. The appeal proposal before me reflects a revised design of the front dormers submitted as a separate planning application which was also refused planning permission by the Council.
-

4. The appellant has expressed a willingness to amend the design of the front dormers if required. However, no revised proposal is before me and therefore, I necessarily determine the appeal on the basis of the drawings submitted and refused by the Council.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is a two storey mid-terraced property of modest proportions located on the eastern side of Wellington Street West between the junctions with Hill Street and Arran Street. This section of Wellington Street West is defined by long terraces with a roofscape that gradually increases in height at eaves and ridge level in groups of houses to follow the sloped topography of the street in a northward direction. The rear elevations of the terraced properties on the eastern side of Wellington Street West have characteristic two storey rear outriggers, predominantly shared with neighbouring properties, and small rear yards albeit that some have been lost to single storey extensions.
7. Policy DES1 of the City of Salford Unitary Development Plan 2004-2016 (UDP), adopted June 2006, requires that development responds to its physical context, respects the positive character of the local area and contributes towards local identity and distinctiveness. Policy DES8 of the UDP states that planning permission will only be granted for alterations or extensions to existing buildings that respect the general scale, character, rhythm, proportions, details and materials of the original structure and complement the general character of the surrounding area.
8. The Salford City Council Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions (SPD), adopted July 2006, was prepared to guide the interpretation of policies in the UDP. The guidance relating to dormers extensions indicates that, amongst other things, planning permission will not normally be granted facing an adopted highway, unless they can be designed in a way which does not have an unacceptable impact on the street scene.
9. The long terraces to both sides of Wellington Street West surrounding the appeal site have a strong rhythm and sense of uniformity with the majority of properties having retained their original front roof planes without dormers. This visual effect is only interrupted by a landmark building on the northern corner of the junction with Hill Street, the increased ridge height and presence of a modest front dormer at No 28, and the different character of properties to the south of the junction with Arran Street.
10. The existing pitched roof front dormer at No 28 does not look out of place or detract from the even terraced forms that otherwise characterise the street scene, due to its siting towards the higher roof ridge of the property, limited proportions and partial screening offered by a chimney stack. In contrast, the two pitched roof front dormers proposed to No 16 would be viewed as large, bulky and dominant additions to the roofscape due to their substantial width and depth resulting in coverage of more than half of the roof slope of the property. The front dormers would, therefore, appear incongruous within the

roofscape of the terraced row. The harmful effect on the host property and the street scene would be worsened by their prominence due to the reduced eaves and ridge height of the roof of the adjacent No 14. I, therefore, consider that the addition of the proposed front dormers at No 16 would significantly detract from the appearance of the host property and the wider terrace of which it is part.

11. The design of the front dormers incorporates SPD guidance with respect to siting below the ridge line of the dwelling and a set back from the eaves to ensure the window sill rests on the roof plane. However, these design features are not sufficient to mitigate the harm arising from the overall massing and proportions of the dormers, together with the incompatibility of the dormer windows with the alignment of existing windows at first floor level.
12. In reaching the above findings, I have taken into account that there is a grouping of properties with front dormers located within a terrace on the western side of Wellington Street West beyond the junction with Scovell Street. I also observed a further grouping of semi-detached properties with front dormers on the eastern side of Wellington Street West beyond the junction with St. John's Street. However, the character of those properties and their surroundings are markedly different from the strong rhythm of the long terraces of which the appeal proposal forms part and therefore, do not justify the harm identified.
13. The appellant also referred to examples of a number of similar front dormers additions to terraced rows along Wellington Street East, located to the opposite side of Bury New Road. I also observed that front dormers of varied styles are a common or original feature of properties nearby on Great Clowes Street, Howe Street, Hope Street and Lower Broughton Road. In those street scenes, where there are a significant number of properties with front dormers, the character has markedly changed. However, those streets do not have a direct influence upon the character and appearance of the section of Wellington Street West of which the appeal property forms part. Furthermore, the example of intermittent groupings of large, bulky and dominant front dormers on Wellington Street East in particular, should not be seen as setting a precedent for the character of Wellington Street West to be similarly eroded.
14. The appellant also has drawn my attention to the Council having recently granted planning permission for similar dormers at 23 Douglas Street within a terraced row that had no previous precedent. However, I do not have the full details of the circumstances that led to that proposal being accepted. In such circumstances, I cannot be sure that it represents a direct parallel to the appeal proposal, particularly as it is located in a street scene influenced by the presence of a large side dormer to an existing rear outrigger on the opposite side of Douglas Street.
15. The Council have not offered any concerns with respect to the proposed rear dormer. Based on the evidence before me and observations during my visit to the site, I have no reason to take a different view. The rear dormer would be largely hidden from the street scene due to the predominance of large two storey rear outriggers in the adjoining terraced row and the close proximity of a similar terraced row of properties at the rear which face Manley Street. However, the rear dormer forms part of a loft conversion also consisting of the front dormers to which harm has been identified. As such, the rear dormer

would not be severable from the part of the development which I consider to be unacceptable.

16. Having taken all of the above into account, I conclude that the front dormers and associated loft conversion, including a rear dormer, would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. The proposed front dormers and associated loft conversion would, therefore, be contrary to Policies DES1 and DES8 of the UDP and the related guidance within the SPD. Although the policies predate the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) they are consistent with its design objectives and are therefore given considerable weight.
17. The Council have not expressed any concerns with respect to the single storey rear extension. Based on the information before me and my observations during my visit to the site, I have no reason to take a different view. The single storey extension would be of a flat roof design that would wraparound the existing two storey rear outrigger with reduced bulk and massing and would, therefore, appear subordinate. Furthermore, similarly to the rear dormer, it would be well screened from public vantage points. As such the single storey rear extension is acceptable with respect to its effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area and therefore, complies with Policies DES1 and DES8 of the UDP.

Other Matters

18. It is common ground between the main parties that the proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact upon the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring properties. Based on the evidence before me, I have no reason to take a different view. In terms of matters of privacy, the dormer windows would be further away from surrounding properties than existing first floor windows and no windows are proposed to the side elevations facing No 14 and No 18. In terms of outlook, the single storey rear extension would be closer to the ground floor windows in the rear elevation of No 14. However, its limited bulk and massing arising from its flat roof design and the precedent of more substantial two storey outriggers to either side of the window would prevent an unacceptable impact in terms of overbearing, overshadowing or loss of light.
19. The single storey rear extension would cover the entire rear yard of the appeal site. Ordinarily the associated loss of amenity space would not be encouraged. However, the wider locality has a significant number of similar additions where outside amenity space has been replaced by useable habitable accommodation. In such circumstances, it would not be reasonable to preclude a similar development to the appeal property.
20. The development would provide additional living space, including three additional bedrooms and a bathroom associated to the loft conversion. I understand and sympathise with the wishes of the appellant to provide additional space for her growing family and extend in a manner which she considers would enhance the value of the property. I also acknowledge the wishes of the appellant and her family to reside in the local area to ensure close proximity to a place of worship, schools and existing services in the local community. However, although the absence of suitable and affordable alternative properties in the local area has been indicated, there is no detailed evidence in that respect which limits the weight I give. Furthermore, I am not

satisfied that the internal layout of the property and a loft conversion could not be reconfigured to provide significant additional living space if the front dormers as proposed are omitted. Consequently, the personal circumstances put forward are not sufficient to outweigh the harm identified.

21. The appellant has expressed concerns in terms of the Council's approach in dealing with planning applications relating to the appeal site. However, those matters have no effect on the planning merits of the proposal before me or the outcome of this appeal.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed and planning permission refused insofar as the appeal relates to construction of front and rear roof dormers to accommodate a loft conversion, but allowed and planning permission granted insofar as it relates to a single storey rear extension. The respective parts of the development are clearly severable.

Conditions

23. The Council did not suggest any conditions in the event that the appeal would be allowed. Nevertheless, with respect to the planning permission to be granted for the single storey rear extension only, a standard condition which limits the lifespan of the planning permission is necessary. I have also specified the approved plans and the relevant parts of the development to which they relate to provide certainty in terms of the planning permission granted.
24. A further condition is also necessary to ensure that the single storey rear extension utilises matching materials in the absence of details on the approved plans.

Gareth Wildgoose

INSPECTOR