

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 April 2017

by Harold Stephens BA MPhil DipTP MRTPI FRSA

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

Decision date: 25 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/17/3171562

196 Kensington Street, Rochdale OL11 1QS

- 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 Khalid against the decision of Rochdale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01384/HOUS dated 15 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 25 January 2017
 - The development proposed is the erection of a front porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. At my site visit I saw that the front porch has been constructed. At present there are window frames located on both sides of the porch. Notwithstanding this, the appeal proposal must be determined on the basis of the plans submitted with the application, which detail a blank wall along the south western (side) elevation.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the front porch on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a mid-terrace property. The porch extension is located along the common boundary with 198 Kensington Street. The porch projects forward some 1.5m beyond the front elevation of the main dwelling. It is set back some 4m from the front boundary of the site.
 5. The development plan for the area includes the Rochdale Core Strategy which was adopted in 2016. Policies DM1 and P3 of the Core Strategy require all development proposals, including extensions and alterations to demonstrate that they are of high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area.
 6. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in this case. Paragraphs 56 and 58 of the NPPF state that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and that good design should contribute positively to making places better for people and should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.
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7. The Council has also adopted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) entitled 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (2016). The purpose of this guidance is to assist in the process of ensuring high quality design for residential development throughout the Borough and to supplement local and national policies. The SPD states that extensions and alterations to existing properties should be carefully designed to be in keeping with the host property and should generally remain subservient to it.
8. At my site visit I saw that existing front porches situated along Kensington Street are modest in size and a number of properties have bay windows located within the front elevation. Furthermore, I saw that the appeal property is widely visible within the existing street scene. In my view, when viewed from the road, the proposed development is obtrusive and visible in long range views along the street, presenting an incongruous feature which is not compatible with the appearance of the host dwelling.
9. The front porch, by virtue of its size, scale and massing, has resulted in an insubordinate and disproportionate addition to the host dwelling and appears unduly prominent within the street scene to the detriment of the character of the surrounding area. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy DM1 and P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, the Council's SPD and the NPPF. On the main issue I conclude that the appeal must fail.
10. I have taken into account all other matters raised. I acknowledge that the window within the north eastern (side) elevation results in some overlooking to the front garden of the adjoining property to the east, 194 Kensington Street. However, I find that this does not cause significant harm to the living conditions at that property in terms of overlooking or loss of privacy. Moreover, the proposal does not unduly impact upon the amenity of any neighbouring occupiers through overshadowing or loss of outlook or daylight and therefore accords with Policy DM1, the SPD and the NPPF with regard to residential amenity.
11. Reference is made to other properties within the area where front extensions have been approved by the Council. I do not have all the details about these properties. However, none of these developments persuaded me that the appeal proposal is appropriate in this situation. Suffice it to say that each decision must be considered on its own merits and in accordance with the provisions of the development plan and any other material considerations.
12. I note the arguments advanced in support of the porch that it improves security at the property and assists access for disabled members of the family. Whilst I have sympathy for the personal circumstances outlined in the representations they do not outweigh the harm arising from the permanent development in the appeal proposal. Planning conditions would not overcome the objections I have described. I conclude that the proposal is in overall conflict with the development plan. None of the points raised are sufficient to outweigh this conflict. The proposal does not constitute sustainable development. My overall conclusion is that the appeal should be dismissed.

Harold Stephens

INSPECTOR