
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 June 2017

by Paul Singleton BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 13 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/U4230/D/17/3176244

487 Hilton Lane, Worsley, Manchester M28 3TE

- 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 and Mrs Lee Watkinson against the decision of Salford City Council.
 - The application Ref 17/69487/HH, dated 12 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 26 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is part demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a two storey side extension to include living space in the roof, construction of porch and Juliet balconies to front elevation and glass balcony to rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for part demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a two storey side extension to include living space in the roof, construction of porch and Juliet balconies to front elevation and glass balcony to rear at 487 Hilton Lane, Worsley, Manchester M28 3TE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 17/69487/HH, dated 12 February 2017, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drawing No. 16.16.01 – Location Plan (dated January 2017);

Drawing No. 16.16.32 - Proposed Block Plan and Street Elevations (dated April 2017);

Drawing No. 16.16.30 - Proposed Ground, First and Second Floor Plans (dated April 2017);

Drawing No. 16.16.30 – Proposed Elevations (dated April 2017).
 - 3) Notwithstanding condition 2, no development shall take place until a revised drawing, showing the retention and re-use of all of the existing window openings in the front elevation of that part of the existing building to be retained, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with those approved details.
 - 4) No development shall take place until samples of the facing brickwork and roof tiles to be used in the repair/ reconstruction of the existing
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building and in the construction of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Procedural Matter

2. I have adopted the description of development used in the decision notice and appeal form in preference to that used in the original application as this provides a clearer description of the proposal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached cottage joined with Number 485a Hilton Lane, with the appeal property forming about 75% of the combined length of the two cottages. The building is in an extensive state of disrepair and in need of major refurbishment. The kitchen and bedrooms are small by modern standards and the very low headroom available at first floor level is a significant constraint on the usability of the property as a family home.
5. The group of dwellings comprising Nos. 485a, 485b, 487 and 487a Hilton Lane is set back a considerable distance behind the common building line on the north side of the road with No. 487a standing directly to the rear of Nos. 489-497. The design and appearance of these properties is quite different to that of the traditional terraced houses which dominate this side of the road. Due to the degree to which the properties are set back and the extensive screening provided by boundary hedges and vegetation in their front gardens the houses are hidden in all but direct views from the opposite side of the street. For these reasons this group of properties makes a very limited contribution to the street scene in Hilton Lane.
6. The proposed side extension would have a deeper floor plan than the existing cottage and would project forwards of its front elevation by around 3.8 metres. It would also have taller eaves and ridge heights than the existing building. Because of these differences the extension would not appear as subservient to the original building but neither of the relevant policies in the Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) requires that an extension to an existing building should be subservient. Given the physical constraints of the host property such an approach would be unlikely to meet the need for larger rooms and increased floor-to-ceiling heights in order to bring the extended dwelling up to modern standards. Indeed, an extension restricted to the depth and height of the existing cottage would likely unbalance its appearance and further erode its original character.
7. The proposed design seeks to distinguish between the retained and new elements of the extended dwelling and to achieve a juxtaposition of the old and the new which accentuates the qualities of both. This is an entirely appropriate approach to take in relation to the appeal property and in the context of the existing significant variation in the scale, design and appearance of the four properties that form this small and largely isolated group.

8. Nos. 485b and 487 follow a common building line but this is of very limited length and I agree that the forward projection and gable elevation of the proposed extension would balance the existing prominent projection to No. 485a. Its ridge height would line through with that property and would be below that of No. 487a which, in any event, follows a different building line. The main facing materials of brick and render would mirror those used in the two cottages while the Juliet balconies and floor-to-ceiling glazing would give the extension a contemporary appearance in keeping with that of the front elevation to No. 487b.
9. As a result of its increased depth, footprint, height and more contemporary design the extension would read as a fresh and confident entity that would contrast appropriately with the retained part of the cottage and blend in with its neighbours. This approach is consistent with the statement in the reasoned justification to UDP Policy DES 8 that the policy encourages inventive and innovative design provided that the development respects its context. In addition, although the policy seeks that extensions should respect the scale, proportions and materials of the host building it also states that the design of alterations and extensions should ensure that the resultant building appears as an attractive and coherent whole. The design of the proposed extension would achieve that outcome.
10. The end bay of the existing dwelling would be demolished but the proposal would retain most of the character of the remaining part of the cottage. The retained elevation would be sympathetically repaired/ rebuilt and its roof would be retained and re-clad in blue-grey slate to match the existing roof to the appeal property and No. 485a. The new porch would add interest to the existing elevation and the minor projection of the skylight above the existing roof slope would not cause any material harm to the character of the building. However, although large modern windows would be appropriate in the new extension, the installation of a full height window in the front elevation to the retained part of the cottage would harm its original character.
11. I accept that large areas of glazing are often used in the conversion of historic buildings but my experience is that these are successful only when making use of an existing opening. That would not be the case here. The loss of 2 of the existing window openings and their replacement with full height glazing would have a detrimental effect on the simple form of the front elevation to the cottage and the symmetry that would otherwise be retained within that elevation. This would reduce the degree to which the retained element would readily be identifiable as an older cottage of distinctive character. In my judgement that change would not support the objective of achieving a harmonious juxtaposition of the old and new within the proposed design.
12. The retention and re-use of the original window openings would have a minimal effect on the amount of light within the entrance hall and I consider this to be a reasonable revision. Accordingly, I conclude that the planning permission should not include approval for that element of the proposal and that a condition requiring the submission and approval of an amended drawing to incorporate this amendment should be attached.
13. Subject to this minor revision, the proposal would provide for an acceptable quality of design which would cause no material harm to the character and appearance of the host property. In light of my comments about the limited

contribution which this small and isolated group of buildings makes to the street scene neither would it cause harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. I therefore find that the proposal complies with UDP Policies DES 1, which requires that development should respect the positive character of the local area and contribute to local identity and distinctiveness, and DES 8, which requires that extensions and alterations must ensure that the resultant building appears as an attractive and coherent whole.

14. The Council has raised no objection to the proposed rear extension and porch and I saw nothing on my site visit to suggest that these would have an adverse effect either on the character and appearance of the area or on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings.

Conditions

15. Planning permission is granted in accordance with the terms of the application but, in the interests of certainty, a condition is needed to tie the permission to the approved plans. I have attached a condition requiring the submission and approval of a revised front elevation for that part of the existing building to be retained to provide for the retention and re-use of all of the existing window openings. This is needed to achieve a scheme which secures an appropriate level of distinction between the original and new elements. A condition requiring the submission and approval of the facing bricks and tiles to be used is also needed to secure a development which retains and reflects the character of the original building.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Paul Singleton

INSPECTOR