
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 January 2018

by Helen Hockenhull BA(Hons) B.PI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 January 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/W/17/3179852
25 Millfield Grove, Rochdale OL16 5SY

- 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 Mushtaq Khan against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00504/FUL, dated 26 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 28 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension on garden land. Change of Use.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property forms a two storey end terraced house located in Millfield Grove, Rochdale. Millfield Grove consists of five rows of terraced dwellings situated around a central car parking area with associated amenity green space. These grassed areas together with the layout of the dwellings give the cul de sac an open green character.
4. An area of open space lies to the west of the appeal property which has been purchased by the appellant. A pedestrian footway runs along the side of this area of green space and a further footpath is located to the rear of the appeal property. Green metal railings of approximately 1 metre in height run along the front and side boundaries of many of the dwellings in the cul de sac. These provide open views into garden areas and maintain the open character.
5. The appeal proposes the erection of a two storey side extension which would have a width of around 6 metres. The scheme includes the erection of a new timber panel fence which would be around 1.8 metres in height to the side and rear of the extended garden area and approximately 0.95 metres high to the front of the property. Beyond the proposed side fence, a grassed strip of around 1 metre would be retained running alongside the adjacent footpath.

6. Policies DM1 and P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy 2016 require that all development proposals demonstrate that they are of a high quality of design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area. The Council's Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2016 in paragraph 5.1 advise that extensions should be designed to be in keeping with the host property and generally should be subservient to it.
7. In the appeal case, the proposed two storey side extension would be the same height and extend the full depth of the existing house. Furthermore it would increase the width of the front elevation from around 5.7 metres to approximately 11.8 metres. As a result the proposal would create a very large extension which would not be subservient to the host dwelling. It would therefore conflict with the advice in the Council's Residential Development SPD and fail to comply with the high quality design objectives of Core Strategy Policies DM1 and P3.
8. The appeal property lies in a prominent location at the end of Millfield Grove and can be viewed from the pedestrian walkways to the side and rear. The grassed open space to the side of the appeal property makes a valuable contribution to the open and spacious appearance of the cul de sac. The proposed extension would significantly narrow the visual gap at the end of the road, resulting in a loss of this distinctive open green character.
9. Core Strategy Policy G6 aims to enhance green infrastructure. It expects that development proposals will avoid the loss of existing urban green space unless suitable alternative provision is made, it has limited value or the proposal would meet other sustainability or local regeneration objectives. I have been provided with no evidence in this regard to support the appeal scheme.
10. The proposed timber panel fence would increase the sense of enclosure particularly for users of the surrounding footpaths. Whilst I acknowledge the intention to retain a 1 metre wide strip between the fence and the footway, I consider this gap to be insufficient to retain the feeling of spaciousness and the open character of the cul de sac. Furthermore the height and materials of the proposed fencing would be at odds with the low level open green railings on the boundaries of other dwellings in Millfield Grove. As such the proposed fencing would appear incongruous in the street scene.
11. Bringing all the above points together, I consider that the appeal proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. It would fail to comply with Policies DM1, P3 and G6 of the Rochdale Core Strategy which seek to ensure high quality design, improve the quality of the area and sustain and enhance green infrastructure. The scheme would also conflict with paragraph 17 and section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework which has similar design objectives.
12. I acknowledge the appellant's need for additional living and bedroom space for his large family. However this need does outweigh the harm I have found to the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I dismiss this appeal.

Helen Hockenhull

INSPECTOR