
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 July 2019 by Hilary Senior BA(Hons) MCD MRTPI

by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 12 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/D/19/3228602

21 Hale Road, Altrincham, WA14 2EE

- 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 Tom Cressey against the decision of Trafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 95680/HHA/18, dated 19 September 2018, was refused by notice dated 22 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is second floor rear extension over existing outrigger.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of 21 Hale Road and surrounding properties, and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Downs Conservation Area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is located within the Downs Conservation Area (CA). Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
5. The Downs Conservation Area Supplementary Planning Document SPD 5.5 Conservation Area Appraisal (Oct 2014) identifies the significance of the Conservation Area as a residential area between the original settlement of Altrincham and the hamlet of Bowden, with distinctive character zones. Hale Road falls in Zone 3 which is characterised by residential property built in the second half of the 19th Century. Numbers 1-23 Hale Road are identified as a positive contributor to the conservation area as they are in good condition and reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials and form, reflect the traditional character and former uses and as a group illustrate the development of the settlement in which they stand. In

- addition the vista along Oxford Road is identified in the SPD as important in townscape terms (Map 17).The Downs Conservation Area was extended in 2014 to include the area of Hale Road, between Oxford Road and Ashley Road.
6. The appeal site, which lies in a prominent location at the perimeter of the conservation area comprises a three/four-storey terraced dwelling with access onto both Hale Road and Oxford Road. The proposal is for a second floor extension above the existing outrigger to be used as a shower room. The outrigger provides the existing wc and bathroom on the lower levels.
 7. The terrace, within which the appeal property sits, consists of five properties which have a prominent gabled roofline, visible from Oxford Road due to the orientation of the terrace. That gabled roofline is a notable feature of the terrace and makes a positive contribution to its significance as a non-designated heritage asset. All five properties have rear outriggers which add to the general rhythm of buildings, albeit that the outriggers vary in terms of their height or width.
 8. The proposed extension would increase the height of the outrigger at No 21 and as such would partially obscure the views of the distinctive gabled roofline, diminishing the positive contribution the buildings make to the conservation area. Although the proposal is for a relatively small extension, and would be constructed in matching materials, it would nevertheless alter the form and massing of the outrigger and, as it would be at second floor level it would be a prominent addition to the building. Consequently, the proposal would have a significant effect on the character and appearance of the property and wider terrace.
 9. Extensions to the outriggers at no 17 and 15 Hale Road were built several years ago and before the conservation area was extended. In any case their impact on the street scene is reduced as, due to the form of houses and angle of the road, they are further away from the road and therefore not as prominent.
 10. My attention has been drawn to extensions to the rear of other dwellings on Oxford Road. However, these appear to be single storey extensions which are not visible from the public highway and which are not therefore directly comparable with the appeal proposal. In this case the rear of the dwelling directly faces Oxford Rd, which is where the parking area is accessed from, and the vista is important in conservation area terms as set out in the SPD.
 11. For these reasons the proposal would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the Downs Conservation Area and as such would be contrary to the weighty requirements of the Act. In addition, the proposal would conflict with policies R1 and L7 of the Trafford Local Plan Core Strategy which seek to protect, maintain or enhance heritage assets and ensure that development is appropriate in its context and enhance the character of the area.
 12. The works would affect only part of the conservation area and therefore in terms of the Framework the harm caused to its significance would be less than substantial. The approach in paragraph 196 of the Framework is that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, that harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

13. The appellant states that there will be a public benefit from the extension as it will improve the amenity at the house and upgrade the property. Whilst I acknowledge that the extension would provide enhanced accommodation, this is a private rather than a public benefit. Whilst extensions could, in principle, sustain or enhance the significance of heritage assets and support their long-term conservation, there is no evidence that the property in this case is unviable in its current layout or otherwise at risk.
14. As such, any public benefits identified are not sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified, harm which, given the weighty requirements of the Act and advice in Paragraph 193 of the Framework, carries great weight.

Conclusion and Recommendation

15. For the reasons set out above, and taking all other matters raised into account, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Hilary Senior

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

16. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Susan Ashworth

INSPECTOR