



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 November 2019

by J M Tweddle BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/D/19/3238299

2 Riddings Road, Hale WA15 9DS

- 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 Andrew Rankin against the decision of Trafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 97211/HHA/19, dated 21 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 30 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as an attic extension comprising new bedroom and shower room.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Council, in its formal decision, describe the proposal as the 'erection of rear dormer extension to accommodate the loft conversion and new bay window to rear elevation'. From the evidence before me, I consider this to be a more accurate description of what is proposed and have therefore dealt with the appeal on this basis.
3. As part of their submission, the appellant has put forward an alternative scheme that would reduce the size of the roof extensions. However, I am mindful that it is not the purpose of the appeal process to evolve a scheme and it is therefore important that what is considered by the Inspector is essentially what was considered by the Council. I have therefore proceeded to determine the appeal on the basis of the plans as originally submitted. The merits of the reduced scale scheme would, if necessary, be a matter for the main parties to consider as part of a fresh proposal away from this appeal.
4. In its formal decision, the Council refer to the 'Hale Station Conservation Area Management Plan'. However, this appears to be a typographical error as the evidence from both parties indicates that the site lies within the South Hale Conservation Area. I have, therefore, considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area, having due regard to its location within the South Hale Conservation Area.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling located within the South Hale Conservation Area (CA) and dating from the inter-war period. The surrounding area is characterised by leafy residential streets with the significance of the CA, in part, gained from its historical street patterns and high levels of architectural integrity and detail which provide a good example of a predominantly Victorian/Edwardian residential suburb. There is a variety of housing designs with a mix of large detached houses and sizable semis set within generous plots.
7. 2 Riddings Road is a semi-detached dwelling fronting the highway as part of a residential cul-de-sac. Along with its adjoining neighbour, the property has undergone minor alterations via the addition of side and rear facing extensions, however, its basic form and appearance is largely retained providing a positive contribution to the CA through the retention of a strong sense of symmetry with its neighbour. Furthermore, as an example of inter-war housing the property provides a historical narrative as to the growth of this part of the CA, adding to its overall significance.
8. The proposal would see the introduction of a flat roofed box style dormer extension alongside a pitched roof dormer projecting out from the rear roof slope. The pitched dormer extension would be set above the existing ridgeline and would incorporate a bay window extension at first floor level. This would result in a cluttered and somewhat restless composition of competing design elements that would detract significantly from the original basic form and appearance of the property. In particular, the box dormer is a particularly unsympathetic design solution and when combined with the large pitched dormer they overwhelm the original roof slope.
9. Moreover, the Council's Supplementary Design Document 4 '*A Guide for Designing House Extensions & Alterations*' (SPD4) advises that dormer windows should be proportionate to the scale of the property and reflect the style and architectural character of the original house. It goes on to state that large dormers with large expanses of glazing should be avoided and that dormer windows should not sit above the ridge of the existing dwelling.
10. The development would provide a large dormer with extensive glazing rising to a height in excess of the current ridgeline. In doing so, the proposal would conflict with the basic design principles outlined in SPD4 and result in a top-heavy design that would be significantly at odds with the current appearance of both the appeal property and its attached neighbour. This would result in the appeal property having a pronounced asymmetrical, and so unbalanced, appearance. Consequently, the development would not amount to a sympathetic nor subservient addition that would respect the original character of the property.
11. I have been provided with a drawing to demonstrate that the pitched dormer extension would not be visible from the front of the property, however, it is likely that it would be experienced in the street scene when entering the street from Bower Road. I was also able to see that the rear of the property is clearly visible from public views between properties along Bower Road. In addition, the proposal would be highly visible from a number of private views experienced from the upper floor windows of the housing opposite the property and from the rear facing windows and garden areas of properties along Bower Road.

Accordingly, the form and scale of the development would significantly draw the eye and represent an incongruous feature that would be harmful to the overall character and appearance of the CA.

12. In terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the harm to the CA would be 'less than substantial' and it is therefore incumbent upon me to give considerable importance and weight to such harm. The Framework advises that this harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The development would provide additional living accommodation for the appellant and his family, however, these are not public benefits. No other benefits have been advanced in support of the scheme. Accordingly, the harm to the CA is not outweighed by public benefits.
13. The Council have advised that they consider Policy R1 of the Trafford Local Plan Core Strategy 2012 (the TLPCS) to be out of date due to a lack of conformity with the Framework. Even if I were to accept this, the application of heritage policies within the Framework has indicated that the development should not be allowed.
14. Consequently, I find that the proposal would have a significant harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area. It follows, therefore, that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the South Hale CA. This is contrary to Policies L7 and R1 of the TLPCS, which together seek to achieve design quality that will preserve or enhance conservation areas.
15. The proposal would also fall short of the design expectations set out in SPD4 and is at odds with the guidance contained in the South Hale Conservation Area Management Plan which require proposals to be proportionate in scale and take inspiration from established architectural styles within the CA. In this context, the proposal would also conflict with the provisions of the Framework which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment and promote high standards of design.
16. I appreciate the appellant's desire to create an additional bedroom for his family and that the current roof space is constrained. I also acknowledge a lack of objections from nearby residents. However, these matters do not outweigh the harm I have found.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons I have set out, the appeal should be dismissed.

Jeff Tweddle

INSPECTOR