
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 February 2020 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by V Lucas LLB (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/19/3241783

2 Grange Avenue, Milnrow, Rochdale OL16 4ET

- 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 Ian Calow against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00799/HOUS, dated 10 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 5 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is a rear extension and loft conversion to existing semi-detached dwelling.
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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.

Preliminary Matter

3. Notwithstanding the description of development set out in the banner heading above, which is taken from the application form, a more accurate description is that provided in the decision notice as 'first floor extension including increase of ridge height and alterations to roof pitch and two storey and single storey rear extensions and demolition of garage'. The Council dealt with the proposal on this basis and so shall I.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of No 2 Grange Avenue and the wider area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a semi-detached bungalow located within a suburban residential area. The area is characterised predominantly by semi-detached bungalows, many of which have been extended. This proposal seeks permission to erect a first-floor front extension and a part-single, part two storey rear extension. Permission is also sought to increase the ridge height of the host dwelling.

6. The first-floor front extension would be set back from the eaves, however it would span the full width of the property and include an increase to its ridge height. The scale of the front extension, combined with the projection of the two-storey rear extension beyond the original rear elevation, would result in a significant increase in massing to the property. This would substantially alter the simple form and appearance of the original bungalow. The extensions would also be in a prominent position as the appeal dwelling is highly visible in the street scene, including its side elevation as the adjacent bungalow is positioned at an angle. As such, this proposal would be overly dominant and fail to read as a subservient addition.
7. The height of the host dwelling would be raised by a considerable amount, thus resulting in a stepped ridge line with the attached bungalow. This would be readily apparent in the street scene and its effect would be exacerbated by the altered roof slope as a result of the proposed front extension. This would appear at odds with the roofscape in this locality as the ridge line between pairs of semi-detached bungalows fronting Grange Avenue are continuous, even on properties which have front dormer extensions.
8. Photographs and addresses have been provided of other properties within the wider estate which have been extended and I viewed them at the time of my site visit. It is noted that a high proportion of dwellings have been extended, however many alterations consist of front and rear dormers that are clearly separated from one another and are subservient to the host property. There are also examples where the ridge line of one bungalow in a pair of semi-detached properties has been raised in order to accommodate the dormers, thus resulting in a stepped ridge line between the two. However, in these cases, due to the subservient nature of the dormer the original character of the property is still evident.
9. It is however acknowledged that there are some similar developments where dwellings have been extended to the front and tie in with a first-floor rear extension. In those cases, based on the evidence before me, the rear extension does not appear to extend beyond the original rear elevation. As such, they do not substantially increase the massing of the property to a similar degree as this proposal.
10. Nevertheless, of all the examples referenced, none appear to be of direct comparison to the proposed development, with both a front and two storey rear extension which includes the raising of the ridge line and projection beyond the original rear elevation of the host dwelling. For the reasons noted above, it is all these elements in combination which cause the appeal proposal to read as an incongruous and overly dominant addition to the host dwelling. As such, these examples do not individually justify the appeal proposal. Moreover, I have not been provided with any further details of these cases and cannot therefore be sure that the exact circumstances, the context or policies against which they were approved are the same as the proposal before me. This appeal has been determined on its own merits in light of the current policy and the context of the site.
11. Reference is made to a residential design guide 2007 however I have not been provided with a copy and cannot therefore determine its relevance to this appeal. I have also been referred to Planning Policy Statement 7 however this has now been replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework (the

Framework). For the reasons noted above I have found this proposal would not relate well to the host property and the wider area and it would thereby fail to meet the requirements of the Framework, particularly chapter 12, which requires developments to be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

12. Consequently, taking all the above into consideration, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of No 2 Grange Avenue and the wider area. It is therefore contrary to policies P1, P3 and DM1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy (2016) which collectively seek to ensure, amongst other things, that developments are of a high standard of design and enhance the quality of the area.

Other Matter

13. I note that the proposal would provide additional accommodation for the appellant's family and space to work from home. However, these are personal circumstances which can change over time and the development would remain long after such circumstances have ceased to be relevant. As such, this matter is not sufficient to outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area as identified above.

Conclusion and Recommendation

14. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Hannah Ellison

Appeal Planning Officer

Inspector's Decision

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

V Lucas

INSPECTOR