
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 March 2020 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Claire Searson MSc PGDip BSc (Hons) MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 31 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/19/3243517

2 Half Acre Road, Rochdale OL11 4DF

- 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 Sean Farnsworth against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00621/HOUS, dated 22 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 17 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side extension with internal alterations and removal of existing conservatory.
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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 effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the wider area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling, occupying a corner plot on Half Acre Road with Battersby Street. There is good spacing between properties in the immediate area, and dwellings tend to follow strong building lines. This proposal seeks permission for a two-storey side extension following demolition of the existing side conservatory.
5. Rochdale Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (June 2016) (the SPD) provides guidance for two-storey side extensions. Paragraph 5.14 states that planning permission will not normally be granted for a two-storey extension to a dwelling on a corner plot unless it maintains sufficient space between the boundary. Paragraph 5.15 goes on to note that the presence of a strong building line and any overriding need to protect it and the contribution the space makes to the overall character of the street scene are factors that will be taken into account when determining what constitutes sufficient space.

6. The front elevations of Nos 21 and 23 Battersby Street, to the west of the appeal site, form a strong building line in the street scene. Whilst No 25 Battersby Street is positioned at an angle to Nos 21 and 23, it is not sited beyond the building line. The original two-storey side elevation of the host dwelling largely respects this layout, whereas the proposed extension would project significantly beyond the established building line. Its forward positioning and substantial massing would cause it to be highly prominent on the approach to the site from the west along Battersby Street.
7. There is generous space between the side of the appeal dwelling and the side boundary of the site, and the adjacent dwellings to the rear on Battersby Street are set back from the highway. These factors help create a sense of openness in the immediate locality. It is acknowledged the appeal dwelling has an existing conservatory positioned to the side. However, it has a lightweight appearance due to its single storey scale and glazed design, thus ensuring it is not overly dominant in the street scene and does not detract from the good spacing.
8. Whilst the proposed extension would be narrower than the existing conservatory, thus increasing the space between the side boundary, it would nevertheless significantly extend the host dwelling to the side over two storeys. As such, due to its overall scale and positioning beyond a prominent elevation, it would be a visually intrusive addition in the street scene and would noticeably erode the good spacing to the side which currently contributes positively towards the character of the area.
9. Photographs of other two storey side extensions have been submitted in support of this appeal. Whilst I have noted these examples, some of which appear to sit forward of a building line, I do not have the full details or the context in which they were approved and cannot therefore be certain that they are directly comparable to this appeal. In any event, this appeal has been determined on its own merits and the scale, massing and siting of the extension in this context are factors which have been taken into account. Accordingly, the examples do not justify the appeal development.
10. My attention has also been drawn to an appeal decision¹ in which it was determined that sufficient space would remain between the side wall of the extension and the plot boundary to ensure that the perception of space at the corner would not be harmfully impaired. There is very limited detail before me however based on the appeal decision it appears that the main issue concerned the retention of space to the side, rather than respecting a defined building line, as is a matter for the proposal before me. Furthermore, that appeal was in a different setting and policy context. As such, I cannot be certain that it is directly comparable with the appeal proposal before me.
11. Consequently, taking all the above into consideration, this proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the wider area and is contrary to policies DM1 and P3 of the Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (October 2016) which seek to ensure developments respect their context and enhance the quality of the area. The proposal would also conflict with the requirements of the SPD as set out above.

¹ Appeal Ref: APP/C4235/D/14/2221993

Other Matters

12. Reference has been made to guidance set out in supplementary planning documents of the Councils of Bury, Salford and Stockport. I have not been provided with copies, however the guidance in those documents does not apply to the appeal site which falls within Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council. As such, this matter does not have any bearing on the main issue identified above.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. 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

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

C Searson

INSPECTOR