



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2019

by William Walton BA MSc Dip Env Law LLM CPE BVC MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st May 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/B2355/D/19/3240534

531 Holcombe Road, Helmshore, Rossendale BB4 4LX

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant full planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr M Ringland against the decision of Rossendale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2019/0305, dated 14 July 2014, was refused by notice dated 4 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of the conservatory and construction of a two-storey side extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a 2-storey semi-detached dwelling occupying an elevated position above Holcombe Road in Helmshore. The ground floor elevation is constructed of red brick and the first floor is harled. To the front of the property is a lawn that slopes down to a retaining wall bounding the pavement. The front garden also includes some attractive shrubs and a tree which is about the same height as the house.
4. The proposed development comprises demolition of a single storey conservatory and its replacement by a 2-storey side extension. The extension would extend about half of the width of the existing dwelling and would be made of matching materials. It would be set back slightly from the existing front elevation, set down slightly from the roof ridge and set in from the boundary with the neighbouring property. As a result, the proposed extension would be subordinate to the original building and would not result in visual merger with the adjacent dwelling.
5. A 2-storey side extension was added to the paired semi-detached dwelling some years ago. It is set back from the front elevation although, according to the appellant, not by as much as the proposed development. The extension on the paired semi-detached dwelling is considerably wider than the proposed development. At its front are 2 windows on each floor which are vertically aligned and of near uniform size. This window arrangement broadly

- corresponds to that of the original part of the dwelling, maintaining both the integrity of the original design of the building and its visual harmony.
6. In contrast, the window arrangement in the proposed extension would mark a significant departure from that in the original part of the dwelling and in the extended paired semi-detached dwelling. On both the ground floor and the first-floor there would be one large window extending across most of the front and wrapping around the corner to the side elevation. This arrangement would look very out of place in respect of the paired semi-detached dwelling and other neighbouring properties.
 7. As a result, the new extension with its large front windows would upset the balance currently achieved rather than, as asserted by the appellant, help to rebalance it. This would be to the detriment of the design and the appearance of the host dwelling, the paired semi-detached property and the streetscape. This incongruity in the design would be compounded by the appeal property's elevated position which would make it highly visible to passers-by.
 8. In the appeal decision granting permission for the detached property on the other side of the paired semi-detached dwelling (APP/B2355/W/16/3165788) the Inspector concluded that despite it being quite different in design from the neighbouring semi-detached properties it would not harm the character of the local streetscene. I do not find, however, that this decision has any bearing on my findings in regard to the harm that would be caused to the character of the host building and streetscene by the wraparound window in the proposed development.
 9. The appellant also referred me to 4 planning permissions granted by the Council for extensions where the set-backs were less than in the development proposal subject to this appeal. The set-backs were not an issue in the determination of this appeal and so I have not considered these decisions any further.
 10. For the above reasons I conclude that, overall, the proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. Thus, it would conflict with policies 1, 23 and 24 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document: The Way Forward 2011-2026 2011 (CS) which seek, individually and collectively, to promote design which is inclusive, of high quality and compatible with the local context.
 11. Finally, I also find that the development proposal conflicts with the advice contained in part 2 of the Council's Alterations and Extensions to Residential Properties: A Supplementary Planning Document 2008 (SPD) that, among other things, the windows of an extension should reflect the dwelling's architectural integrity. Although the local plan which this SPD was introduced to give effect to has now been withdrawn, I find that its principles are still reflected in the subsequently issued CS and therefore consider that it remains relevant to the determination of this appeal.

Other Matters

12. The appellant states that the proposal would have no adverse effect on the level of sunlight or daylight for the neighbouring property. For the avoidance of doubt, the issue of living conditions has not been relevant in the determination of this appeal.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above the appeal is dismissed.

William Walton

INSPECTOR