
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 July 2020 by Hilary Senior BA (Hons) MCD MRTPI

by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPL MRTPI

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

Decision date: 28 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/20/3249118

24 Mount Road, Middleton, M24 1DZ

- 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 Scott against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01365/HOUS, dated 15 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 5 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is erection of a single storey front and side extension following demolition of existing side and rear extension.
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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 Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the property and, linked to that, its effect on the significance of the non-designated heritage asset; and
 - the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of 24 Mount Road.

Reasons

Non-designated heritage asset

4. 24 Mount Road is a semi-detached, brick and slate built two-storey dwelling. It is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset by the Council and from all I have seen and read I have no reason to disagree. The property is located in an established residential area characterised by a mix of dwelling styles and materials and large street trees.
5. The significance of 22 and 24 Mount Road as a non-designated heritage asset is derived in part from the character and appearance of the buildings as a pair. Constructed in 1907 in the Arts and Crafts style and designed by notable local

architect Edgar Wood, the pair of properties are symmetrically designed with bay windows, steeply pitched roofs, prominent chimneys and brickwork detailing commensurate with the style and age of the building. There have not been any substantial external alterations to the frontage of the dwellings although 22 Mount Street has been previously extended to the rear. Nevertheless, even at the rear, the original form of the host dwelling is still legible and a significant amount of the original fenestration has been retained. The appeal property and the adjoining dwelling are prominent in the street scene and make a positive contribution to the character of the area.

6. Policy P2 of the Rochdale Core Strategy (2016) lists buildings designed by the architect Edgar Wood as key heritage assets of the borough which should be conserved and enhanced, in particular in terms of their external appearance. Paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires that the effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application and states that a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm and the significance of the heritage asset.
7. The proposal is for a single-storey extension to the rear of the property to replace an existing outrigger which appears to be in a deteriorating condition. It is not clear if that structure is part of the original building but nevertheless the Council have raised no issue with its demolition and given the limited contribution it makes to the significance of the heritage asset I have no reason to disagree.
8. However, the proposed extension, which would provide a new kitchen/dining room, would be considerably larger than the existing structure in terms of its projection from the building as well as its width and height. Whilst I acknowledge that it would be constructed in materials to match the dwelling, it would have a substantial, box-like form and massing which would dominate the rear elevation of the building, and in particular the existing bay window which it would be sited adjacent to. Furthermore, the proposal would extend in height to the window cill of the existing first floor windows as such failing to respect the proportions of the building. The size and form of the fenestration on the extension would accentuate its incongruity.
9. In addition, the proposal would result in the loss of an existing, original, ground floor window, which is of a design and detailing typical of others on the building and which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the building as a heritage asset.
10. For these reasons the proposal would detract from the form, detailed design and architectural interest of the building. As such the proposal would result in harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. Whilst I agree with the Council that, in terms of the approach of the Framework, the degree of harm would be less than substantial, given the significance of the building, that harm carries considerable weight.
11. For these reasons the proposal would conflict with Policy P2 of the Rochdale Core Strategy (2016) which seeks to ensure that key heritage assets of the borough are conserved.

Living conditions

12. The ground floor window serving the existing dining room is already restricted by the proximity of the neighbouring extension which projects along the common boundary. Plans indicate that the proposal would result in some further overshadowing of that room. I acknowledge the appellant's point that there would be a substantial amount of light to the new kitchen/ dining room resulting in some borrowed light to the study beyond, but nevertheless it seems to me there would be some limited loss of direct sunlight and general daylight to the original dining room.
13. Moreover, given that the proposal would extend across the rear of the dwelling, almost to the bay window serving that room, and would have a significant height and projection, the extension would appear overbearing from the existing dining room such that, in addition to the loss of light, the quality of the living space would be eroded.
14. I acknowledge that harm in this respect would be limited and that proposal may provide the appellant with the personally desired layout of space. Nevertheless, the development must be considered in perpetuity and the Framework requires that development creates places that provide a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users.
15. For the above reasons the proposal would harm the living conditions of the occupiers of the property and would be contrary to policy DM1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy (2016) which seeks to ensure that development does not adversely affect the amenity of residents through amongst other things, its overbearing impact and overshadowing. It would also be contrary to the Framework as set out above.

Other Matter

16. I note reference to a previous planning approval at the appeal site for an extension. Whilst I have taken this permission into account, the approved scheme is more limited in extent, in both width and height, and retains the original ground floor window. Accordingly, the approved scheme carries limited weight in my considerations. In any event, the proposal before me must be considered on its own merits.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

Hilary Senior

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

18. 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

