



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 October 2020

by William Cooper BA (Hons) MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P1940/D/20/3254400

225 Prestwick Road, South Oxhey WD19 6EJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Eddie Csog against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref: 20/0101/FUL dated 14 September 2019 was refused by notice dated 23 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as 'part-demolition and reconstruction of 2-storey dwelling to match existing; loft conversion with rear dormer and insertion of rooflights; single storey front extension; two storey side extension; single storey rear extension'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. In their statement of case the appellant includes illustrations of an alternative to the scheme upon which the Council determined the application. For the purposes of determining this appeal, I assess the scheme as that upon which the Council determined the application.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the streetscene including the host building, and
 - the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, with particular regard to outlook.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey dwelling located in a mainly residential area. It is situated on the east side of a curving stretch of Prestwick Road between Hoylake Gardens and Ormskirk Road. This stretch and properties in the vicinity are characterised by two-storey dwellings. Along the host stretch, dwellings are a mix of render and brick finish. The appeal property is located at the southern end of a hip-roofed terraced row.
5. My attention is drawn to several other extensions on Prestwick Road. However, these differ from the proposal in that they do not involve two storey-rear

- extensions, and one of them is on a corner plot. Furthermore, from what I saw during my site visit, the absence of dormers and two-storey rear extensions are prevailing characteristics of the host stretch and in its vicinity.
6. Between rows of dwellings, side gaps mainly free from extensions - in combination with garden spaces and 'green links' - contribute distinctive spaciousness to the twentieth century residential character of the neighbourhood.
 7. The appeal proposal shares elements of another scheme at the property which was granted planning permission in January 2020¹ ('the approved scheme'). These elements are a loft conversion with rear dormer and rooflights, and single storey front, side and rear extension. From what I saw during my site visit, a scheme resembling this approved scheme appears to be under construction. Given the approved scheme, these elements of the appeal scheme are acceptable.
 8. Compared to the approved scheme, the appeal proposal would entail additional second-storey side and rear extension elements. This would approximately double the two-storey building footprint on the site, compared to the approved scheme and the original building.
 9. I appreciate the appellant's intention to echo the hipped roof style of the neighbouring row to the south. However, the proposal would result in a combination of dormer, gable and hip roof profiles towards the end of the terrace. This would lead to an overly complex agglomeration of roof profiles and bulk at the side and rear of the property. This would result in a disproportionate mass at the side and rear of the building which would visually overwhelm the main part of the building and unbalance the host row.
 10. The additional two-storey mass would also encroach into the side gap between the host row and the adjoining row to the south. It would reduce this gap at first floor level by around a third and result in an elongated, splayed two-storey blank flank wall as close as 2.5m to the neighbouring building at No 227 Prestwick Road. This would result in a cramped and contrived appearance and erode the distinctive spaciousness of the neighbourhood.
 11. This would have a discordant impact on the main part of the dwelling, the host row and the streetscene. Given the property's end-terrace location on a curving stretch of street, with neighbouring residential properties to the rear and side, the above adverse effects would be noticeable to various degrees from various viewpoints on the appeal site, on Prestwick Road and neighbouring properties.
 12. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host building and the streetscene. As such, it would conflict with Policies, CP1 and CP12 of the Three Rivers District Core Strategy (2011) (CS), and Policy DM1 and Appendix 2 of the Three Rivers District Development Management Policies Local Development Document (2013) (LDD). Together the policies seek to ensure that development complements local character and distinctiveness.

¹ Planning Application Ref: 19/1937/FUL.

Living conditions of neighbouring occupiers

13. The proposal would result in a substantial blank two storey flank elevation up to the boundary of the neighbouring property at No 227. This would appear overbearing from the front, side and rear garden areas of No 227.
14. To conclude the proposal would harm the living conditions of the occupiers of No 227 in respect of outlook. As such, it would conflict with Policy CP12 of the CS and Policy DM1 and Appendix 2 of the LDD which seek, amongst other things, to safeguard the living conditions of residents.

Other Matters

15. The appellant states that a similar, less sympathetic scheme could be achieved under Permitted Development. However, substantive depiction of this other scheme is not presented.
16. My attention is drawn to extensions on sites on other streets in South Oxhey. However, they differ from the appeal proposal in the following ways. Either they do not comprise the same agglomeration of extensions including a two-storey rear extension, they are substantially separated from the appeal proposal, the permission predated the current development plan, or in some cases a combination of some of these factors. This limits the extent to which they are analogous to the proposal before me. Moreover, full details of the other cases are not before me and the proposal has its own setting and circumstances. As such, I assess the proposal on its own merits.
17. The proposed development would provide additional living space at the appeal property. However, the benefit would be limited by the scale of development and would not outweigh the identified harm.

Conclusion

18. The proposal would be contrary to the development plan and there are no other considerations which outweigh this finding. Accordingly, for the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

William Cooper

INSPECTOR