



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 January 2021 by L Wilson BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

Decision by Chris Preston BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/20/3260706

32 Shore Mount, Littleborough OL15 8EW

- 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 Adam Dawson against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00541/HOUS, dated 18 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 22 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is a three storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory, installation of window to side elevation and increase in height of roof.
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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 Matters

3. I have taken the description of development in the banner heading above from the Council's decision notice and the appeal form as it provides a more accurate description of the proposal.

Main Issue

4. The effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. No. 32 is a two-storey end of terrace property situated in a residential area. There are significant land level differences within the surrounding area and Shore Mount has a strong pattern of development. It is generally characterised by blocks of mainly three or four terraces which are set back from the highway behind either a driveway or front garden, have evenly stepped roofs reflecting the topography of the area and tile cladding at first floor. The step in height between different properties and terraces is generally modest resulting in a gradual rise up the hillside. There are also bungalows within the street scene which differ in character and appearance to the terraces.

6. In response to the topography of the area, the appeal property currently sits slightly higher than the adjoining property, No. 30, and lower than the adjacent property, No. 34. However, when viewed from the highway the appeal property appears to sit higher than No. 34 because it sits closer to the highway.
7. The development seeks to increase the ridge height of the appeal property by approximately 1.1 metres to provide accommodation within the second floor. The existing ridge height is approximately 0.5m higher than No. 30 and the development would result in the ridge height being approximately 1.6m higher.
8. The increase in roof height would be conspicuous due to the set back of No. 34 and because the first floor of the property is clearly visible from the highway. The scheme would also result in an uncharacteristic gap between the top of the first-floor windows and eaves. Within Shore Mount there are a small number of instances where properties do not have a stepped ridgeline, for example Nos. 38 and 40. Nevertheless, in those instances the proportions of the properties remain consistent with the surrounding terraces.
9. The increased ridge height and gap above the first-floor windows would result in an elongated property which would unbalance the proportions of both the dwelling and terrace. The difference in ridge height between particularly the appeal property and No. 30 would draw the eye and appear inconsistent with the gradually stepped roofline of the terrace. The ridge height would appear much greater than the other properties within the terrace or the wider area and would result in the host property appearing unduly prominent within the street scene. Accordingly, the scheme would compromise the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area on account of the increase in height, scale and massing which would result in a dominant and incongruous feature. It would therefore not form sustainable development, as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework'), given the harm identified.
10. Consequently, the scheme would conflict with Policies DM1 and P3 of the Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (2016), Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD (2016) and the Framework. These collectively seek, amongst other matters, to promote high quality design which has regard to the existing character and appearance of the area.

Other Considerations

11. I acknowledge that the proposal would provide additional living space for the appellant and their family. In addition, there have been no objections to the development from neighbouring properties. However, personal circumstances will seldom outweigh more general planning considerations, and these are not matters that outweigh the harm that would be caused by the development.
12. The appellant asserts that the Council has not worked proactively. From the evidence presented, the Council did engage with the appellant. In any event, concerns over the level of service received would be a matter to taken up with the Council and does not impact the planning merits of the case.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

L M Wilson

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and, on that basis, I agree and conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Chris Preston

INSPECTOR