



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 August 2021

by Alison Partington BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th August 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W4223/D/21/3271018

131 Chew Valley Road, Greenfield, OL3 7JJ

- 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 Richard Howarth against the decision of Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref HOU/345556/20, dated 30 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 22 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. A revised *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework) was published in July 2021. Apart from the paragraph numbering, and the addition of a paragraph relating to applications for the removal or alteration of historic statues or monuments, the section on conserving and enhancing the historic environment, which is the section most relevant to this appeal, has not changed. I have determined the appeal on the basis of the national and local policies as adopted at the present time.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in the appeal is whether or not the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Ladhill Lane Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is located within Ladhill Lane Conservation Area. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be had to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of a conservation area.
5. The conservation area covers much of what appears to be the historic core of the settlement. In the vicinity of the site, the buildings largely consist of modest stone terraces, built to house millworkers, some of which are currently in commercial use. Interspersed among the terraces are larger buildings such as a public house and the Methodist Chapel.
6. The common use of stone and slate for the construction of the buildings, and the modest simple design of the terraced housing are key characteristics of the conservation area and give a strong sense of unity to it. Reflecting its growth

as a mill settlement gives historic, as well as architectural significance, to the conservation area.

7. The terrace which contains the appeal property is typical of the conservation area and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of it. The properties at either end of the terrace "wrap around" the corner and so have outriggers that project beyond the rear elevation of the rest of the terrace. No 131 is located adjacent to the end property and is narrower than other properties in the terrace. Although previously a commercial property it has recently been converted to a dwelling.
8. The proposed flat roof rear dormer would be set down slightly from the ridge of the property and slightly up from the eaves but would fill the majority of the rear roof plane. Even though it would be constructed with materials to match the existing roof, its considerable scale and mass would make it a disproportionate and unsympathetic addition to the property.
9. Views of the rear of the terrace are more limited than the front, nonetheless the rear of this property can be seen in close range from Kinders Lane and from the parking area associated with Kinders Mews. In such views the proposed dormer would appear an overly dominant feature, that would draw the eye.
10. Whilst there have been some extensions on the rear elevation of houses within the terrace, including a ground floor extension with roof patio above on the appeal property and a first floor terrace with steps down to ground level on No 133, the roof plane remains largely unaltered. The position, scale and mass of the dormer means that it would draw the eye in a way that the current alterations on the rear of No 131 and 133 do not. I accept that there is a two storey extension towards the middle of the terrace with a dual pitch roof perpendicular to the main roof. However, its position in the terrace means it balances the two outriggers at either end, and with a ridge line quite a bit lower than the the main roof – it does not dominate the roof plain in the same way that the appeal scheme would.
11. Whilst there are some other properties in the conservation area that have dormers, I observed that such properties are very much in the minority and that dormer windows are not a feature of the terraced properties along Chew Valley Road that are within the conservation area. As such, the proposal would be an incongruous feature, and the cluttered appearance it would give to the roof would contrast with the clean and simple roofs generally found in the area.
12. My attention was drawn to the fact that in recent years dormers of a similar size and design as proposed on No 131 have been approved on the rear of Nos 102 and 104 Chew Valley Road and that these are clearly visible from the road at the rear. However, I note that these 2 dwellings are located in a short terrace of three houses, rather than the much longer terrace of which the appeal property is a part, and that the roof heights of this and adjacent terraces varied. As such, there is not the same consistency as is found on the appeal terrace.
13. In addition, the dormers on the two modern infill developments on Ladhill Lane referred to by the appellant also do not represent a direct parallel to the appeal scheme, given they are not on traditional terraced properties and the dormers are much smaller in scale.

14. All in all, I consider that the proposed development would not preserve the character and appearance of Ladhill Lane Conservation Area. Accordingly, they would conflict with Policies 9, 22 and 24 of the *Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (adopted November 2011)* which require that developments should have a high quality of design that do not have a significant adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area and should seek to protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets within the borough.
15. Having regard to paragraph 202 of the Framework, the harm caused to the conservation area would be less than substantial, and so needs to be weighed against the public benefits. At present the property only has one bedroom and it is stated that the proposed dormer would allow the appellant to create a second bedroom in the attic. However, this is a private not a public benefit. Moreover, whilst the existing house may be limited in size the dormer is not necessary to make the property habitable. Therefore, I do not consider that there are any public benefits that outweigh the harm the proposal would cause to the conservation area.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons set out above, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Alison Partington

INSPECTOR