



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 December 2021

by M Clowes BA (hons) MCD PGCERT (Arch Con) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W4223/D/21/3282490

20 Ribble Avenue, Chadderton, Oldham OL9 0PN

- 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 Urmson against the decision of Oldham Council.
 - The application Ref HOU/346930/21, dated 18 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 13 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as a front porch and alteration to bay window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the front porch. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted insofar as it relates to the alterations to bay window at 20 Ribble Avenue, OL9 0PN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref HOU/346930/21, dated 18 May 2021, and the plans submitted with it, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted.

Procedural Matter

2. I have used the description of the proposal from the Council's decision notice as it more accurately defines the entirety of the development carried out, including a porch and alterations to the front bay window. Since the development has been carried out, retrospective planning permission has been sought. I have determined the appeal accordingly.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site consists of a semi-detached bungalow located on a housing estate of similarly designed dwellings. The surrounding properties generally have symmetrical front elevations and hipped roofs, albeit with a stepped ridge height to follow the contour of the land. At some point in time, the roof of the appeal property has been amended from a hip to a gable, with a large box dormer that straddles the ridge of the roof.

Porch extension

5. The porch is a large extension on the relatively compact front elevation of the dwelling. Given its width, siting close to the front boundary of the property and proximity with the gabled roof above the bay window, it provides a dominant feature on the host property of which little of the original front elevation

remains visible. The bulk of the porch is prominent, particularly when viewed travelling north-west along Ribble Avenue, exacerbated by the proximity of the property to the corner of the road. When combined with the dormer and the gabled roof to the bay window, the porch extension has resulted in an overly complicated and cluttered front elevation with multiple projections. This contrasts with the generally plain, simply detailed elevations and roofscapes of the neighbouring properties, which also follow a reasonably consistent building line. Whilst the porch extension has not increased the overall floorarea of the dwelling significantly, this does not justify a front extension that due to its size and position is out of scale with the host property.

6. It is further noted that the porch has been constructed from breeze block with the plans indicating a rendered finish once the development is completed. This would contrast with the dwelling which like its neighbours, is constructed predominantly from red brick. The differing materials when combined with the scale and position of the porch would result in a prominent and incongruous development that would not relate well to the host property and would adversely affect the wider streetscene.

Alteration to bay window

7. The bay windows form the main design feature of these otherwise simply detailed dwellings. The addition of a pitched roof enhances this attribute by making it a focal point of the elevation. Several nearby properties have added either a lean-to or gabled roof above their bay windows, therefore such alterations are not uncommon locally. Whilst the overhanging eaves are not a feature found on the host property, the roof is nevertheless in isolation a small-scale alteration that is subordinate to the host property. I do not find that it causes significant harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling or wider area. As the roof is physically separate from the porch extension, it is capable of being retained in its existing form.
8. I conclude that the porch has a harmful effect upon the character and appearance of the dwelling and the wider streetscene. It therefore conflicts with Policies 9 and 20 of the Oldham Council Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011 (the DPD) which seek to ensure that new development is of a high quality that reflects the character and distinctiveness of a local area, an objective shared with both the Oldham and Rochdale Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2007 and the Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2007. The erection of the gabled roof to the bay window is small-scale in nature and reflects the character of the local area. It is therefore in conformity with Policies 9 and 20 of the DPD.

Other Matters

9. Reference has been made by the appellant to a rear extension at 71 Oakbank Avenue which is said to have been permitted under the same planning policies that their proposal was refused. However, being a rear extension its effect on the streetscene is markedly different to the appeal development. Therefore, I cannot draw any direct comparison with the appeal development that weighs in its favour. Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The porch conflicts with the Development Plan and the existence of other extensions in the locality does not outweigh the specific harm identified in this instance.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed in part and dismissed in part. As the pitched roof to the bay window has been completed, no conditions are necessary in allowing this part of the appeal.

M Clowes

INSPECTOR