
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 December 2021

by R Bartlett PGDip URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Z4310/D/21/3280354
113 Alder Road, Liverpool, L12 2BA

- 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 James Harrison against the decision of Liverpool City Council.
 - The application Ref 21H/0229, dated 26 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 19 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension, single storey front and rear extensions, loft conversion incorporating rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. My decision is based upon the amended plans that were submitted to the council during the course of the application process.
3. At the time of my site visit a single storey, pitched roof, extension had been constructed at the rear of the appeal property. This bears no resemblance to the single storey, flat roof with roof lanterns, rear extension proposed on the plans currently before me. For the avoidance of doubt, my decision relates solely to the proposals shown on the submitted plans and not to any other development already undertaken on the site, including the existing alteration to the original hip roof, which I have not been advised by either party is lawful or otherwise.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character of the dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons

5. The council raised no objection to the small flat roof porch extension to the front of the property, which would be only very slightly larger than the existing canopy above the front door. The council also raised no objection to the single storey rear extension, which has already been built albeit not in accordance with the submitted plans, or to the substantial flat roof rear dormer.
6. Although Alder Road is a long street comprising a mix of buildings, the appeal site sits within a row of similarly designed residential properties. The adjacent dwellings are predominantly large detached houses with hipped roofs and a

rendered finish, set back from the road and with large gardens to the rear. Most of this row of houses were originally of identical design.

7. The spacing between properties is roughly equal, and is enhanced by the hipped roofs. The space between numbers 113 and 115 is wider than that between other properties due to each dwelling having a driveway to the side. The space between the dwellings together with the slightly splayed alignment of each dwelling, results in the eastern side elevation of the appeal property being highly visible from Alder Road. The eastern side and rear roof slopes of the dwelling are also clearly visible in views from Whinmoor Road.
8. The original hipped roof on the western side of 113 Alder Road has already been altered to a hybrid flat/gambrel style, which is somewhat alien to its surroundings. This flat roof alteration has resulted in the loss of the ridge tiles and has imbalanced the proportions and architectural detailing of the original house to the detriment of the character and appearance of the dwelling and that of the immediately surrounding area.
9. The remaining hipped roof, due to its sloping nature and change in material, clearly reduces the massing and visual impact of the eastern side elevation and increases the sense of space between dwellings, which is particularly important should adjacent number 115 be extended in the future. The proposed development would result in a large and highly visible expanse and massing of wall and a flat roof, which I did not see elsewhere in the area. This would be exacerbated by the addition of a flat roof dormer, which would also be visible in views from Alder Road and Whinmoor Road and the proximity of the new flank wall to the boundary of the site.
10. I appreciate the appellant's point, that the extension would balance the appearance of the dwelling by matching the changes already made to the western side of the roof. However, there is nothing before me to confirm that these incomplete changes are lawful. Moreover, the same argument could be made for reinstating the hipped roof on either side. Matching the changes already made to the dwelling would not address the fact that they would continue to detract from the row of dwellings within which the dwelling is situated. The amended plans, stepping the extension back and down, which I understand was an attempt to make the proposals appear subordinate or to comply with the council's concerns and design guidance, results in further imbalance, harm and confusion to the already contrived roof design.
11. Plans and photographs have been submitted by the appellant to demonstrate a variety of other extensions that have been constructed elsewhere on Alder Road and further afield. However, these relate to different house types with different settings and different neighbouring properties. Many show the original hipped roofs retained and extensions of either subordinate or symmetrical proportions. Despite some similarities the cases are not directly comparable and each development must be considered on its own merits. None of the examples shown incorporate the unusual hybrid flat roof above the main dwelling or the resultant unusually shaped flank wall that are proposed at the appeal site.
12. I am in no doubt that a two storey side extension could be achieved on the site without causing further harm to either the original dwelling or to its surroundings. Indeed I saw that 121 Alder Road had been extended in a similar manner to the proposal, with the original hipped roof design retained.

However, the proposals currently before me, due to a combination of their scale, proximity to the site boundary and poorly designed roof form, would be harmful to the character of the dwelling and its immediate setting.

13. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy H8 of The City of Liverpool Unitary Development Plan 2002, emerging policy H8 of The Liverpool Local Plan 2013-2033 (Pre-submission draft – January 2018) and The council's Supplementary Planning Guide Note 1, which collectively require house extensions to respect the character of the existing dwelling and adjacent properties in terms of scale, design, orientation and materials, to be of high quality design that matches or complements the original dwelling and the surrounding area and that in relation to two storey extensions, the roof should always match that of the original house.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

Rachael Bartlett

INSPECTOR