



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 September 2022

by J Downs BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/22/3303257

15 Farriers Lane, Rochdale, Lancs OL11 4NZ

- 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 Shahid Ahmed against the decision of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00366/HOUS, dated 18 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 27 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is Retrospective application for the erection of rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The appeal documents and my site visit confirm that the dormer has been constructed.
3. The submitted drawings indicate that the roof design has changed from a shallow hip to a gable on each side. Whilst there is dispute as to whether the current roof form benefits from planning permission, I have assessed the proposal on the basis that planning permission is sought of this element of the proposal, along with the rear dormer window.
4. I noted a discrepancy between the submitted plans and dormer as constructed with regards to the position of one of the window openings. I have considered the appeal on the basis of what I observed on site.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are
 - the effect of the rear dormer window on the character and appearance of the host property and locality; and
 - the effect on the living conditions of residents of 4 Wheelwright Close with specific regard to outlook and privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

6. The appeal property is an extended detached two storey dwelling located within a cul-de-sac. The front elevation of the property appears to have been rendered and painted in a cream colour, the roof replaced with grey pantiles, timber cladding introduced to the projecting front gable and the size of the

window openings increased. This contrasts with the prevailing character of the surrounding area which are constructed of brick with timber detailing and red roof tiles on the part hipped roof of the two storey properties. The side and rear elevations of the property remain in red brick.

7. While the dormer is set in from the ridge, eaves and sides of the roof slope as I viewed them, it occupies a clear majority of the roof slope. This makes it appear as a particularly bulky, large and prominent addition to the dwelling. A different style of window, with a horizontal emphasis, has been used in the dormer, contrasting with the more vertical emphasis of the first-floor windows and the substantial glazed elements at ground floor level. As such the windows on the dormer do not relate well to the existing pattern of fenestration on the rear elevation of the property. This exacerbates the disproportionate scale of the dormer.
8. The dormer is finished using dark, horizontal cladding. The colour is well related to the colour of the roof tiles. However, it has introduced a substantial, additional element to the materials palette of the building. This further dissociates the dormer from the dwelling and it appears as an incongruous addition.
9. Although not referred to within the reason for refusal, the Council has raised concern over the roof design which has seen the characteristic shallow hip removed and replaced with a gable. There are single storey dwellings in the immediate area which have a gable roof, including the immediate neighbour of the appeal property. Further, the alterations to the appearance of the dwelling, in particular the change in the colour of the roof materials, have made the dwelling distinctive in the street scene to the effect that the difference in the shape of the roof does not appear incongruous or discordant.
10. In relation to the first main issue, the development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property by introducing a disproportionately large dormer extension which would not be well related to the existing dwelling. It therefore would be contrary to RCS Policy DM1 which requires development to enhance the quality of the area. There is also conflict with the Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD adopted June 2016 in relation to dormer and window design.

Living conditions

11. No 4 Wheelwright Close is sited directly to the rear of the appeal site. It is a two-storey property however it is set at a lower level than the appeal property. It has a substantial single storey extension which covers much of the area immediately to the rear of the appeal site. The substantive area of the private garden of No 4 lies to the side of the dwelling and would only be visible in oblique views from the dormer.
12. While the SPD identifies separation distances between principal elevations, it assumes equal ground levels. In this case, the raised ground levels of the appeal site mean that the windows in the dormer effectively look over the roof of No 4. There would not be an actual increase in the extent of overlooking between the properties.
13. While the dormer would increase the mass of the host property, views of it from No 4 are restricted due to the lowered ground levels and the offset of the

garden space. The outlook from the first floor windows of No 4 is already restricted by its relationship with the appeal property.

14. In relation to the second main issue, I conclude that the dormer would not adversely affect living conditions of residents of 4 Wheelwright Close with respect to outlook and privacy in accordance with RCS Policy DM1 which requires development proposals to not adversely affect the amenity of residents through visual intrusion, overbearing impact or loss of privacy.

Other Matters

15. I have taken into account that the proposal would enable the appellant's family to be more easily accommodated. I note the advice contained within the SPD on this point that 'the needs of an applicant may exist for only a few years whereas built development is likely to last for decades'. The harm that would result to the character and appearance of the area is not outweighed by this matter.

Conclusion

16. While I have not found that the dormer harms the living conditions of the occupants of No 4, this lack of harm becomes a neutral factor in the determination of the appeal. There are no material considerations which would outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and area, and the conflict with the Development Plan taken as a whole. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

J Downs

INSPECTOR