



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2023

by D Hartley BA (Hons) MTP MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D2320/D/22/3311173

61 Lydiate Lane, Ecclestone, Lancashire PR7 6LX

- 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 & Mrs Earlan and Jemma Kirwan and Matthews against the decision of Chorley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00565/FULHH, dated 20 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 23 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as '*a single storey rear extension to form new kitchen/dining with utility and w.c., new front porch extension and dormer loft extension including removal of hipped roof and build-up of new gable wall*'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached brick built dwellinghouse set back from Lydiate Lane with a landscaped front amenity space including driveway. It falls within land designated as Green Belt. However, I have no reason to disagree with the Council that the proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt (i.e. it would not amount to a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building) taking into account policy HS5 of the adopted 2015 Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 (LP) which permits increases in volume up to 50% and paragraph 149(c) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (the Framework).
4. There is a linear pattern to the position of dwellinghouse in Lydiate Lane. While the properties are not all identical in appearance or size, many are nonetheless constructed in brick and are set within spacious plots. Many have attractive views of open fields on the other side of the road. There is a mixture of hipped and gabled roofs in the locality, although in respect of the semi-detached dwellings they have hipped roofs thereby retaining a design balance and symmetry to such buildings. To the passer-by, it is quite apparent that the front roofs of the dwellinghouses in the locality are predominantly unbroken and this gives the area a pleasing design consistency. Collectively, the aforementioned attributes add positively and distinctively to the character and appearance of the area.

5. The proposal includes the extension of an existing proportionate dormer to the rear of the property with an enlarged box dormer which would take up a significant proportion of the roof space. However, the resultant dormer would be to the rear of the property and hence would not be conspicuous from public views. Therefore, I find that this part of the proposal would be acceptable from a design point of view.
6. My main concern, however, is that to facilitate the enlargement of the rear roof dormer, and to erect a pitched front roof dormer, it is proposed to create a gabled roof to the semi-detached dwellinghouse. This in itself would result in some adverse harm to the design balance and symmetry of the pair of semi-detached dwellings in so far that they currently both have hipped main roofs. In conjunction with the hip to gable roof alteration, the front roof dormer would unacceptably upset the simple and unbroken roof design consistency of the existing semi-detached dwellings when seen from the main road.
7. Furthermore, the proposed front dormer, while being less top heavy than that proposed to the rear, would nonetheless seek to introduce an out of character roof structure into the immediate locality where the front roof slopes of surrounding dwellings are predominantly unbroken. Consequently, when this part of the development proposal is considered as a whole, it would not represent good design and would appear as an incongruous addition in the street-scene.
8. I have no reason to disagree with the views reached by the Council in respect of the acceptability of the front porch and the single storey rear extension when considered in isolation. That said, in combination with the proposed gabled roof and front roof dormer, the front porch would also seek to depart from the ground floor design consistency that exists in respect of the pair of semi-detached dwellinghouses.
9. For the collective reasons outlined above, I find that when the proposal is considered as a whole it would not constitute good design and significant harm would be caused to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the development would not accord with policy HS5(a) of the LP which requires extensions to respect the existing house and the surrounding buildings in terms of scale, size and design. In addition, there would be conflict with paragraph 126 of the Framework which seeks to create high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places.

Other Matters

10. I have taken into account the supportive letters received from the occupiers of Nos. 59 and 61 Lydiate Lane. I note that the occupier of No. 61 states that '*we would be looking to do the same ourselves, by adding a front and rear facing dormer to our detached property*'. There are no plans before me for No. 61 Lydiate Lane and I cannot be sure if or when a similar proposal may be submitted to the local planning authority (LPA) for the neighbouring property. I have therefore determined this appeal on the basis of the proposal that is before me and the site conditions that exist now.
11. I do acknowledge the desire for increased bedroom space. However, this has to be balanced against the clear harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area if this appeal were to be allowed. Furthermore, some aspects of the development proposal are acceptable in isolation and so it is not

the case that the appellant would not be able to explore the potential to extend the property to some extent as part of further discussions with the LPA. In this case, I find that none of the other matters raised are of sufficient magnitude to alter or outweigh my conclusion on the main issue.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the development would not accord with the development plan for the area taken as a whole and there are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

D Hartley

INSPECTOR