



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 March 2023

by M Clowes BA (Hons) MCD PG CERT (Arch Con) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/A4710/D/22/3312624

Beechfield, Keighley Road, Illingworth, Halifax HX2 8HA

- 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 Jamie Hattersley against the decision of Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00870/HSE, dated 4 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 29 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is a single storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in relation to this appeal is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a grand 19th century semi-detached dwelling of local natural stone and slate. Although not a listed building or located within a conservation area, it is of considerable architectural quality and historic interest. As such, it has all of the hallmarks of being a non-designated heritage asset. However, the Council has not made this assessment, and neither will I.
4. The south-eastern elevation of the host dwelling appears to have been deliberately designed to be of an impressive architectural appearance, with a 2-storey projection and ground floor stone mullioned bay window forming the focal point, mirroring that of the attached semi-detached dwelling. It therefore appears to me that this is the front elevation of the appeal dwelling. The north-western elevation in contrast, has a more simplistic form with a modestly detailed door opening and a stair window which is a typical feature of a rear elevation. Overall, the horizontal scale of the dwelling is balanced by the vertical proportions and positions of the first floor windows directly above the ground floor openings, which produces a balanced ratio of window to wall.
5. Arising from its size, position and flat roofed form, the proposed development would introduce a poorly designed, boxy extension with a high window to wall ratio, contrary to the refined proportions of the front elevation and the pitched roof form of the host dwelling. It would interfere with and cover over the 2-storey front projection resulting in the further loss of the existing ground floor bay window. Incorporating 2 different styles of fenestration treatment (bi-

folding doors and top opening lights) in a continuous band to the front elevation, they bear no relationship to the fenestration of the host dwelling. They further fail to respect the distinction between the 2-storey projection and the remainder of the dwelling. Overall, the proposal would disrupt the considered design of the host dwelling and irreversibly harm its architectural composition, which the use of matching materials would not mitigate. Highly symmetrical with its attached neighbour, the proposed extension would further unbalance and harm the integrity of the pair of semi-detached dwellings.

6. The presence of established landscaping along the front boundary with Moor Lane would limit the visibility of the proposed extension. Likewise, the hedgerow between the appeal site and the attached semi-detached dwelling would limit the extent to which the properties are viewed together. Nevertheless, I cannot be certain that the boundary hedge and landscaping to the front garden would be maintained for the lifetime of the development.
7. The hedge between the semi-detached dwellings is substantial and would need to be reduced at the least, if not partially removed, in order to accommodate the extension in the position proposed. Moreover, as hedgerows and trees could be removed without permission or may die in the future, the harm I have identified would become much more apparent were the existing landscaping to be cut back or removed. Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is clear that development that is not well-designed, should be refused. It would not therefore be good planning to rely on the presence of landscaping to cover up poor design.
8. Reference is made to the ability of the appellant to remove the existing ground floor bay window to the front elevation without planning permission. Whether or not this is the case, its removal would only be necessitated by the development proposed. The removal of an important Victorian architectural feature would be damaging to the overall character of the dwelling and therefore unlikely to occur in isolation, given that it would also remove floorspace from the host dwelling. Even if the bay window was to be removed, such works would be smaller in scale and therefore less harmful, than the proposed extension.
9. For the above reasons, the proposed extension would cause adverse harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policy BE1 of the Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan 2006. This policy seeks to ensure that new development respects or enhances the established character and appearance of existing buildings including amongst other things, form, massing and design. There would also be conflict with paragraph 130 of the Framework which requires development to add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short-term but over the lifetime of the development, as well as responding to and reflecting the identity of the built environment.

Other Matters

10. Reference is made to the Council's approval of 2 proposals considered similar to the proposed development. Limited evidence is before me of the context of these sites and the reasoning that led to favourable decisions by the Council. Nonetheless, the decision notice and plan provided in respect of planning application reference 19/00783/LBC, advises that the proposal was for the replacement of an existing conservatory structure. Furthermore, the

photograph supplied¹ appears to indicate that the addition was to the side, rather than on the front elevation of the host dwelling.

11. The decision notice supplied in respect of planning approval reference 22/00058/HSE, advises that the proposal was for an orangery to the principal elevation. However, the proposed plans reveal that the front elevation of the host dwelling was symmetrical and flat. The approved extension retained a symmetrical appearance to the front as well as vertically proportioned windows, such that the overall character of the host dwelling appears to have been respected. In light of my findings in respect of the appeal scheme, I do not find either of the circumstances of the approved extensions analogous to that before me.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, having considered the development plan as a whole, and all other considerations, the appeal is dismissed.

M Clowes

INSPECTOR

¹ Page 2 of the appellant's appeal statement.