



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 March 2023

by A.Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/D/22/3310727

2A Alkrington Hall Road North, Middleton M24 1SZ

- 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 Richard McKeever against the decision of Rochdale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 22/00942/HOUS dated 23 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 18 October 2022.
 - The application is for two storey and single storey front extensions, first floor side and rear extensions, dormer extension to front and rear, single storey rear extensions, render and cladding to all elevations, alteration to fenestrations, following demolition of existing single storey rear extension and existing formers to front and rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the Councils Decision Notice and differs from that used on the Application Form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the Council's Decision Notice that I feel more accurately describes the proposed development.

Main Issues

3. The main issue is the impact of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached chalet type bungalow with dormer windows likely dating to around the 1960's or 70's. It is set back and slightly raised above the unmade Alkrington Hall Road that serves a number of properties including several along Dene Drive that adjoins Alkrington Hall Road almost opposite the appeal site.
5. The character of this area is frequently determined by mid 20th century red brick and render properties that are predominantly located opposite the appeal site and along Dene Drive. This character is altered somewhat by the appeal

- property and its neighbours that introduce more modern forms and materials such as buff brick and weatherboard cladding.
6. The appeal property itself utilises a mix of materials including natural stone, red brick, cedar cladding to the dormers and what appeared to be Westermoreland slate to the roof. Despite this the materials used at the front at least, appear to have been high quality, even though they are largely alien to their context.
 7. The overall form of the building is elongated taking up a good proportion of the width of the plot but it's set back from the road and low eaves ensure that the existing building makes a neutral rather than detracting contribution to the area. To the rear there is a two storey shallow pitched roof element in red brick that doesn't reflect the more obvious quality of the front elevation. This presents itself onto a rear garden that is well shielded from ground level to all sides. The garden steps up to the rear with woodland beyond. From ground level I was unable to perceive the adjoining houses on West Crescent due to boundary fence and foliage beyond.
 8. The proposal before me seeks to radically alter the existing house and would largely alter its appearance from a predominant dormer bungalow, to that of a large, triple gable fronted house. To the front therefore, the existing, predominantly single storey character of the property would be altered to present three two storey gable features that would contain large expanses of glazing. This would include a two storey glazed atrium/entrance hall feature.
 9. To the rear there would be a single two storey gable which would sit very close to the boundary to properties on West Crescent. This too would contain lots of floor to ceiling glazing to the first floor. Whilst the existing two storey central element would be removed, this would be replaced by a continuous row of box type dormers extending much of the length of the rear elevation.
 10. In assessing this appeal I am aware of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on residential development¹ that provides guidance on design, location and residential amenity. I am also aware of the requirements of Policy DM1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy that largely reflects that emphasis upon high quality design as contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework).
 11. Although the site in question is not perhaps typically or directly comparable to many of the examples shown in the Residential Development SPD, this guidance is still relevant with regards its emphasis upon good design, subservience, dormer extensions and residential amenity.
 12. The scheme before me completely alters the character of the existing house. What is currently a fairly low building that uses generally high quality materials, would be altered into a large three gabled house. As such the character of the existing property would be subsumed within these sizeable extensions. Moreover, the proposed triple gables, and their projection forward, would introduce overly large features into this site that would have their impact magnified significantly by the raise in height of the plot from Alkrington Hall Road. The proposed extensions would also extend the scale

¹ Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD Adopted June 2016.

of development across the width of this plot and as such would appear both over dominant and represent an overdevelopment of the site.

13. To the rear the impact is perhaps less, although the large box style dormer would introduce a poorly designed solution for accommodation in the roof here. Moreover, the proposed new gable to serve bedroom five, would present an area of floor to ceiling glazing that would allow more direct overlooking of the gardens of properties on West Crescent, whose boundary would be very close to this part of the house. Despite the oblique angle between this window and the rear elevations of properties here, there would still be the potential for harmful overlooking of the currently private garden space of these neighbours.
14. Although I consider that there would be ways to extend this property to meet the occupant's requirements, ultimately, the proposal before me would represent an incongruous and poor design solution that would result in an excessive scale of extensions and would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of neighbours.
15. As such the proposal would fail to meet the requirements for high quality design contained within Policies DM1 and P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy. It would also be contrary to guidance contained within the Council's Guidance and Standards for Residential Development SPD and the aspirations for high quality design as advanced in The Framework.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, and taking into account of all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

A Graham

INSPECTOR