
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 April 2023

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Z4310/D/23/3317610

31 Oswestry Street, Anfield, Liverpool L5 1AJ

- 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 M Muscedere against the decision of Liverpool City Council.
 - The application Ref 22H/2697, dated 29 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 8 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a new porch to front.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a 3-storey house that is one of a matching pair. It stands within a recently built residential estate within which dwellings are similar in style, materials, and general appearance with some variation in detailed design, layout and house type. A distinctive feature of properties within this estate is the flat front elevations of dwellings, which are punctuated mainly by ground floor bays and short canopies. For the most part, houses along Oswestry Street are also set back from the road largely behind open front gardens, driveways and hard surface areas used for vehicle parking. Consequently, the front facades of properties are a prominent feature in the street scene and within the local area to which the appeal dwelling belongs.
4. The proposed front extension would be single storey and modest in scale. It would include a flat roof at a similar height as the existing short flat canopy. Although set back from the road, the new addition would project noticeably forward of the main front wall of No 31 and its ground floor bay. In doing so, the proposal would undermine an original design feature of the house and the wider estate because the main front wall of the host building would no longer be flat. It would also unduly disrupt the symmetry between No 31 and its attached counterpart as a matching pair by unbalancing their principal elevations. As the only example of such development within the wider estate, the appeal scheme would draw the eye as a conspicuous and visually disruptive feature. It would be an uncharacteristic addition to the local area even with external materials and door to match those of the existing dwelling.

5. Residential areas will evolve with changes made to properties over time to reflect the changing needs and circumstances of its occupiers. That process already appears to be underway with a timber boundary fence introduced to a property on the opposite side of the road to the site and new planting introduced within some gardens. In my experience, change that is compatible with local character can positively contribute to an area by adding visual interest and enhancing diversity. However, the process of change does not in itself justify introducing a discordant form of development, as sought.
6. On the main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the local area. As such, it conflicts with Policies H8 and UD1 of the Liverpool Local Plan 2013-2033. These policies seek to ensure that house extensions achieve a high quality of design that matches or complements the style of the dwelling and the surrounding area and takes into account the pattern of development. The appeal scheme is also contrary to the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) insofar as development should be sympathetic to local character and add to the overall quality of the area.
7. An interested party raises additional concern with regard to the effect of the proposal on the outlook from, and the entrance to, an adjacent property as well as the potential to divert rainfall onto a neighbouring area. These are important considerations and I have considered all the submitted evidence. However, given my findings on the main issue, these are not matters that have been critical to my decision.

Conclusion

8. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan. There are no material considerations, including the Framework, which indicate that the decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons set out above, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR