



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 July 2023

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B2355/D/23/3320347

59 Hardman Avenue, Rawtenstall, Rossendale BB4 6BB

- 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 Philip Speddy against the decision of Rossendale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2023/0033, dated 19 January 2023, was refused by notice dated 20 March 2023.
 - The development proposed is single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed single-storey side extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and local area.

Reasons

3. No.59 Hardman Avenue (No.59) is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling, located on the north-west side of Hardman Avenue on the corner with Hall Carr Road. To its side, No.59 is off set from Hall Carr Road by an area of garden edged with a high hedge. It is proposed to construct a single-storey side extension infilling part of this area, projecting around 3.5m from the existing flank of the No.59. Consistent with the guidance in the Council's *Alterations and Extensions to Residential Properties Supplementary Planning Document (2008)* (SPD), the extension would not be more than half of the available width of the side area, and would leave a minimum of 2m from the highway (in this case Hall Carr Road).
4. However, the guidance in the SPD further advises that generally there will be a presumption against extensions at the front of a property due to the need to protect the character of existing street scenes. They will not therefore be permitted if they project excessively from the original front wall. The proposed single storey side extension would be set forward by around 1m from the existing front elevation of No.59. Whilst this projection is not in itself excessive, the proposal includes a small porch and the roof of the extension would project across this and the existing double windows on the front elevation. So, the projection would extend the full width of No.59. I find this width, in combination with the forward projection, would result in an addition that fails to appear subordinate to its host.

5. Moreover, I saw on my site visit that Hardman Avenue is characterised by pairs of semi-detached or short rows of terraced dwellings with an overall uniformity in appearance, comprising a consistent building line between groups. Although the existing boundary hedge would offer some screening, the corner location of No.59 means that the extension would be particularly prominent and its projection forward of the building line would fail to assimilate well with the character and appearance of the streetscene described.
6. No.59's attached neighbour has been extended to the side over two-storeys, continuing the existing front elevation and ridge of the hipped roof. This extension has resulted in some loss of symmetry, but there is nonetheless a uniformity and balance to the pair particularly the fenestration details and simple porch canopy. By projecting forward of the existing building line, the proposed side extension would appear an incongruous addition to the pair, unbalancing this composition.
7. I observed on my site visit that there are examples of porch canopies on Hardman Avenue, including those which project across the front windows. There are, however, no examples of extensions, such as proposed, which project from the front building line, save at No.35 Hall Carr Road (No.35) which is located on the opposite corner of Hardman Avenue to the appeal property. This semi-detached dwelling has been extended to the side over two-storeys with a gable and porch set forward of the front elevation of its host. I do not have full details of the extension to No.35 before me, but I note from the appellant's own evidence that the planning permission pre-dates the Council's current SPD guidance and the adoption of the Rossendale Local Plan 2019 to 2036 (2021) (LP). Further, I do not find this extension reflects the character and appearance of the local area and it does not therefore offer any particular support for the proposal before me.
8. On the main issue, I therefore conclude that the proposed single-storey side extension would result in an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the local area. The proposal would thus conflict with LP policies HS9 and ENV1 and the SPD guidance, which together broadly seek to ensure that new development, including extensions, respect the existing dwelling, and takes account of the character and appearance of the local area. It would also be contrary to the principles of well designed places in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other matters

9. I acknowledge the personal circumstance of the appellant in caring for a family member, and that providing a large ground floor bedroom and shower room would clearly be a benefit of the scheme. This benefit does not, however, outweigh the harm I identify above to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and local area. I also note the appellant's comment that a porch could be installed without planning permission being required. Whilst that may be so, such an alteration would not have the prominence of the single storey extension proposed, and would appear subservient to its host.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Jones

INSPECTOR