

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 October 2023

by P Eggleton BSc(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st November 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/D/23/3329325

150 Seymour Grove, Old Trafford, Manchester M16 9GR

- 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 Laher against the decision of Trafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 110961/HHA/23, dated 12 May 2023, was refused by notice dated 21 July 2023.
 - The development proposed is a front, side and rear two storey extension with a new detached garage to the rear garden.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The existing dwelling has an attractive design with well articulated elevations, full height bays to the front and rear and distinctive detailing including the chimneys, the overhanging eaves and the contrasting and decorative materials, all of which combine to provide a high level of architectural interest. Despite the existing detracting side extension and the need for extensive renovation and repair, the property exhibits high quality design that adds significantly to the character and appearance of the area, particularly given this prominent corner location. Many of the surrounding houses appear to be of a similar age and include architectural features reflective of those found at the appeal property but they do not achieve the high standard of architectural interest or the same level of design quality.
 4. This proposal, although replacing the side extension and seeking to mimic elements of the design of the existing house, would result in the quality of the existing composition being entirely lost. The strong vertical emphasis of the existing well articulated feature bay would be replaced by a substantial and cluttered frontage which would appear entirely at odds with the property's existing proportions and form. The replacement front bay and the new matching bay, would offer some design interest but they would be dominated by a new central bay that would have little design interest yet would be the most prominent feature. The plans are incorrect as the floor plans show this
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- central feature to be much wider than shown on the elevations. The floor plan dimensions would ensure that this central feature would be even more dominant.
5. The rear of the building is visible from the street and currently benefits from a high level of architectural interest. This would be replaced by a single monolithic elevation and roof form with a purely horizontal design emphasis that would have little architectural interest. The side elevations fail to accurately depict the stepped front bays and do not illustrate the distinctly separate nature of the main roof from the gables. The greater projection of the central bay is also not shown.
 6. Notwithstanding the plan discrepancies, it is evident that the proposal would result in a very substantial and poorly articulated building that would have little architectural interest and would be a significant step down in design quality compared with the original dwelling. It would fall below the quality of the more uniform semi-detached properties in the vicinity due to the poorly thought-out side and rear elevations which would be clearly visible; and because of the overly cluttered frontage dominated by the new central feature which would detract from the more characteristic bays to either side. Overall, it would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area.
 7. Given the above, the proposal would be contrary to policy L7 of the Trafford Core Strategy 2012 as it would not be appropriate in its context; or enhance the street scene or character of the area. The poor design overall would also conflict with the aspirations of the *National Planning Policy Framework* and would not represent sustainable development.
 8. Reference has been made to the Supplementary Planning Document, SPD4: A Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations 2012. This particular arrangement and the spaciousness of the site is not reflected within the examples referred to. Whilst the proposal would meet some of the requirements for corner plots and side extensions and would not appear cramped given the size of the plot, it would be contrary to paragraph 3.1.1, as it would appear unacceptably prominent whilst also detracting from the dwelling's character. It would also conflict with the general aspirations of paragraph 2.7, that extensions fit in with their surroundings by not only complementing the dwelling but also the street scene.
 9. I am mindful of the aspirations of the appellant with regard to achieving a highly sustainable home with regard to heating, power generation and insulation. It is also evident that a considerable investment would be required to bring this property back into a habitable state which would benefit the local housing supply and the local economy. This is a large plot and it could accommodate a much larger property. Whilst I afford these matters considerable weight, they are not sufficient to outweigh my concerns with regard to the overall quality of the design and the harm to the character and appearance of the area, particularly given the prominence of the property. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

Peter Eggleton
INSPECTOR