



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 May 2024

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25TH June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/W/24/3336980

33 Craig House, Ballbrook Avenue, Manchester M20 3JG

- 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 M20 Property Group against the decision of Manchester City Council.
 - The application Ref 137745/FO/2023, dated 27 July 2023, was refused by notice dated 24 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is to construct a second-floor extension and rear terrace to the existing office building.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a second-floor extension and rear terrace to the existing office building at 33 Craig House, Ballbrook Avenue, Manchester M20 3JG in accordance with the terms of the application, 137745/FO/2023, dated 27 July 2023, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location plan referenced 714-62-101(p) received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 2 August 2023 and drawings referenced P (200), P (210), P (220), P (102), P (103) and P (300) received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 6 November 2023.
 - 3) No above ground development that is hereby approved shall commence unless and until samples and specifications of all materials to be used on all external elevations of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as local planning authority. The development shall only be implemented in accordance with the agreed materials.
 - 4) Notwithstanding details submitted, prior to the commencement of development, a construction management plan outlining working practices during development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, which for the avoidance of doubt should include:
 - Measures to control noise and vibrations;
 - Dust suppression measures;

- Compound locations where relevant;
- Location, removal and recycling of waste;
- Detail of an emergency contact telephone number;
- Parking of construction vehicles; and
- Sheeting over of construction vehicles.

The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved construction management plan.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) was adopted in March 2024 and replaces some policies, or sections of policies, of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012) (CS). CS Policy EN3, referred to in the Council's decision notice, has been replaced by PfE Policy JP-P2 in so far as it relates to conservation areas. As PfE JP-P2 requires development proposals affecting designated heritage assets to have regard to national planning policy, it has not been considered necessary to seek further comments from the main parties on this matter.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed second-floor extension and rear terrace on the character and appearance of the Ballbrook Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property (Craig House) fronts Ballbrook Avenue on its southern side close to its junction with Palatine Road, and is on the south west edge of the Ballbrook Conservation Area. S72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas.
5. The Ballbrook Conservation Area (the CA) was designated in 1991 and is bound by Wilmslow Road to the east, Lapwing Lane to the south-west, Palatine Road to the north-west and Sandleigh Avenue to the north. The significance of the CA is largely derived from the group of Edwardian semi-detached houses (known as the Radcliffe Estate), set within wide, tree-lined avenues, and fronted by garden walls. The layout of Ballbrook Avenue, Lapwing Lane and Palatine Road creates a triangular site comprising a cluster of three 'service' buildings within the CA, which includes the appeal property. Craig House is a two-storey brick faced building, built in the 1920s with a flat roof (incorporating a glazed roof lantern) set behind a parapet wall. It has an ornate double door entrance with fan light in a lower two-storey block to the right hand side of the principal elevation. The appeal property has a utilitarian, but attractive composition and individually, and as part of the cluster, I observed that it makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA.
6. It is proposed to construct a new mansard roof extension at second-floor of the main part of the appeal property to provide additional office accommodation. On the principal elevation, the proposed mansard would be set slightly behind the existing parapet and would be around 2.4m in height (internally). Craig

- House has a regular array of sash windows at ground and first floor and the proposed mansard would incorporate 6no. dormers with framed casement windows, which would align with and be of similar size to those at first floor below. The detailing and alignment of the windows and the use of high quality materials, shown as a blue-grey slate to the roof and painted timber windows, would ensure it appears a sympathetic, appropriate addition to its host.
7. Despite being set back from the parapet, the proposed mansard would be visible within the streetscene, notably at the junction of Redclyffe Road and Ballbrook Avenue. It would, however, be viewed in the context of the larger, former bank building (at No.35 Ballbrook Avenue) which forms part of the cluster of 'service' buildings on this corner. Although the ridge of the proposed mansard would be above the eaves of the former bank, it would be below the ridge of the hipped roof and prominent chimney stacks. The roof profile of the former bank would therefore remain visible in the streetscene and the lower, two-storey entrance to Craig House retains the original visual break between the massing of the two buildings. It would further still allow 99 Palantine Road ('the Bank') on the opposite corner of Palantine Road, which is Grade II listed, to be fully appreciated as a distinct, local landmark building.
 8. To the south-east of Craig House is No.29 and No.31 Ballbrook Avenue, a semi-detached pair of two-storey Edwardian houses fronted by garden walls, street trees and finished in red brick and render, with half-timbered gables; typical of houses in the CA. Although views would be filtered by the street trees in the summer months, the flank elevation of the mansard (and dormers) would be visible from the south east on Ballbrook Avenue and would be viewed in the context of the two-storey semi-detached pair. However, the design of the mansard (pitched away from the flank) and good degree of separation between Craig House and No.31 (of over 4m) means it would not dominate its neighbour, or appear unduly prominent in the streetscene.
 9. The plan form of Craig House steps in to the rear and the proposed mansard has been set off the edges, with a vertical profile, set back behind a small terrace to the rear elevation, accessed from 4no. full height doors. I observed on my site visit that the rear elevation of Craig House is only visible from a courtyard to the rear, accessed through the former post office, now Pizza Express, or a ginnel that runs alongside the flank of that building. Only a small part of the proposed mansard and terrace would be visible from the ginnel and it would not disrupt or cause harm to the composition or character of neighbouring buildings.
 10. I therefore conclude on the main issue that the proposed second-floor mansard extension and rear terrace would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the Ballbrook Conservation Area. Consequently, it would not conflict with CS Policy DM1 or SP1 because it is well-designed and appropriate in scale, form, massing, materials and detail. It would further accord with PfE Policy JP-P2, saved Policy DC18.1 of the City of Manchester Unitary Development Plan (1995) and the guidance at Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) that great weight would be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, and developments should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Conditions

11. I have had regard to the advice in the Planning Practice Guide and the conditions suggested by the Council, which the appellant has had the opportunity to comment on. In addition to the standard commencement condition, it is necessary to specify the approved drawings in the interests of certainty. In light of the importance afforded to the use of high-quality materials, it is also necessary to impose a condition that samples and specifications of all external materials are submitted to, and approved by the Council. As the appeal property is located close to a busy junction, with limited forecourt parking, and on the edge of a residential road, in the interests of amenity, I have imposed a condition requiring submission and approval of a Construction Management Plan.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR