



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 March 2025

by **E Heron MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/W/24/3357157

32 - 40 Flixton Road, Urmston M41 5AA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Nick Ratcliffe, NHR Directors Pension Scheme against the decision of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 113474/FUL/24.
 - The development proposed is minor works to the rear of the existing property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Notwithstanding the description of development set out above, which is taken from the application form, it is clear from the plans and accompanying details that the proposed development comprises external staircase and deck to first floor rear, new shopfronts, replacement of doors and windows, replacement gate to front and proposed dormers and rooflights to the rear. I have dealt with the appeal on that basis.
3. Whilst there are several elements to the appeal proposal, the point of dispute lies in the proposed dormer windows, external staircase, and associated deck, all contained at the rear of Nos 36 to 38. Accordingly, my decision is focussed on those aspects of the development.
4. My attention has also been drawn to a planning permission at the site that was granted on 26 February 2025, (Council ref. 114625/FUL/24), and a copy of the north elevation drawing has been provided. I have taken account of this in my assessment and have referred to it as 'the approved scheme.'
5. The dormer windows are only shown on the north elevation drawings and the floor plans, but I note that the sides would be covered in vertical slate. I have determined the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

7. The appeal site is in a town centre location. The front elevation has a formal arrangement to reflect its function within the main shopping street. It has traditional

dormers, centrally aligned and in proportion with the building fenestration. To the rear of the site is an open service yard serving nearby supermarkets. The rear elevations of the appeal buildings are visible across this service yard from Park Road South. Despite previous alterations, including a large flat roofed ground floor extension with associated roof terrace, the rear of Nos 32 to 40 provide a pleasing backdrop to the harsh and functional appearance of the service yard.

8. Most visually striking is the rhythm of the gabled rear extensions within the terrace group, together with the roof slopes and chimneys punctuating the skyline. Existing dormers are small scale, do not dominate the roof slopes, and are set far back behind the rear gable extensions such that they are not discernible in the street scene. As such they do not detract from the distinctive character of the rear elevation.
9. The proposed dormers located on Nos 36 to 38 would be large alien structures that would give the impression of a bulky, flat-roofed extension at second floor level. They would dominate and disrupt the rhythm of the distinctive rear roof slopes and jar with the architectural style of the host buildings. This is in marked contrast to the existing unobtrusive dormers on the rear elevation, and the distinctive but proportionate dormer features on the formal front elevation.
10. Moreover, the proposed dormers would not complement the general characteristics of other roof structures in the locality. The flat-roofed window projections, high up on the rear elevation of Nos 46 to 52 are of a different style and elevational context, but nonetheless they are of a simple design that avoids disrupting the rear roof slope of the main building. Furthermore, the proposed dormers would be more harmful than the approved scheme, which is for a simple rooflight arrangement that does not disrupt the building's roof shape.
11. The proposed deck, and the materials proposed for the staircase, would provide some continuity with the existing flat roofed extension and roof terrace on Nos 32 to 43. However, the staircase would be positioned such that it would protrude a significant distance from the rear elevation of Nos 36 to 38. For this reason, it would appear as an isolated structure and would be an overly prominent and harmfully distracting feature.
12. The appellant asserts that the staircase's projection is dictated by building regulations and to prevent overlooking of rooms in any future residential occupation of the upper floors but provides no further evidence about these factors. I have seen no evidence therefore that these issues cannot be overcome in a less harmful way, and I note the approved scheme includes a staircase in a less visually obtrusive position, adjacent to the wall of the existing flat roof extension.
13. In conclusion, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such the proposal conflicts with Policy JP-P1 of Places for Everyone Joint Development Document for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford, and Wigan. Amongst other things this policy requires new development to be consistent with good design principles including respecting and acknowledging the character and identity of the locality.

Other Matters

14. The appellant argues that the works would facilitate the creation of four new homes. There would be short term economic benefits through construction employment and local spending. I also acknowledge that extended floor space at second floor level may enhance attractiveness to future occupiers. These benefits do not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area that I have identified.

Conclusion

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

E Heron

INSPECTOR