The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 7 September 2021

by Graham Wraight BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/W/21/3276414
12 Repton Avenue, Manchester, M40 3PN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a grant of planning permission subject to conditions.
- The appeal is made by Miss Jessica Sherratt against the decision of Manchester City Council.
- The application Ref 129762/FH/2021, dated 16 March 2021, was approved on 10 May 2021 and planning permission was granted subject to conditions.
- The development permitted is erection of single storey side extension and bin store in the front garden following the demolition of existing garage
- The condition in dispute is No 3 which states that: *The materials to be used on the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building in type, size, colour and texture*.
- The reason given for the condition is: *To ensure the appearance of the building to be extended is not adversely affected by the materials to be used in the construction of the extension, pursuant to saved policies DC1.1, DC1.2 and DC1.4 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policy DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy*.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) was published on 20 July 2021 and the main parties have been given the opportunity to make comment on this in relation to the appeal.

Background and Main Issue

3. Planning permission has been granted to construct a single storey side extension and bin store at the appeal property. Condition 3 of the permission requires that the external facing materials used match those of the existing building in their type, size, colour and texture. The application seeks to vary the condition to allow for a front façade in tied red brick matching existing, all other façades in white render, roof tiles in keeping with existing style and windows anthracite frames double glazed.

4. The main issue is the effect that this variation would have on the character and appearance of the area, with particular reference to the proposed use of render.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is located in a prominent position on the corner of Repton Avenue and Onslow Avenue. A low wall encloses the site and there is established hedging positioned behind it. The dwellings and their extensions that are found in the area closest to the appeal site are almost exclusively constructed from red brick, which provides a consistent visual appearance, and this is a predominant contributor to the character and appearance of the area.

6. The proposed use of render would visually jar with the presence of red bricks on the existing dwellinghouse and in terms of it being a material that is not commonly found in the visual context in which the dwelling sits. It would therefore appear as an uncharacteristic and incongruous choice of material in its surroundings. Whilst the rear elevation of the approved extension would not be readily visible within the street scene, the side elevation would be clearly evident in views taken from the public domain, and it would be viewed directly against the existing brick-built side elevation of the appeal dwelling.

7. The established vegetation on the appeal site would not entirely screen the side elevation of the approved development from views taken from the road. In particular, the approved extension would be visible from Onslow Avenue across the front garden of the adjacent dwelling and also from the turning head which forms the junction of the three adjoining avenues. In any event, reliance on the existing vegetation to perform a screening function would be dependent on it not being reduced in height, removed or dying, as in such instances the impact would be more pronounced due to the development becoming even more visible within the street scene.

8. My attention has been drawn to the presence of render on two other dwellings in the locality, which I was able to observe during my site visit. These examples do not however represent the norm in the surrounding area and in this respect they serve only to illustrate the overall concern regarding the visual impact that the use of an uncharacteristic material such as render would have. As a whole, the presence of render remains exceptional in the area closest to the appeal property, and these other examples do not justify the harm that would be caused by the variation of the condition that is sought.

9. For these reasons, I conclude that the use of render would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the proposed variation of the condition would be contrary to Saved policies DC1.1 and DC1.2 of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and Policy DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy 2012, all of which seek to protect character and appearance. Policy DC1.4 of the UDP refers to 2-storey side extensions and therefore is not relevant. I am also satisfied that the condition as imposed meets the tests set out in paragraph 56 of The Framework. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Wraight

INSPECTOR