Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 April 2010

by Susan Holland MA DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

The Planning Inspectorate
4/11 Eagle Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN

☎ 0117 372 6372
email:enquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk

Decision date:
29 April 2010

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/D/10/2125013
29 Badminton Road, Manchester M21 0UQ

- 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 Waqas Ahmad against the decision of Manchester City Council.
- The application Ref 092138/FH/2010/S1, dated 8 January 2010, was refused by notice dated 26 February 2010.
- The development proposed is a new dormer to main roof facing rear of property, containing new bedroom.

Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main issues

2. The main issues are the effects of the proposed development: (a) upon the intrinsic design of the host dwelling; and (b) upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Issue (a): The northern frontage of Badminton Road is occupied by pairs of similar gable-ended semi-detached houses. Each individual front elevation prominently features a 2-storey curved bay under a gabled pitched roof. Some of the houses have been extended at the rear by means of a 2-storey outrigger, also under a gable-ended pitched roof. The appeal dwelling has no such 2-storey extension, but an existing single-storey mono-pitched extension which spans the building at the rear.

4. The appeal proposal is to use a full-height, flat-roofed dormer to contribute headroom and thus enable the formation of an additional bedroom, en-suite bathroom and storage space within the roof. The dormer would stop short of the shared central chimney (a detail apparently omitted from the submitted 'proposed roof plan' at Drawing 11C which does not appear to indicate the dormer roof at all) but would otherwise extend across virtually the full width of the dwelling.

5. All that would be visible at the front of the house would be 3 small rooflights just below the ridge. However, the rear elevation would be heavily dominated by the new dormer. Firstly, as seen from below, the depth and bulk of the dormer would obscure the main roof ridge, even though the dormer roof would be set below the ridgeline. Secondly, the rear elevation of the dormer would

be set directly above the main rear elevation, maximising the amount of floorspace with headroom. This would result in a disproportionately bulky dormer almost completely obliterating the original roof structure, which would barely be visible except for the area immediately around the chimney stack. Thirdly, the wide extent of the dormer would, from whichever direction it was seen, result in the appearance of a flat roof to the whole rear half of the dwelling on the north side of the main roof ridge.

6. The dominance of the proposed dormer, its distortion of the main roof structure and its excessive area of flat roof would together result in an unbalanced rear elevation and a visually harmful disregard of the roof form and detail characteristic of the original building. I therefore conclude that the appeal proposal would have a materially harmful effect upon the intrinsic design of the host dwelling. I consider that the proposal would pay insufficient *regard to the general character of the property* in the terms of statutory saved Policy DC.1.1(a) of the Manchester Unitary Development Plan (the UDP).

7. Issue (b): In the surrounding residential area, which is largely characterised by semi-detached houses, dormers are largely absent and original roof forms predominate. The absence of dormers, it seems to me, stems principally from the limited volume of the existing roofspace above the dwellings, many of which have hipped roofs (as in parts of Brantingham Road to the north) or feature bays and gables which limit roofspace (as in parts of Badminton Road). The size and scale of the dormer currently proposed is determined by its function – that is, by the need to create headroom over a wide area of the roof if additional habitable space is to be formed within the roofspace.

8. The appeal proposal would be wholly uncharacteristic of the area. To allow it on the basis that it is the sole means of providing additional residential accommodation within the roof would thus invite further proposals elsewhere within the area, made with the same objective. Therefore both individually, and as the precursor of similar proposals, the proposed development would be likely to have a materially harmful effect upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area, in conflict with saved statutory Policy H2.2 of the Manchester UDP.

9. The Appellant maintains that a dormer of similar extent – that is, directly above the rear elevation – would be permissible under the General Permitted Development Order provided that the eaves were first extended outwards. However, I consider this argument to be of insufficient weight to persuade me to allow the appeal proposal in the face of the visual harm that would be caused as described above.

S Holland

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