



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2024

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 December 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/D/24/3353938
48 Norman Road, Manchester M14 5LE

- 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 H Rahman against the decision of Manchester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 140671/FH/2024.
 - The development proposed is a rear dormer extension and a first floor rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Council alleges that one of the host's existing 6 metre deep ground floor rear extensions, which the proposed first floor extension would sit above, is unauthorized. This is contested by the appellant. As I have limited evidence before me on this matter, giving the benefit of the doubt to the appellant, I have determined the appeal on the basis of the impact of the proposed first floor and dormer extensions only, but having regard to cumulative impacts.
3. The latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework was published in December 2024 ('the Framework'), and I have had regard to it in my decision. Whilst the Council's reasons for refusal refer to, amongst other things, Section 5 of the Framework, as that sets out policies relating to housing supply, it is of little relevance to the main issues in this appeal.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host property and the area;
 - the living conditions of local residents, with particular regard to overlooking of, and the outlook from, 33 Brighton Grove; and
 - flood risk.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The host together with 50 Norman Road ('No 50') form a semi-detached pair, which are set back from the southern side of the highway. The properties here comprise a broad mix of semi-detached pairs which are typically grouped

together with others in a similar style, along with other buildings, such as the large Luther King House next to this site. I observed that some properties close to the appeal site have been altered or extended to the rear. That includes No 50 which has a large rectilinear extension across part of its rear roof, as illustrated in some of the appellant's images.

6. At 8 metres wide, the proposed first floor rear extension would span most of the host's rear face and, at 6 metres deep, it would project a considerable distance to the rear. Those dimensions would give it a substantial rectilinear bulk and mass. Together with its very shallow pitch catslide roof, it would be markedly at odds with original building's much more steeply pitched, gabled roof form, and it would not appear as a subservient addition.
7. Furthermore, given that it would oversail a gap between the existing ground floor rear extensions, one of which has a roof which pitches to the side, the resultant property would have a very eclectic and awkward design.
8. Whilst the proposed extensions would be barely visible in the streetscene, they would be prominent viewed from many nearby properties given their bulk and their elevated position. In those views, considered cumulatively with the existing ground floor rear extensions and the proposed dormer, which would cover almost the entirety of the rear roof slope, virtually none of the original building's form and style would still be legible. The property would appear overwhelmed by visually incongruous extensions.
9. As No 50's roof extension covers a much smaller proportion of that property's roof, and that property's original form and style is still clearly legible, the scheme would also disrupt the balance of this semi-detached pair.
10. The appellant has provided images which, he states, demonstrates the Council's inconsistent approach. However, most of the images are of this pair, and I do not know the other properties' context or planning history. Moreover, some, including Luther King House, have a markedly different original design and style compared to this property. I cannot therefore draw any meaningful conclusions from that evidence.
11. For the above reasons, the scheme would not constitute good design and it would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area. It would thereby conflict with Policies SP 1 and EN 1 of the Manchester Core Strategy 2012 ('MCS'), Policy DC1 of the Unitary Development Plan for Manchester 1995 ('MUDP'), and Policies JP-Strat5, JP-P1 and JP-S1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document 2024 ('PFEP').
12. Amongst other things, and in broad terms, these require good design which maximises environmental benefits, and enhances or creates character having regard to the built and natural environment; and state that extensions should not be excessively large or bulky, or project out too far, resulting in structures which are not subservient to the original house. It would also conflict with the requirement for good design at Section 12 of the Framework.

Living conditions

13. No 33 Brighton Grove ('No 33') forms part of a large building, which sits well back from the rear face of 48 Norman Road, with its rear elevation facing the host across that property's short rear garden, and the host's outbuilding and garden. Whilst the proposed extensions would be clearly visible from No 33,

given the distance and the existing outbuilding, the scheme would not have a significantly harmful impact on those occupiers' outlook, nor cause them to suffer a significant loss of light. Although opposing upper floor windows would be closer as a result of this scheme, given the significant distance, No 33's occupants would not suffer a harmful loss of privacy as a result of overlooking.

14. The scheme would not therefore conflict with those parts of MCS Policies DM 1, SP 1 and EN 1, MUDP Policy DC1, and PFEP Policies JP-Strat5 and JP-P1 which require good design that ensures the wellbeing of residents, having regard to matters such as the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. Neither would it conflict with the Framework's requirement at Section 12 to create places with a high standard of amenity. As PFEP Policy JP-S1 addresses sustainable development and climate change it is of limited relevance on this issue.

Flood risk

15. The Flood Risk Assessment by Flume Consulting Engineers ('the FRA') identifies that the site falls within Flood Zone 2. However, as the FRA was provided in connection with a previously proposed ground floor extension and conversion to create an additional dwelling, the flood mitigation measures it identifies are for that development, and are of limited relevance to the scheme before me.
16. The Framework sets out that a site-specific flood risk assessment should be provided for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. Having regard to Framework paragraph 181, in the absence of a flood risk assessment specifically for this development, I cannot be certain that the scheme would adequately address matters such as sustainable drainage systems, and safe access and egress routes in the event of a flood.
17. Thus, on this issue, the scheme would conflict with those parts of MCS Policies DM 1, SP 1 and EN 14 which require development to have regard to flood risk and drainage, and to make a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents; and with the stance in the Framework.

Other matters

18. The appellant has set out his dissatisfaction with the Council's handling of this, and previous, planning applications. Whilst I have had regard to that, I have dealt with the scheme before me on its planning merits.
19. He continues that the extensions are required to create a family home, including for his elderly parents. However, I have only limited information before me on this matter, and no cogent evidence that this scheme is the only way in which the family's needs could be met. Personal circumstances rarely outweigh general planning matters because the effect of the development would remain long after the personal circumstances cease to apply. The personal circumstances used to justify the development would inevitably change over time, but any identified harm would remain. The benefit to the appellant and his family therefore carries only limited weight.

Conclusion

20. I have found that whilst the scheme would not harmfully impact nearby occupiers' living conditions, it would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area, and that it has not been

adequately demonstrated that the scheme would suitably address matters related to flood risk.

21. The scheme's limited benefits would not outweigh the harm that it would cause. Consequently, having regard to all other matters raised, including representations in favour from interested parties, the appeal is dismissed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR