



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 July 2015

by S. Ashworth BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 05/08/2015

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/D/15/3017354

8, Chatburn Avenue, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 2AU

- 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 Miss K Gibson against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 3/2014/0967, dated 16 October 2014, was refused by notice dated 23 January 2015.
 - The development proposed is two storey extension to the side, existing conservatory to be altered to form garden room with windows and slate roof. Existing garage altered to form playroom and utility.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site occupies a corner position on Chatburn Avenue such that the dwelling, No 8, fronts a cul-de-sac and is side-on to the main part of the road. The site, which incorporates a garden to the side and rear of the dwelling, is bounded to the side by a mature hedge. The surrounding area is residential in character and comprises dwellings of a mix of styles and sizes. Immediately to the rear of the site, and set at a lower level, is a group of bungalows. Land levels drop significantly between the site and Chatburn Road.
4. The existing property is an extended, detached, two-storey dwelling which has a hipped roof form and an attached conservatory to the rear. The proposed extension would be set back from the frontage of the existing property and down from the ridgeline. As such the mass of the resulting dwelling would be broken up and the extension would appear as a subservient addition to the building. The roof would be hipped, and the proportions of the windows would reflect those of the existing dwelling. No objections have been raised to the alterations to the conservatory or garage. Consequently, although it would result in a much larger dwelling than the original, the proposal would not, in my judgement, be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property.

5. However, there is a clear building line on the main part of Chatburn Avenue and properties are generally set back behind front gardens. This creates a sense of spaciousness. Although positioned side-on to this part of the road, No 8 currently reflects the prevailing pattern of development and maintains the building line. Consequently the space at the side of the property contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
6. The proposed development would extend considerably closer to the highway at the side of the site, substantially forward of the building line. As such it would erode the space at the side of the dwelling and harm the open character of the area. The effect of this would be exacerbated by the elevated position of the building, and the presence of the smaller scale bungalows adjacent to it, which would mean that the development would be dominant in views from the north-west. As such it would have a significant detrimental impact on the street scene and the character and appearance of the area.
7. My attention has been drawn to a number of properties in the vicinity which have been substantially altered, notably Nos 39-41 Chatburn Park Drive. Whilst these dwellings are prominent to view, they do not encroach beyond the building line and consequently the space between the dwellings and the highway has been maintained. Similarly the extension at 17 Chatburn Avenue is a side extension which does not project closer to the road. These examples are not therefore directly comparable to the appeal proposal.
8. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. One of the key considerations of sustainability is the environmental role of development. Paragraph 58 seeks to ensure that development adds to the quality of the area and establishes a strong sense of place using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live. Whilst the development may meet other sustainability credentials, it would not meet the requirements of paragraph 58 and does not therefore constitute sustainable development when considered against the Framework taken as a whole.
9. Whilst I have concluded that the development would not result in harm to the appearance of the host property, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area for the reasons set out. As such it would be contrary to Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy which seeks, amongst other things, to ensure that that development does not have a harmful impact on its surroundings.
10. I have taken into account that the development would provide enhanced accommodation for the appellant. However, this does not justify the harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, and taking all other matters raised into account, the appeal is dismissed.

S Ashworth

INSPECTOR