Application: 17/00739/FUL  Township: Pennines  Ward: Littleborough Lakeside

Site Address: 31 Lake Bank, Littleborough, OL15 0DQ

Applicant: John Howarth  Agent: Malcolm Percy

Proposal: Formation of new window openings and erection of canopy to front elevation (Retrospective) - Resubmission of 17/00449/FUL
Delegation

1.1 The application is presented to the Planning and Licensing Committee following a call in request from Councillor Ann Stott on the following grounds:
   - The alterations are beneficial to the building and surrounding area;
   - The alterations do not detract from visual amenity;
   - The alterations do not cause imbalance to the building;
   - The alterations do not detract from the commercial enterprise of the building.

Proposal Summary

2.1 Planning permission is sought retrospectively for the formation of new window openings and the erection of a canopy to the front/side elevation.

Recommendation

3.1 Refuse planning permission.

Reason for Recommendation

4.1 The alterations comprise large projecting bay windows and a projecting canopy, which is considered to be an insipid and incongruous design with openings that relate poorly to the openings at first floor level directly above. The proposed development fails to take into account the traditional appearance of adjacent frontages. In addition, the proposal fails to sympathise with the character of the host building, which previously included traditional stone surrounds to the window and entrance door with a date stone within the header, which made a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the property and the street scene. The proposal fails to respect the character of the host building and is detrimental to the character and appearance of the street scene, contrary to Policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the guidance set out in the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Shop Fronts and Security Shutters' and the National Planning Policy Framework.
SITE

The application relates to 31 Lake Bank, which is a two storey building previously utilised as a residential cottage. The property adjoins No. 33, which is set back from the frontage of the host building. Both properties are in use as a café/restaurant at ground floor, with B&B accommodation above.

The property is stone built, previously comprising a traditional type frontage, including a main entrance door with traditional stone surround and attractive header, and window at ground floor level with stone header and cill. Unauthorised works have been undertaken to remove the original features to the front elevation of No.31.

PROPOSAL

This application seeks retrospective permission for the formation of new window openings and the erection of canopy to the ground floor of the front/side elevation, removing and replacing the traditional features described above.

The two bay windows measure a width of 2.5m and a height of 1.7m, projecting from the front walls by 0.35m.

The projecting canopy measures a width of 7.1m and a height of 0.8m. This wraps around the build adjoining the existing canopy within the frontage of the adjacent property No. 33.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Local

Rochdale Core Strategy (2016):

The following policies of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy are relevant:-

SD1 Delivering sustainable development
P3 Improving design of new development
DM1 General development requirements

Saved Policies of the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD): Shopfronts and Security Shutters

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY
16/00497/VRCON - Application to vary conditions 4 and 5 of planning permission 15/01188/FUL to allow increased opening hours to between 09.00 hours and 12 midnight Sunday to Wednesday inclusive and 09.00 hours to 0100 hours Thursday to Saturday and to allow the outside area to be used between the hours of 0900 and 21.00 on any day – Granted subject to conditions.

15/01188/FUL - Two storey side extension, ground floor rear extension, installation of bi-fold door on front elevation, change of use of part of ground floor from bed and breakfast accommodation to restaurant and formation of outside dining areas (Resubmission of 14/01508/FUL) – Granted subject to conditions.

14/01508/FUL - Two storey side extension, ground floor and second floor rear extension, change of use of part of ground floor from bed and breakfast accommodation to cafe and formation of outside dining areas – Granted subject to conditions.

13/00706/FUL - Change of use to restaurant (Use class A3) including the installation of roller shutters to side and rear door openings (Resubmission) – Withdrawn.

13/00300/FUL - Change of use from a café to a café bar including the installation of roller shutters to side and rear – Refused.

12/D55224 - Alterations to the internal layout to form two separate units including change of use of part of ground floor from shop (Use class A1) to café (Use class A3) and formation of additional bed and breakfast accommodation together with the addition of a ground floor window to the side elevation and a door to the rear elevation – Granted subject to conditions.

05/D45232 - Single storey extension and alterations to front elevation, single storey, first floor and second floor extension to rear of premises – Granted subject to conditions.

99/D36089 - Change of use of part of ground floor from living accommodation to coffee lounge and in connection with existing craft shop and bed and breakfast facility, front porch and single and first floor rear extensions – Granted subject to conditions.

93/D28973 - Two storey side and single storey rear extensions to dwellinghouse to form craft shop/workroom, bed and breakfast accommodation and single storey rear extension to form garage – Granted subject to conditions.

**REPRESENTATIONS**

Letters of notification were sent to surrounding p and a site notice displayed. No representations have been received.
ANALYSIS

Procedural Matters

Planning permission was granted the change of use of the ground floor of No. 33 to form an extension to the café/restaurant at No. 31 (ref: 15/01188/FUL). That scheme initially proposed alterations to the front elevation of No.31 and was amended following officer advice to retain the external cottage frontage. The external alterations have since been carried out without the benefit of planning permission despite officer advice that planning permission was required and the alterations would be unsympathetic to the character of No.31.

Visual amenity

One of the core planning principles of the NPPF is to always seek to secure high quality design and this is reflect in Policy P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS), which requires all new developments to adhere to high standards of design. Policy DM1 of the CS states that all development proposals will be expected to demonstrate that they are of high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area, in addition to requiring a number of other basic planning considerations.

In addition to the above, paragraphs 56 and 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework state that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and that good design should contribute positively to making places better for people and should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

The Council’s Shopfronts and Security Shutters SPD states that ‘…in the past, buildings on the same street (often constructed at different times and in different styles) visually acknowledged each others existence and often shared common features – for example a strong vertical emphasis, a symmetrical façade, similar proportions, a simply detailed upper elevation with a complex base, and varying height and roofline. These principles of visual inter-relationship hold good today, and the Council will expect all proposals for shopfronts and advertisements to reinforce the positive character of their location’.

No. 33 is semi-detached property adjoining No. 31, which together now form the Lake Lounge café/restaurant. The frontage of this building previously boasted significant visual merit, constructed in natural stone and featuring a traditional door opening with stone surround and stone header, including date stone above. A traditional window opening was situated adjacent to the door opening, including a stone header and cill. At first floor level, two traditional window openings were set at consistent positions above the ground floor openings, providing an even and consistent design that is typical of traditional terraced properties.

The external alterations have resulted in the loss of the traditional features and the resulting character of the property is considerably diminished to the detriment of the building and the surrounding area. The two adjacent buildings,
Nos. 27 & 29 are brick built and include traditional cottage frontages. The host building is set flush with those properties and is viewed within the same context. Other surrounding buildings primarily consist of commercial shop fronts at ground floor level, however this is not considered to be an appropriate justification for the loss of the particular features of the host property, especially when the proposed design of the new openings is considered. As noted above, the SPD states that the Council would normally expect the retention and restoration of frontages which contribute to the character of their location. This proposal directly contradicts the Council’s adopted policy.

In addition to the loss of the traditional features, the external alterations that have been carried out are considered in themselves to be detrimental to the character of the building and its surroundings. The works consist of two large bay windows, set centrally within the frontage of No. 31, with a projecting slate canopy above that extends across the entire frontage of the building and then wraps around it to adjoin the existing canopy in front of No.33. The two large bay windows appears at odds with and unsympathetic to the remaining parts of the building, set centrally rather than consistent with the windows at first floor. The openings are significantly larger, creating an unbalanced appearance to this elevation and to the adjacent cottages which are viewed in the same context.

**CONCLUSION**

Overall, it is considered that the proposal comprises an insipid and incongruous frontage design that fails to contribute to the design objectives set out in the Shopfronts and Security Shutters SPD. The proposal does not have regard to the existing residential frontages within which context the building is viewed, nor does it respect the character and appearance of the property and the area. The proposal has significantly harmed the character and appearance of the property and the area. Consequently, the application is considered to conflict with Polices DM1 and P3 of the adopted Core Strategy, along with the NPPF and the Shopfronts and Security Shutters SPD.