
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 November 2016

by Andrew Dawe BSc(Hons) MSc MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 01 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/16/3158094
13 Wathen Road, St Andrews, Bristol

- 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 J. P. Sing & Mrs G Kaur against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01599/H, dated 23 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 2 June 2016.
 - The development is hip to gable, rear dormer, double storey rear extension, single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for hip to gable, rear dormer, double storey rear extension, single storey rear extension at 13 Wathen Road, St Andrews, Bristol in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/01599/H, dated 23 March 2016, and the plans submitted with it.

Procedural Matters

2. The appellant has submitted with the appeal some amended drawings Refs DJR/WS/600, 601 & 602 showing a reduced height to the roof of the two storey element concerned, albeit that it is the roof height shown on the originally submitted plans that has been implemented. I have no evidence that neighbouring residents have been consulted on this amendment. As this would have the potential to prejudice those neighbours, I have not taken those amended plans into consideration.
 3. The Council raises a point about discrepancies between the submitted plans and what has been constructed concerning the single storey element in respect of the gap between the fenestration and eaves and a small stagger in the side elevation adjacent to No 15. The Council also highlights that the eaves position of the two storey element, as being above that of the host dwelling, is not clear as such on the plans. Notwithstanding those issues, I have determined the appeal on the basis of the originally submitted plans.
 4. The Council, in its decision notice, refers to its Supplementary Planning Document Number 2: A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions (the SPD). I have applied substantial weight to that document due to its status in supporting the relevant development plan policies.
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Main Issues

5. The main issues are the effect of the development on:
- i) the character and appearance of the host dwelling;
 - ii) the living conditions of the occupiers of No 15 Wathen Road in respect of outlook.

Reasons

Background

6. I note that the appeal development varies from a previously approved scheme, Ref 15/03710/H, comprising a single and two storey rear extension, principally in respect of the increased height of the roof of the two storey element, the creation of a hip to gable side roof and the addition of a rear dormer across most of the width of the roof. Nevertheless, I have taken account of that previous permission as a substantial material consideration in respect of those elements of that permission that have been constructed.

Character and appearance

7. The development, which has been constructed, relates to an end of terrace dwelling in a cul-de-sac where there are a variety of designs of properties. The hip to gable element of the proposal is the most prominent aspect of the development when seen from that street but in that varied context, including a gable side to No 11, it does not stand out as an incongruous feature. The side of the dormer significantly changes the shape of that side of the dwelling. However, again it is seen in the context of varied roof forms in the street, including those of Nos 9 and 11 which are partially truncated at the rear. It is also not a dominant feature of the general street scene being set back from the road and screened from approach views, other than from close to the site, by neighbouring buildings.
8. The large rear dormer is a prominent feature of the rear of the dwelling. The juxtaposition of the two storey extension's roof with it adds to the overall degree of prominence of the dwelling's new roofscape. However the ridge of the two storey element is still below the flat roof of the dormer and the ridge of the original dwelling, albeit only slightly. The dormer is also seen in the context of the existing similarly large dormer immediately adjacent at No 15. Furthermore, the tile cladding of the dormer, and the tiles of the two storey element's roof, enable those roof features to assimilate and merge, to some extent, with the general roofscape of the terrace when seen from the rear. The use of render and tiles on the development generally, that match in with the rest of the dwelling, also contributes to an acceptable degree of assimilation with the host dwelling as a whole.
9. Rear views of the development are also restricted to those from adjacent gardens, land associated with garages to the rear of the site, and from beyond that a tennis club and then quite distant residential properties to the north, north-east and north-west, including obliquely from Derby Road. Some of those other dwellings visible from the rear of the site also have fairly large rear dormers themselves, as well as that of No 15. The dormer of No 13 is therefore not an alien feature in that context. Furthermore, the development is

seen from those rear vantage points in the context of the varied rear elevations of the adjacent houses at Nos 5 to 11.

10. Notwithstanding the Council's concerns about the clarity of the plans, I note in respect of the two storey element's eaves, there is only a small difference in height with those of the original house such that it does not cause material harm to its appearance, especially from more distant vantage points. That aspect is also not seen from the street in Wathen Road.
11. For the above reasons, I conclude on this issue that the development does not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. As such, in respect of this issue, it accords with policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy (the Core Strategy) and policies DM26, DM27 and DM30 of the Bristol Local Plan Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (the SADMP), and is not at odds with the aims of the SPD, which together require new development to deliver high quality urban design, that will be expected to contribute towards local character and distinctiveness; and that extensions to existing buildings will be expected to respect the design and character of the host building, its curtilage and the broader street scene.

Living conditions

12. The dormer does not project beyond the lines of the original roof on the side nearest to No 15 and is also seen from No 15's garden in the context of that property's large rear dormer. The eaves of the two storey element are higher than those previously approved but only by a small amount. Although its roof height has increased from that previous approval, the roof continues to slope away from No 15. Additionally the two storey element remains set off the boundary with No 15 and also separated from the part of the garden of No 15 nearest to the house by a small outbuilding of that property abutting the boundary. I am therefore satisfied that the increased massing of the development compared with that previously approved, is not to such an extent, when seen from any part of the rear garden or house of No 15, as to have an overbearing enclosing or dominating effect.
13. For the above reasons, I conclude on this issue that the development does not cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 15 in respect of outlook. As such, in respect of this issue, it accords with policy BCS21 of the Core Strategy and policy DM30 of the SADMP, and is not at odds with the aims of the SPD, which together require extensions and alterations to existing buildings to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Other matter

14. I have had regard to concerns of the neighbour at No 15 about overshadowing of that property. It is likely that the development does cause some loss of sunlight to the rear of that dwelling towards the end of the day. However, in considering this issue, I have had regard to the circumstance whereby there is already approval for a rear extension which is a substantial material consideration. The degree of additional height to the two storey extension compared with that previously approved, combined with its hipped roof design, is unlikely to significantly or materially increase any such loss of sunlight.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Andrew Dawe

INSPECTOR