
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 March 2017

by Megan Thomas Barrister-at-Law

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

Decision date: 04 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/17/3167534

160 St Peter's Rise, Bishopsworth, Bristol BS13 7NE

- 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 Andrew Garland against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/06019/H, dated 4 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 12 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is a double storey side extension and loft conversion with dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter and Main Issue

2. The planning application indicated that the development sought was a double storey side extension as well as a loft conversion with a dormer. The submitted plans indicate that the side extension would have a width of about 2 metres, a depth of about 8.2 metres and have a pitched roof with a maximum height of about 7.7 metres and eaves at about 5.2 metres in line with the existing eaves. The Council do not object to that two storey side extension and I agree with the Council that it would be satisfactory in planning terms.
3. Consequently, the main issue in the appeal is the effect of the dormer structure on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area.

Reasons

4. No.160 St Peter's Rise is a two-storey end-of-terrace dwelling on the south side of the Rise. It is in a row of four: nos 160, 158, 156 & 154. The appeal site has an existing single storey side extension with a mono-pitch roof. Nos 158 and 156 have rear-facing flat-roofed dormers. To the north east of the appeal site are two properties on St Peter's Rise, and to its south east are 1A and 1B Headley Park Avenue.
 5. There is the Bishopsworth and Malago Conservation Area to the north of the site which includes properties on the north side of St Peters Rise. However, the appeal site is not within the Conservation Area and, as confirmed on my site visit, I do not consider that the proposed development would materially harm views out of or into that Conservation Area.
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6. The proposed dormer structure would be rear facing but, from the front of the dwelling, would appear similar to a side dormer and would have two small rooflights set into the front roof slope. The side and rear dormer would be one structure but the side dormer can be described as having a width of about 5.1 metres, a depth of about 1.6 metres and a flat roof with a slope towards the front end of the property with a maximum height of about 2.1 metres. It would have a window facing to the side. The rear dormer would have a width of about 6.8 metres, a depth of about 3.6 metres and a flat roof with a maximum height of about 2.1 metres. Two windows are proposed, one with a large Juliette balcony.
7. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document 2 *A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions* (October 2005) 'SPD 2' indicates that large box-like dormers are inappropriate for most domestic dwellings. The proposed dormer would fail to be subservient to the roof. Although it would be set upwards slightly from the eaves, it would have a flat roof at the same level as the main roof ridge and would appear like a large box. It would significantly unbalance the appearance of the house. The original character of the host dwelling would be substantially overwhelmed and almost indiscernible.
8. The proposed significant fenestration including the Juliette balcony would also add to the top heavy appearance of the dwelling.
9. On my site visit to the area and from evidence supplied, I noted that there were a number of rear/side dormer structures on dwellings. Precise details of whether some have been built pursuant to permitted development rights or have become immune from enforcement are not supplied including details of the planning history relating to the two rear dormers adjacent to the site on nos 158 and 156 St Peter's Rise. The latter two dormers do not follow advice in SPD2 but nevertheless their existence does not ameliorate the harm that I consider would be caused to the character and appearance of the appeal site itself.
10. The appellant has drawn attention to a number of dormer structures that have been granted express planning permission by the Council but, again the existence of those decisions and the dormers built pursuant to them do not reduce the harm that would result from the particular proposal before me. I am obliged to look at the proposal on its own merits and have done so.
11. On my site visit to the area and from evidence supplied, I have concluded that, from the public realm, dormer structures are not sufficiently prevalent to be a defining characteristic of the area. Views of the proposed dormer structure from public vantage points would be limited but they would not, in any event, be a positive visual addition to the streetscene.
12. I conclude that the proposed dormer would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area. It would conflict with policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted 2011), policies DM26 & DM30 of the Bristol Local Plan Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (adopted 2014) and the Council's SPD 2.

Other Matters

13. Given the separation distances, current positions of windows and proposed windows, and orientations of dwellings, I do not consider that living conditions and amenities of the occupants of nearby properties would be diminished to an extent necessary to refuse planning permission. I have had regard to the potential loss of daylight and sunlight and the potential increased loss of privacy but none of the impacts would warrant refusal of permission.

Conclusion

14. I do not consider the two storey side extension element of the planning application is sufficiently divisible to enable me to issue a split decision in this case. Therefore, having taken into account all representations made, for the reasons given above, I dismiss the appeal.

Megan Thomas

INSPECTOR