

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: 05 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/17/3167363

58 Sturminster Road, Hengrove, Bristol BS14 8AA

- 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 Alan Hutchinson against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/06376/H, dated 22 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 12 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is a double storey rear extension and front dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. A two-storey rear extension has secured planning permission pursuant to a different planning application and therefore the main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed front dormer structure on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a three storey detached house on the west side of Sturminster Road, which is a reasonably busy distributor road. Dwellings nearby are both detached and semi-detached. The house is set slightly above the road on rising ground. At the front there is a set of steps leading up to a front door on the first floor, behind a balustrade that runs across the width of the house. The ground (lowest) floor has four full length double doors out to the front of the house. The second (highest) floor has two front windows, one with a Juliette balcony.
 4. The proposed dormer structure would be made up of two outer sections with pitched roofs and a middle linking section which the appellant says would have a pitched or sloped roof, although this is not entirely clear without a cross-section drawing.
 5. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document 2 *A Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations* (October 2005) 'SPD' sets out the essential design characteristics of acceptable dormer windows. One essential criterion is that dormer windows should be located only on the side or rear roof pitches. There
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is therefore a presumption against dormer windows in front roof slopes in the SPD.

6. Care has been taken to ensure that the proposed dormer would be set in from the sides of the roof, would be set up from the eaves and that its roof form would not protrude above the main roof ridge of the house. However, it would nevertheless be a large wide structure with three windows and as a result it would be an overly prominent feature on the host dwelling. I have borne in mind that the proposed use of tiles on the structure and the entire roof being newly tiled, might mitigate the overall prominence, but in my view this would be to a limited and inadequate extent given the proposed size of the structure.
7. Furthermore, the proposed fenestration in the dormer would not relate particularly well to the arrangement and proportion of existing fenestration in the lower floors.
8. Front dormer structures are not prevalent along Sturminster Road. 138 West Town Lane, which is about 200m from the appeal site, has two single pitched roof dormers which relate well to fenestration in the lower floors and are small enough for the front roof slope to continue to dominate the appearance of the building. The same cannot be said of the proposal before me.
9. The addition of the proposed dormer structure to the front elevation of the appeal site would result in a particularly busy frontage in contrast to the relatively simple front facades of nearby buildings. Overall, I consider that the proposal does not overcome the presumption against front dormers in the SPD.
10. I have borne in mind the appellant's evidence that the proposed middle section of the structure would enable full use to be made of the converted room and I acknowledge that the accommodation is needed for a growing family. However, those factors do not outweigh the harm I have identified above. I have also had particular regard to a front dormer structure given approval by the Council in November 2016 but, whatever the merits of that proposal in that location and in relation that particular dwelling, it does not overcome the harm I find would accrue to the appeal site and its surroundings.
11. Overall, I conclude that the proposed dormer structure would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider area and would be contrary to policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted 2011), policies DM26, DM27, DM28 & DM30 of the Bristol Local Plan Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (adopted 2014) and the Council's SPD 2.

Conclusion

12. Having taken into account all representations made, for the reasons given above, I dismiss the appeal.

Megan Thomas

INSPECTOR