

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 May 2017

by Andrew McGlone BSc MCD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 12 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/D/17/3171655

132 Ribchester Road, Clayton Le Dale BB1 9EE

- 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 Paul Bowie against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 3/2016/1152, dated 6 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear extension and dormer conversion to a det. House.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Despite the description of development set out above, I consider the description found on the decision notice and the appellant's appeal form better reflect the scheme that is before me and that which the Council considered. My findings therefore relate to this description of development.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The property is a detached bungalow positioned among a cluster of properties on the north-eastern side of Ribchester Road. The cluster includes 126 to 138 Ribchester Road and the two properties that face the site, which are 145 and 147 Ribchester Road. Each of the dwellings in this cluster is set back from the road and within spacious grounds. They are all either dormer bungalows or bungalows. Some have been sympathetically extended. Red brick and render are used on the front elevation of the appeal site, with a tile roof.
 5. The proposal would raise the existing ridge height of the property broadly in line the semi-detached pairing of Nos 134 and 136. This would be slightly above No 130. Consequently there would be a very gradual increase in the ridge heights. Despite concerns about the extent of the front roof plane, the eaves line would remain unchanged and I am not convinced that on its own the roof plane would be entirely out of kilter in a street scene which displays some variety in this regard.
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6. However the two storey front gable would be the main feature in this elevation. In my opinion this would emphasise the height of the front roof plane and introduce an uncommon characteristic to the cluster of dwellings. The gable would also differ to the existing hipped roof above the front bedroom window. Unlike dwellings nearby this aspect of the proposal would form a bulky pitched roof gable at the front. As a result, in combination with the various roof pitches, this would not be cohesive, especially when viewed on approach from the east. They would not reflect either the host property or neighbouring properties which each use consistent roof styles and roof pitches.
7. I understand the two storey front extension to be a key feature of the appellant's scheme and I note that it would create additional bedroom space at first floor. However, despite some variation in the design of properties locally, this aspect of the scheme would not be subservient and it would dominate the front elevation. While I have been referred to an example of a two storey front extension at 157 Ribchester Road 'Greenacre', this property is a fair distance away. It is also among a street scene of two storey detached dwellings that are separated from the cluster of properties which includes the appeal site. I do not consider that the two sites are set within the same context. I therefore attach little weight to this example.
8. Although concerns have been raised about the use of brick and render, the existing dwelling and others nearby already use this combination. As such, I have no such issues with the use of these materials. Furthermore, I do not have concerns that the rear extension, which includes wide-ranging alterations to the existing built form to the rear, would adversely affect the character and appearance of the area. However these matters do not outweigh the harm that I have identified.
9. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would significantly affect the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would not accord with Policies DMG1 and DMH5 of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley; which together seek, among other things, development to be of a high standard of design that considers the building in context and is sympathetic in scale and style.

Other Matter

10. I note the findings of the bat survey that forms part of the evidence. This survey noted the presence of bat droppings within the dwelling's roof space and the need for at least one further survey at dusk or dawn. There are no subsequent surveys before me to take account of. Given the survey's findings, I consider that there is a reasonable likelihood of protected species being present at or near to the appeal site. However, the presence of bats is not a decisive factor in the outcome of this appeal due to my findings and further survey work cannot be conditioned in these circumstances anyway.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew McGlone

INSPECTOR