
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2017

by Richard S Jones BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/U1620/D/17/3170819
29 Hinton Road, Gloucester, GL1 3JS

- 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 Tim Dewick against the decision of Gloucester City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01481/FUL, dated 18 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is a single storey extension and loft conversion to existing dwelling.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve the character or appearance of the Denmark Road Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The host property is an attractive two storey semi-detached Victorian dwelling constructed in brick with a front bay window. The site is situated within the Denmark Road Conservation Area which is characterised by attractive suburban housing such as the appeal dwelling. The Council's Conservation Officer notes that the houses on Hinton Road are highlighted within the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as making a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. I agree.
 4. At present the existing roof form is attractive and is covered with slate with decorative ridge tiles. Like the other properties along this side of Hinton Road, it has not been compromised by any existing rear roof extension.
 5. Although set down from the ridgeline and up from eaves level, the dormer would, nonetheless run across the majority of the width of the roof and with its strong horizontal proportions would result in an unsympathetic box like addition. It would not relate well to the existing dwelling and would materially detract from the original roof plane. This harm would not be acceptably mitigated by the use of matching materials and the use of timber painted windows.
 6. Although the dormer extension would not be visible from the street, it would be visible between the trees from the rear which backs onto open sports club fields. Even if these fields do not form part of the Conservation Area,
-

paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) makes clear that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, and to their setting.

7. I note that the appellant says that this land has been earmarked for housing development but even if this does come to fruition, the dormer may well still be visible from the public realm, as well as from individual properties.
8. In support of the appeal reference is made to a dormer which was approved at No 36 Hinton Road in 2009. However, I was only able to see glimpsed views of this from Malvern Road. The appeal proposal would therefore be more visible. The other pictured dormer provided by the appellant serves to highlight the prominence of such structures. In any case I have considered the appeal on its own merits. Moreover, I do not consider that existing dormers in the area have resulted in a material change to the character of the area, thereby justifying further visual harm, particularly to this row of Victorian dwellings which are unencumbered by such development.
9. The Council do not raise concern regarding the size, design and siting of the proposed single storey rear and side extension and I find no reason to take a contrary position.
10. Nevertheless, I conclude that the design and siting of the rear dormer is such that it would fail to preserve or enhance either the character or appearance of the Denmark Road Conservation Area, the desirability of which is fully anticipated by section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy BE.29 of the Second Stage Deposit Local Plan (LP). Such an outcome would also conflict with the expectations of paragraph 132 of the Framework, which anticipates great weight being given to the conservation of designated heritage assets.
11. I would quantify the extent of this harm as being less than substantial when considered in the context of paragraphs 133 and 134 of the Framework. Whilst I sympathise with the appellant's wish to extend his property to meet his family needs, these personal circumstances and the other arguments advanced in favour of allowing the appeal do not amount to benefits that would outweigh the substantial weight I must attach to the designated heritage asset's conservation.
12. Furthermore, the proposal would also be contrary to LP Policy BE.20 and Gloucester City Council Home Extension Guide Interim Adoption Supplementary Planning Document. These state, amongst other matters, that planning permission will be granted for the extension of existing buildings provided the design respects the character and appearance of the street scene.

Other matters

13. I acknowledge that the proposal would not be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties, but this is a neutral matter in the planning balance which cannot therefore weigh in its favour.
14. I note the appellant's concern regarding the way in which the planning application was handled by the Council, however, this is not a matter for this appeal which I have determined afresh and on its planning merits.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons explained, and taking all other matters into consideration, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Richard S Jones

INSPECTOR