
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 October 2017

by J E Tempest BA(Hons) MA PGDip PGCertHE MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 1 November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/17/3179814
179 St Johns Lane, Bristol BS3 5AG

- 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 Nasir Ahmed against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00816/H, dated 10 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 11 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is dormer in front roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. This is the effect of the proposed dormer on the host property and the street scene.

Reasons

3. In this part of St Johns Lane and the immediately surrounding side streets, development is of a relatively high density. Properties are close to the road and much of the character of the area derives from its older terraced properties. Bay windows and roofs divided by parapets, with gable features above bays and linking back in the main roofs are a particular feature in the street scene. Whilst roof lights have been inserted into the front roof slopes of many properties, dormer windows within front roof slopes are generally not a feature of the area in the vicinity of the appeal site.
4. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document¹ (the SPD) relating to house alterations and extensions points to many housing areas having a distinct character and layout. I acknowledge that the size and design of the proposed dormer follows some of the principles set out in the SPD relating to dormer windows but the SPD advises that dormers are acceptable on side or rear roof pitches subject to detailed design. Notwithstanding this advice, the SPD offers only general guidance and cannot necessarily be applied to every locality and house type.
5. The appellant points to the relatively modest size of the proposed dormer and its position well below the main ridge and above the eaves. Nonetheless, the dormer would be visible from St Johns Lane, despite the existing gables and roofs

¹ Supplementary Planning Document Number 2: A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions, October 2005

above the bay windows. The introduction of the pitch roofed dormer into the front roof slope would disrupt the existing roof form and detract from the importance of the gable feature. This would consequently disrupt the rhythm of the roofs within the street scene. Whilst each case should be judged on its merits, the lack of dormer windows on front elevations in this area allows the traditional architectural features of houses in the area to remain clearly evident. Were the proposed dormer to be allowed, it would harm the appearance of the host property and would also make it difficult to resist other such proposals which cumulatively would harm the character and appearance of this area.

6. I appreciate the reasons given by the appellant regarding the need for additional accommodation and also the support for the proposal from a number of local residents. However, these are not sufficient to overcome the harm I have identified and which would arise from the particular scheme which is before me.
7. I noted during my site visit the property on the corner of St Johns Lane and Monmouth Street which has pitched roof dormers but these are not within the principal elevation facing towards St Johns Lane. The property adjacent to the appeal site, on the corner of St Johns Lane and Sylvia Avenue, has been much altered and includes large 'catslide' roofed dormers in the front roof slope. However this is an isolated example and does not persuade me that the proposed dormer, despite its differences in design and size, would be acceptable.
8. I appreciate that the appellant has gone to considerable lengths to identify many examples of pitched roof dormers in various parts of the City including some others in St Johns Lane although precise addresses are not provided. Nor am I provided with the planning history relating to the majority of these examples. St Johns Lane is a long road and as such includes different types and ages of housing. My decision on the appeal proposal is based on the character and appearance of the host property and the area around it.
9. I find that the appeal proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host property and would disrupt the street scene. The proposal would fail to meet the expectations set out in Policy DM30 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Adopted in July 2014 that extensions should respect the design and character of the host building and broader street scene. As such it would also be contrary to Policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy adopted in June 2011 to the extent that it would not contribute positively to the area's character and would not reinforce local distinctiveness.

Other matters

10. The evidence includes reference to an earlier application for a front dormer window which was refused permission by the Council in 2015 and where the Council's report indicates dimensions relating to a rear dormer. This decision by the Council on an earlier proposal has not had a bearing on my determination of the proposal which is before me.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

J E Tempest

INSPECTOR