



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2019 by Andreea Spataru BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

Decision by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPL MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/D/19/3225846

19 Estcourt Drive, Darrington, Pontefract WF8 3BN

- 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 Brown against the decision of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/02767/FUL, dated 5 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 19 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as "room in roof space with rear dormer".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. My attention has been drawn to inconsistencies in the proposed plans. The proposed front elevation shows that one of the two gable features to the front of dwelling would be retained. The proposed side elevations do not include this gable feature that would remain in place. Nevertheless, as detailed below, this part of the scheme alone has not been decisive in my overall recommendation.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and of the street scene.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site relates to a detached, stone-built dwelling located in a cul-de-sac, within a predominantly residential area. The dwelling, a bungalow, has a long rectangular form with a pitched roof which is visually relieved only by the gable features. The dwelling is situated at a higher level than the street and has a garden to the side/rear. The rear of the appeal property adjoins open countryside. Neighbouring dwellings vary in terms of scale but are of a similar style to the host dwelling.
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6. The proposal would provide additional accommodation, in the form of three bedrooms and storage, at first floor. The first-floor accommodation would be served by windows in a single flat-roofed dormer on the rear roof plane and four rooflights on the front roof plane of the host dwelling. Alterations would also be made to the existing gable features.
7. Policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF), namely Policies D9 and D10, require, amongst other things, that development respects the character and scale of the host dwelling and is in keeping with the character of the locality. The Wakefield District Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2018 (SPD), provides more specific guidance for domestic extensions including roof extensions and states that at the rear, flat-roofed dormers may be acceptable if their design has been well-considered. Such dormers should, it advises, be set-down from the ridge, in from the sides, and up from the eaves and should be no more than 3m wide.
8. At over 13m in width the proposed dormer would be considerably longer than the 3m recommended in the SPD and would be an imposing structure. The dormer would be set-in from the sides of the roof and set-up from the eaves level but would sit only just below the existing ridge line and would cover much of the rear roof slope of the property. Accordingly, it would form a top heavy, dominant feature that would not reflect the style or form of the original roof. The dormer would also fail to reflect the alignment of the ground floor windows.
9. There is nothing before me to substantiate the appellant's assertion that the 3m guidance relates only to semi-detached or terraced houses. However, notwithstanding that, for the above reasons, the dormer is not well-considered in relation to the style and proportions of the roof, in line with the requirements of the SPD.
10. Given the position of the dormer to the rear of dwelling, the impact on the streetscene would be minimal and as the property backs on to open countryside at the rear, any public views of it are likely to be limited. Whilst this limits the harm, whether the proposal is visible from a public vantage point, does not negate the impact the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the building.
11. The character and appearance of the dwelling would also be affected by the removal of its original gable feature and the insertion of four rooflights. The position of the rooflights, which would be of different sizes, would not respect the alignment of the ground floor windows, contrary to advice in the SPD. However, when viewed in the context of the wider setting, the alterations to the front of dwelling would not have an adverse impact on the streetscene, as not all dwellings located within proximity of the appeal site benefit from gable features to the front. Given the siting of the dwelling in relation to the street level and neighbouring properties, the rooflights would not be unduly prominent and would not in themselves significantly detract from the appearance of the building.
12. However, notwithstanding my conclusions on the proposed alterations to the front of the property, I find that through a combination of its siting, design and scale the proposed dormer would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. Therefore, the development would be contrary to the objectives of Policies D9 and D10 of the LDF as set out above.

Other matter

13. The appellant has suggested that the proposal could be permitted under the General Permitted Development Order. However, this is not a matter for me to determine in the context of an appeal made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. It is open to the appellant to apply to have such matters determined under sections 191 or 192 of the Town and Country Planning Act.

Recommendation

14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andreea Spataru

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

S Ashworth

INSPECTOR