



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 July 2019

by Hilary Orr MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/D1780/D/19/3232222

4 Bassett Dale, Southampton SO16 7GT

- 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 Jan Sniatecki against the decision of Southampton City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00196/FUL dated 2 February 2019 was refused by notice dated 10 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is a room in roof, dormer and raise in roof height to match adjacent building height to ridge.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The description of the development has changed from that on the application form. Part E of the planning appeal states that there has been no change in the description of the development, although uses a different wording. This revised description and that on the decision notice, reflects a more concise description namely; roof alterations including raising the ridge height, hip to gable, rear dormer and insertion of front, so the appeal proceeds on this basis.
3. The Bassett Neighbourhood Plan was made (adopted) by the Council on 20 July 2016, following the referendum which was held on 25 February 2016. The plan therefore forms part of the Council's Local Development Plan.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host building and the wider area.

Reasons

5. The site is located within the area of Bassett in Southampton City. Bassett Dale is a residential road with generally detached dwellings of various designs. The appeal site is a modest detached dwelling with a flat roof single storey garage to the side. The appeal site is set down from the highway and the rear garden drops significantly from the patio to the garden and a small stream beyond. The land then rises to the rear towards a golf course sited behind existing vegetative screening.

6. It was clear from my site visit that the adjacent property at 2 Bassett Dale has undergone considerable alterations and differs substantially from the appeal dwelling and other properties in the road. There is however, more consistency between the host property and the dwellings to the north, where the houses are of similar scale and design with hipped roofs. There are moderate gaps between these dwellings allowing a pleasing spacious character to this part of the road. Whilst it was clear that there have been some alterations to these houses, there remains a sense of uniformity to the street scene with the appeal site marking one end of the row.
7. The proposed scheme would see a number of alterations, including an increase in the height of the roof, changing the roof from a hip to a gable and the addition of a large flat roof dormer to the rear elevation.
8. I note the Appellants arguments that at least some works could be carried out under rights conveyed by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, without the need for express planning permission. I have not however, been provided with any plans or details of any proposals. The Appellants acknowledge in their evidence that such development would not provide adequate ceiling heights. It seems unlikely therefore, that a realistic fall back position exists and thus I can give it only limited weight.
9. My attention has been drawn to the Southampton City Council Residential Design Guide (2006) (RDG). This gives additional guidance on the design of residential extensions and alterations. Paragraph 2.5.2 relates to roof form. Under circumstances where the proposal includes reconfiguring the roof to provide additional accommodation, the proposal should not have an adverse impact on the local character of the area.
10. I acknowledge that raising the height of the roof would bring it more in line with the adjacent property at No 6. Although this variation appears to be, at least in part, as a result of the increasing land levels. However, the changes to the roof design would substantially increase the bulk, height and mass of the roof. The relatively modest width of the dwelling, would exacerbate the effect of these increases, making the resultant roof appear top-heavy. Consequently, the size and design of the redesigned roof, would appear as a disproportionate and incongruous addition to the original dwelling and when viewed in the context of the others in the row and the wider area.
11. The proposed scheme would also add a large, flat roof dormer to the rear elevation of the dwelling. The RDG advises that dormer windows should be in keeping with the house to give a sense of balance and proportion. Box like additions that fundamentally change the overall shape of the roof and have a negative visual impact are unlikely to be acceptable.
12. The proposed rear dormer would be set down slightly from the ridge line and would not extend fully to the side of the property. It would nonetheless, occupy nearly all of the rear roof slope. I recognise that views of the dormer from the street would be limited. It would however, be clearly visible from a number of neighbouring properties and their gardens, and to a limited extent the golf course to the rear.
13. Overall and despite the use of appropriate materials, the scale of the alterations to the roof and addition of the rear dormer, would be unduly

dominant and incongruous. As a result, there would be significant harm to both the uniformity and balance of the row of properties, and to the original dwelling. The scheme would therefore be in conflict with saved policies SDP1, SDP7 and SDP9 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Partial Review (2015) and Policies CS13 of the Core Strategy and BAS1 and BAS4 of the Basset Neighbourhood Plan (2016). These policies in combination, seek to ensure that development proposals are in keeping with the scale, massing and height of neighbouring buildings.

14. My attention has been drawn to other developments, that have taken place in the area. I also saw at my site visit that one of the neighbouring properties has a flat roof dormer to the rear. I have no evidence about the planning history and circumstances for any of these sites. In any event, I have to determine this appeal on its own planning merits, and their presence would not justify granting this appeal.

Other matters

15. I acknowledge that the roof may need to be replaced and the provision of an additional room may make these works more viable. Nevertheless, this is not sufficient to justify allowing the appeal.

Conclusion

16. I have taken into consideration all of the matters raised by the parties, but for the reasons I have outlined above, conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Hilary Orr

INSPECTOR