
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 July 2020

by S. Rennie BSc (Hons), BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/U3935/D/20/3250845

91 Beatrice Street, Swindon SN2 1BE

- 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 Mrs S Hanif against the decision of Swindon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref S/HOU/20/0062/EMMI, dated 2 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 27 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is for a room in the roof and front and rear dormer windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The proposal is for a 'box' dormer to the rear of the terraced house, with a smaller dormer with pitched roof to the front, in association with the creation of more accommodation in the roof of the property.
4. I note the comments from the Council with regards the rear dormer in the Officers Report, but the application was not refused based on this. It was refused solely on the front dormer which has been the basis of the appellant's statement. As such, it is the front dormer which I have focussed my assessment on.
5. The front dormer would be a modest sized feature, although as it is to the front of the house it would be clearly visible. In this street the residential properties are mostly terraced with a clear uniformity to the overall design and form to these houses within these rows. There is some variety to the appearance of the individual houses but their overall design and form are very similar. It is also noticeable that the use of front dormers is not typical. The Council notes of one dormer built a significant time ago, before the current adopted Development Plan policies were in place, but otherwise I am not aware of any other such front dormers. In a street with such uniformity of house design and form, the introduction of a highly visible front dormer would be incongruous and inharmonious.

6. There are commercial buildings near No 91 Beatrice Street, such as the large unit opposite, but these are clearly different from the typical form of the residential properties within this street. There is more variety in building styles and roofscapes in the adjacent streets (although I did not observe any front dormers), but No 91 is primarily seen as part of the character of Beatrice Street where there is a uniformity to the residential dwellings which does not include front dormers.
7. The appellant makes the case that the dormer would be proportionate in size and well designed, but this does not overcome the fact that the introduction of this feature would be out of character within the street scene. Furthermore, I note one or more of the occupants of the house has a medical condition, although it is not fully clear why the front dormer would be particularly beneficial in this regard. Further accommodation in the roof void is likely to be possible without this feature. As such, I do not consider, based on the evidence before me, that the harm caused by the proposed front dormer would be outweighed by personal circumstances such as a growing family.
8. Overall, the proposed front dormer as part of the scheme for increased accommodation within this house would be out of keeping with the prevailing character of the street scene. It would thereby be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and contrary to policy DE1 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026, which requires development to be of a high quality design, respecting built characteristics, amongst other things.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons outlined above and taking into consideration all matters raised, the appeal should be dismissed.

S. Rennie

INSPECTOR