
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2020

by J Gibson BUEP MPIA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/20/3254921
122 Colston Road, Bristol BS5 6AD

- 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 Abdul Malik against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00554/H, dated 6 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 3 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is for a retrospective rear dormer over a double storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I observed during my site visit that the subject rear dormer and double storey extension had already been constructed. I have therefore determined the appeal before me on the basis that the development has already occurred.
3. The Council note that the double storey extension subject of this appeal differs from that permitted under planning permission 19/02149/H. The Council nevertheless concludes that the "precedent" of the double storey extension has been established by the extant permission and that the differences are minor, being a change to the positioning and types of windows and doors on the extension, and are acceptable in design terms. I have not been provided with a copy of the extant planning permission for comparison with the appeal development. Nevertheless, based on the evidence before me and my site visit observations I have no reason to conclude otherwise. I have therefore determined the appeal before me based on the effect of the rear dormer component.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the rear dormer on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is an end of terrace dwelling located at the eastern end of Colston Road. The host dwelling generally reflects the built form characteristics present along the full terrace row which define the overall street scene. The host dwelling is subject to a side extension which has been designed to achieve a subordinate appearance to the host dwelling, reflecting the same built form

- characteristics but with a lower roof height and deeper front façade setback to maintain the visual primacy of the host dwelling. The rear dormer subject of this appeal has been erected on the existing side extension.
6. The rear dormer occupies the full width of the side extension and matches the ridge height of that roof. As such, the rear dormer appears oversized within the roof plane and interrupts its natural form. The rear dormer has been rendered to match the side elevation of the extension and clad with horizontal timber panelling on the rear elevation to achieve the same effect for that aspect of the extension. However, this has conversely increased the visual scale and bulk of these cumulative additions to the extent that it now appears to compete with the host dwelling for primacy and fails to maintain its subordinate appearance.
 7. The appellant contests that the subject rear dormer is not prominently located within the street scene and would therefore not harm the character and appearance of the area to the degree suggested by the Council. However, I observed that the subject rear dormer was visible from several vantage points within the street scene, as well as along the Devon Road overpass and Bristol and Bath Railway Path to the east of the appeal site. Whilst I appreciate that the rear dormer would not be visible along the predominant length of the street scene, the identified perspectives remain equally significant in defining the character and appearance along Colston Road. The suggestion that these views hold less significance on the basis that mainly pedestrians or cyclists would see them does not hold weight in my opinion.
 8. The appellant further suggests that even if the rear dormer were to be altered to sit more comfortably within the roof plane of the side extension, it would not be appreciably different to that which currently exists. However, I do not share the appellant's view in this regard and maintain that a smaller rear dormer which respects the proportions of the host dwelling and the roof plane of the side extension would be a demonstrable improvement.
 9. The lack of identified harm to the living conditions of occupants on adjoining or nearby properties is a matter of compliance with the local plan policies. As such, this is a neutral effect which does not weigh against the harm identified.
 10. Accordingly, the rear dormer over the double storey extension would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. It conflicts with Policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted June 2011), Policies DM26 and DM30 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan (adopted July 2014) and Supplementary Planning Document Number 2 – A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions (adopted October 2005). These policies and guidance seek, amongst other things, to ensure extensions are of a high quality design which appropriately responds to local character and respects the proportions of the host dwelling.

Conclusion

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

J Gibson

INSPECTOR