



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 October 2020 by S Watson BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by R C Kirby BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P4605/D/20/3254758

26 Sara Close, Sutton Coldfield B74 4BN

- 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 Andrea Field against the decision of Birmingham City Council.
 - The application Ref 2020/01886/PA, dated 3 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 11 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is the extension of existing loft conversion rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

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

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons for Recommendation

4. The appeal site is on the west side of Sara Close, a through-road with a turning circle part way down. The appeal site, and the plots on the same side of the road, slope down away from the highway while the opposite side of the road is slightly raised above it. The properties surrounding the appeal site up to the turning circle are predominantly two-storey, semi-detached houses with hipped roofs. They appear to have been largely uniform in appearance, although, it was clear from my site visit that many have been extended or otherwise altered. The host dwelling has had a recent roof extension, including the conversion of the hipped roof to a gable end, and the erection of a rear dormer.
5. The side elevation of the main roof is set behind a two-storey front projection. However, the existing gable and rear dormer are clearly visible from the street scene, especially when viewed from an angle where the side of the dormer forms a prominent feature. As the form of the main roof has already been significantly altered, the proposal would not substantially affect the appearance of the building or street scene, although it would increase the size of the roof. Moreover, the proposal would also reduce the number of different,

interconnecting roofs visible from the street and therefore result in a less cluttered appearance.

6. However, while the extension to the dormer would be limited relative to the existing, it would cumulatively result in a large and dominant feature on the rear of the host property and would result in the complete loss of the rear roof slope. Although at the rear of the property, away from public views along the street, the extension would still be readily apparent from the rear of nearby properties. From these views the dormer would appear as an overly large and incongruous feature. Although I note the intention to use matching materials, and that the design would be sympathetic to the existing dormer, these matters do not outweigh the identified harm.
7. In reaching this view I have taken account of the trees and hedging around the rear of the site; however they would not fully screen the proposed rear dormer and could in any event die or be removed therefore increasing its visibility in the locality. Moreover, the separation created by the railway line is not sufficient to suitably reduce views of the site from nearby properties.
8. The appellant has also raised examples of rear dormers near the site, and during my visit I noted one at the rear of a property along Sara Close. However, I could not tell its size, nor do I know the circumstances of the development. As such I was unable to ascertain whether it was directly comparable to that before me. In any event, all development proposals must be considered on their own merits and as such I find these examples do not set a precedent for harmful development as proposed.
9. I note that the proposal would provide additional living accommodation for the current occupiers, however it is unlikely that it is the only option available to achieve this, and as such this matter carries limited weight in favour of the proposal.
10. I note the support that the Places for Living Supplementary Planning Guidance gives to the principle of extending homes to provide further accommodation, however one of the main principles of this document is that developers must consider the context and exploit and strengthen the characteristics that make an area special, which is not achieved in this case.
11. In light of the foregoing I conclude that the proposed rear dormer extension would be a disproportionate feature that would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy PG3 of the Birmingham Plan 2031: Birmingham Development Plan and Paragraph 3.14(C-D) of the Birmingham Plan: Birmingham Unitary Development Plan. These policies, amongst other things, require that development is of a high design quality which respects its surroundings. The proposal would also conflict with the guidance regarding sympathetic roof extensions set out in the Extending your Home Supplementary Planning Document and the high-quality design requirements of Paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Watson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and concur that the appeal should be dismissed.

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR