



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 October 2020

by A Denby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/D/20/3251194

6 Pilgrims Close, Princes Risborough, HP27 9JP

- 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 Spindlow against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref 20/05283/FUL, dated 3 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 7 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is formation of habitable rooms in roofspace with rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. On my site visit I saw that works have been undertaken, and I note the application has been submitted retrospectively. I have therefore dealt with the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area and host dwelling.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises of a semi-detached bungalow which is set back from its front boundary. The dwelling has single storey extensions to the rear and a detached garage to the side beyond the rear elevation. The dwelling has a compact and uncomplicated form with simple roof line, and this is reflective of the neighbouring semi-detached dwelling.
5. The proposed dormer occupies much of the rear roof slope, with no set down from the ridge, limited inset from only one side boundary and marginal set back from the eaves. Consequently, it is a substantial and bulky feature that competes visually with the host property and results in a substantial roof form, and top-heavy appearance to the building that is at odds with its established character.
6. The glazed elements to the dormer, being similar in height and width to those on the existing dwelling, also further visually emphasise its overall height and bulk. It dominates the existing property and diminishes its character and that of the semi-detached property of which it forms an integral part.

7. The dormer is to the rear roof slope and, although not overly prominent, it is still visible from the street. There are also wider views of it from the surrounding area. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of other dormer roof extensions in the vicinity, and I saw on my site visit that many of the properties in the surrounding area have dormer extensions of varying sizes and designs to front and rear roof slopes.
8. However, there are none that are directly comparable to the scheme before me, when considering the size and overall bulk of the dormer, and its relationship to the roof slope upon which it is situated. The majority of dormer extensions in the vicinity are smaller and generally sit more comfortably within the roof slope, incorporating greater insets, set downs or setbacks. They do not occupy the whole of the roof slope, and as such, remain visually subservient to the original dwelling. This is not the case with the appeal scheme.
9. Although there are some dormers which are higher than the main roof ridge and span the front and rear roof slopes, they also incorporate greater insets or setback from the eaves. The appellant has also referred to extensions carried out to nearby properties, though these are two-storey rear extensions to two-storey dwellings and therefore, I do not consider them to be directly comparable to the appeal site or scheme. Furthermore, I do not know the full circumstances of these other schemes, and in any event, each case must be considered on its own merits.
10. Whilst the proposed materials would match the main dwelling, the dormer fails to meet much of the design criteria contained within the Council's Householder Planning and Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document, 2020 (SPD) and, subsequently, due to its overall size and bulk, it would dominate the rear roof slope, and have an unacceptable harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host property, and that of the surrounding area.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would be contrary to Policies DM35 and DM36 of the Wycombe District Local Plan, 2019, as supported by guidance contained within the SPD, which seek to ensure that development achieves a high quality of design, being subservient in scale, and respecting the character and appearance of the existing property and surrounding area.
12. I note that the proposal would provide additional living accommodation, though I am mindful that this benefit would be personal to the appellant. Furthermore, the appellant states that they were incorrectly advised that approval for the dormer had been obtained and, following receipt of a party wall agreement, work commenced on that basis. Whilst this situation must have undoubtedly caused the appellant concern and frustration, it does not outweigh the harm I have identified.

Conclusion

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

A Denby

INSPECTOR