



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 January 2021

by J Bowyer BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/20/3261338

43 Meadhook Drive, Barton-Le-Clay, Bedford MK45 4RH

- 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 Bonnard against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref CB/20/02372/FULL, dated 11 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 11 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is a rear dormer loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. Near to the appeal site, the roofs to dwellings are of predominantly pitched forms, with very few alterations apparent from the street scene. Together with common detailing to buildings and use of a fairly limited range of materials, this contributes a high degree of consistency to the appearance of individual dwellings and a coherent character and sense of overall uniformity which is distinctive.
4. The set in of the proposed rear dormer from the ridge, sides and eaves of the host roof would in all cases be very limited. As a result, it would occupy nearly the entirety of the main roofslope, fundamentally altering its shape, and unbalancing and dominating the form of the appeal dwelling.
5. The position of the dwelling adjacent to a branch of Meadhook Drive and close to the junction of this street with Grange Road means that there are clear public views towards its rear roofslope. While screened from the street immediately to the front of the site, the dormer would therefore be readily visible from the surrounding area. Irrespective of the external materials, the development would stand out against the more modest and generally unaltered roof forms nearby. Accordingly, it would be prominent and intrusive, and I find it would detract from the consistency which is a characteristic of the area.
6. The appellant has referred to a dormer in Ravensburgh Close near to the site, but the very limited information provided means I cannot draw direct or meaningful comparison with the circumstances in this appeal. In any event, the fact that apparently similar dormers may have been permitted is not a reason,

on its own, to allow unacceptable development. I have determined the appeal before me on its own planning merits, and found that it would cause harm.

7. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with saved Policies BE8 and H8 of the South Bedfordshire Local Plan Review 2004 which require, amongst other things, development that is sympathetic to its surroundings and which enhances or reinforces local character and distinctiveness. It would also be contrary to the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide 2014 which includes advice that extensions should be sympathetic to their context and not dominate the existing building.
8. I am sympathetic to the appellant's desire to provide additional living space for her family. However, I am mindful of advice within the Planning Practice Guidance that in general, planning is concerned with land use in the public interest. The development would also be likely to remain long after the current personal circumstances cease to be material. I therefore find that this factor is not sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified, and the conflict with the development plan. Neighbouring occupiers have not objected, but that is a neutral factor, and weighs neither for nor against the proposal.

Conclusion

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

J Bowyer
INSPECTOR