
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 December 2020 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by Zoe Raygen Dip URP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/D/20/3262289

9 Beacon Close, Gilstead, Bingley BD16 3NQ

- 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 O'Hara against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/02916/HOU, dated 13 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 9 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of loft space with the formation of front and rear dormer windows and the lifting of the rear roof of the former extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the conversion of loft space with the formation of front and rear dormer windows and the lifting of the rear roof of the former extension at 9 Beacon Close, Gilstead, Bingley, BD16 3NQ, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/02916/HOU, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Identification Plan (20/1027-01), Proposed Ground Floor Plan (20/1027-03 Revision A), Proposed First Floor Plan (20/1027-03 Revision A), Proposed Elevations (20/1027-05 Revision A).
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken 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 effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area.

Reasons

4. The appeal dwelling is a semi-detached bungalow with an existing side extension. It is located at the head of a cul-de-sac which is characterised by

semi-detached and detached properties, all of which have dormers across the full width of their front roof plane. Permission is sought for front and rear dormers and to raise the ridge of the side extension to match the original dwelling.

5. The proposed front dormer would be well set in from the side of the host dwelling, set down slightly from the ridge line and despite the wording of the Council's reason for refusal, the plans before me show it would be finished in tiles to match the host roof. It would not meet the detailed design principles for dormers in the Local Development Framework for Bradford, Householder Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). However, this guidance pre-dates the National Planning Policy Framework which states at paragraph 126 that the level of detail and degree of prescription in design guides should be tailored to the circumstances and allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.
6. The SPD does however acknowledge that if there are many dormers within the street it might be desirable for new dormers to be of the same size, position with the roof and detailing. All surrounding properties on Beacon Close have front dormers which span the full width of the roof. The window layout of the proposal would be similar to those on the existing dormers in the locality. The introduction of a dormer to the host dwelling would not therefore read as an incongruous addition and, due to its set-in from the side and materials to match, it would be a sympathetic and proportionate addition that would not appear significantly out of character in the street scene.
7. The host dwelling is located at the head of the cul-de-sac and at a lower level than the highway. The extension currently has a subservient appearance however this proposal seeks to raise its ridge line to match that of the original dwelling. Whilst this would remove its subordinate appearance, due to the dwelling's inconspicuous siting, the presence of the extension would not be fully legible and the introduction of the dormer across both the extension and host dwelling would negate the need for it to be set-down from the main ridge.
8. The proposed dormer would not span the full roof plane of the pair of semi-detached bungalows at Nos 7 and 9 Beacon Close unlike existing dormers to properties in the locality. However, the existing side extension to the host dwelling has already introduced an unbalance to the pair of semi-detached bungalows. As such, the dwellings are not currently entirely symmetrical and moreover, due to their siting and boundary treatment the full extent of both properties are not readily apparent. Therefore, this proposal would not cause a visually intrusive unbalance to the pair of dwellings.
9. The proposed rear dormer would not be prominent from the public realm. Whilst it may be of a slightly awkward design due to the set-back of the side extension, this would not be highly visible in the wider street and would not therefore detract from the character of the locality.
10. Consequently, taking all the above into consideration, while the proposed development would conflict with some guidance in the SPD, it would not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area. It is therefore consistent with Policies DS1 and DS3 of the Local Plan for the Bradford District, Core Strategy, Development Plan Document (July 2017) which seek to ensure developments are informed by and appropriate to the character of the area.

Other Matter

11. I acknowledge the concern from neighbours regarding potential overlooking from the proposed rear dormer. The Council has not raised concern in this regard, and I note that the only window in the dormer which would serve a habitable room would be positioned away from the boundary with No 23 Rylands Avenue. As such, the outlook from this window would primarily be directed down the garden of the appeal site. Considering this angle of view and the distance from the rear elevation of No 23, even taking account of a difference in land levels, I consider that this proposal would have a negligible effect on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

Conditions

12. Other than the standard time limit and approved plans condition, the Council has suggested a condition requiring the external materials to be used in the construction of the development to match those of the existing building. In the interests of the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area this condition would be necessary.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above I recommend that the appeal is allowed.

Hannah Ellison

Appeal Planning Officer

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is allowed.

Zoe Raygen

INSPECTOR