



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 December 2020

by M Cryan BA(Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C4615/D/20/3263970

62 Rangeways Road, Kingswinford DY6 8PQ

- 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 P Hartland against the decision of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P20/1399, dated 21 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 23 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is a front dormer window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a front dormer window at 62 Rangeways Road, Kingswinford DY6 8PQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P20/1399, dated 21 September 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan (A4), Proposed Plans (A3).
 - 2) 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.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development in the banner heading above is adapted from that in the planning application form. I have omitted the word 'replacement', as the evidence before me indicates that although the appeal property had a front dormer in the past this was removed around 15 or 20 years ago. I have also omitted the word 'retrospective', as this is not descriptive of the development. Nonetheless, the dormer for which planning permission is sought was under construction, although not complete, at the time of my site visit. I have considered the appeal on the basis that the development has commenced.
3. I also saw that a rear dormer was under construction on the appeal property, but this did not form part of the planning application and is therefore not addressed in my decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the front dormer on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property sits within a residential estate dating from around the 1950s or 60s. I saw that the area contains a range of houses and bungalows, which have generally been laid out with a small run of one basic dwelling type, then another, and so on along the estate's gently curving roads. The appeal property itself is a semi-detached bungalow on a corner plot.
6. Permission is sought for a dormer on the front roof slope, and as described above this had substantially been constructed at the time of my site visit. It is set in from the sides of the property by around 0.9m and 0.7m and approximately 5.4m wide, so occupies a considerable part of the roof's width. However, it sits below the roof ridge, and at around 1.7m behind the eaves is set well back from the front elevation of the dwelling. The Council's 1998 House Extension Design Guide advises that two small dormers may be preferable to a single larger one. However, the combination of the setback from the front of the dwelling, the limited rise of around 1m above the main pitch of the roof, and the use of the same facing tiles as on the main roof slopes, mean that the dormer does not dominate the roof space. It therefore complies with the overall aims of the advice in the Design Guide.
7. The adjoining bungalow at No 60 Rangeways Road does not have a front dormer, and the dormer erected at No 62 therefore inevitably has some unbalancing effect on the appearance of the pair of dwellings. However, the pleasant suburban character of the estate is derived more from the neat and well cared-for appearance of its homes and gardens rather than a reliance on repetition or symmetry of layout or architecture. The positioning, size and materials of the dormer are such that the disruption to the basic symmetry of the pair of dwellings is limited, and not so great as to amount to causing significant harm.
8. Many other homes nearby have been extended or otherwise altered over the years, and my attention was drawn to several instances where front dormers have been added to bungalows, some of which appear to have been long-established and consequently do not appear in the Council's planning history. There are some parts of the estate with particular small clusters of front dormers, such as on Belvedere Close and further north on Rangeways Road, and many other more isolated examples including at 52 Rangeways Road a few doors along from the appeal site. From what I saw on my site visit, in general terms front dormers are not therefore unusual or incongruous within the estate, and while they are not so widespread as to be a defining feature of the area, at the same time they are an established part of its overall character and appearance. I acknowledge that some of the dormers to which both parties referred have a negative impact on the streetscene, primarily because of excessive bulk and massing which dominates their host property. However, as I have already described these are not criticisms which I consider should be applied in this case.
9. I conclude that the front dormer is not harmful to the character and appearance either of the host property or the wider area, and it therefore complies with Policies S6 and L1 of the 2017 Dudley Borough Development Strategy, and Policy ENV 2 of the 2011 Black Country Core Strategy. Together these policies seek, among other things, to ensure that development (including

domestic extensions) is appropriate in form, scale and massing, and that local character and distinctiveness are preserved.

Conditions

10. As the development is already underway, a condition setting a time limit for commencement is not necessary. Conditions specifying approved plans and materials are necessary in the interests of certainty, and to protect the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above the appeal is allowed.

M Cryan

Inspector