



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 24 November 2020

by John Dowsett MA, DipURP, DipUD, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/D/20/3259001

65 Moore Avenue, Bradford, BD6 3HJ

- 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 N Ahmed against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref: 20/01549/HOU, dated 16 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as: Proposed two and single storey side extensions and loft conversion with front dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The planning application form states that the rear dormer window, which is illustrated on the submitted drawings, is to be constructed using permitted development rights. The Council consider that the proposed rear dormer is an intrinsic part of a larger development which includes the proposed side extension and other alterations to the roof of the property.
3. Within the context of an appeal under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the Act), it is not within my remit to formally determine whether any part of the proposed development does or does not require planning permission. In any event, notwithstanding the relative positions of the parties, I am required to consider the scheme as a whole. If the appellant wishes to ascertain whether, in isolation, the proposed rear dormer would be lawful, they may make an application to the Council under section 192 of the Act.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal building is one half of a pair of two storey, semi-detached, houses. The property has a ground floor bay window on the front elevation beneath a pent roof canopy. This canopy extends across the frontage of both halves of the semi-detached pair and becomes an open porch supported on columns at each end. The walls of the house are finished in render apart from the ground floor of the front elevation which is stone. The roof is finished in slate with a centrally placed chimney between the two halves of the pair of semi-detached

houses. A small, flat roofed, single storey extension has been constructed on the side elevation.

6. Moore Avenue is a long, wide, main road. At the point where the appeal building is located, it is primarily residential in character with further residential side streets branching off it to both sides. The houses in the area are of a range of ages and designs but are generally two storey and either semi-detached or in short terraces. They are set back from the highway behind a front garden area which in many instances has been given over either partly, or wholly, to hardstanding for parking vehicles. There are some design differences between the properties in the area and many of the properties have been altered over time. However, the use of a limited palette of materials, consisting of render and stonework with slate roofs, and the use of common architectural features such as ground floor bay windows and similar window shapes and configurations, combine with simple roof forms and uniform eaves and ridge heights, to result in a relatively cohesive architectural character. This is reinforced by a strong and regular building line in relation to the highway.
7. When read together, Policies DS1 and DS3 of the Bradford Core Strategy 2017 (the Core Strategy) expect new development to be of a high design quality that is informed by the site context and the character of the area, and which creates attractive streetscapes. The Council's Householder Supplementary Planning Document 2012 (the SPD), which is to be read alongside the general design policies in the Core Strategy, sets out more detailed guidance on the design of domestic extensions.
8. The proposed side extensions would have a two storey element, approximately 4.5 metres wide, and a smaller single storey element approximately 2.9 metres wide, although this latter extension would be set back from the front wall. The two storey element would have a gable ended roof and also tall gables to the front and rear, which would rise to the height of the ridge of the main roof and contain a window serving a proposed attic room.
9. The guidance in the SPD sets out that two storey extensions will normally be required to be set back by 1 metre behind the front wall of a house, with a corresponding lowering of the roofline. It further states that such extensions should not normally have a width that is greater than two thirds the size of the original house. The two storey element of the proposals would be level with the original front wall of the house and would continue the ridge of the roof at the same height as that of the original building. At 4.5 metres wide, the proposed two storey element would be greater than two thirds of the width of the original house frontage, which is approximately 5.4 metres wide. Cumulatively with the proposed single storey extension, it would substantially exceed the width of the original house frontage.
10. The properties to the south east of the appeal building and its adjoining neighbour are short terraces of four dwellings and there is a wide gap to the north west of the appeal building between it and the neighbouring property. The proposed extensions would lengthen the façade of the appeal building and its neighbour, and this would, to an extent, mirror the longer frontages of the adjacent terraced blocks. However, the proposed extensions, due to their size and form, would visually dominate the original house which would be subsumed into the extension, significantly eroding the legibility of the existing

building form. The proposed extensions would also introduce an incongruous, tall, gable feature which is not characteristic of other houses in the surrounding area. This would result in a discordant feature, very different from the prevailing roof forms, and in a visually prominent location opposite the junction with Auckland Road. As such, it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

11. My attention has been drawn to an approved scheme at number 204 Moore Avenue, which features a gabled frontage, and it is advised that the appeal proposals were based on this. I do not have the full details of this scheme, or the circumstances which led to it being accepted, before me. However, from the copy of the drawing that I have been provided with, the height of the gabled frontage is considerably lower than that of the appeal proposal and is not dissimilar to the small gables that I observed were present on several houses on Moore Avenue, to the north west of the appeal building. These are a much less dominant feature on these buildings than the much larger and taller gables proposed on the front and rear of the appeal building would be, and I do not consider that this scheme is a persuasive precedent for allowing the appeal proposals.
12. The appeal scheme proposes a large box dormer on the rear roof slope. This would exceed the 3 metre width guideline set out in the SPD. Nonetheless, the proposed rear dormer would, as part of the overall proposed scheme of works, be largely concealed behind the proposed rear gable on the two storey extension in views from Moore Avenue. To the rear of the appeal building is a complex of former mill buildings, now used for a variety of smaller businesses, and their associated yard area. Due to the relative positions of the appeal building and the houses on Enfield Parade, there would only be limited, oblique views of the rear dormer from these houses. In addition, the window openings in the dormer would align with those of the floors below on the rear elevation of the house and would help integrate it with the original building. In this context and as a result of the limited visibility of the proposed rear dormer, this element of the proposal would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, notwithstanding that it would not wholly comply with the requirements of the SPD.
13. The Council have not raised any objection to the proposed dormer on the front roof plane and state that this complies with the guidance in the SPD. I observed that several other properties in the near vicinity have also been provided with front dormers. From what I have read and from what I saw when I visited the site, I would agree with the Council's assessment that this element of the proposal would have a neutral effect on the character and appearance of the area. However, this of itself would not overcome the harm that would result from other elements of the proposal.
14. As a result of the size and design of the proposed two storey side extension, the appeal proposals, when taken as a whole, would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. Although I have found that, looked at in isolation, the proposed front and rear dormers would not be inherently objectionable, because of their size and proposed position on the roof, these elements would not be severable from the overall scheme. Consequently, I am not able to consider the option of granting permission for some elements of the scheme and refusing permission for those elements that would be harmful.

15. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would not comply with the relevant requirements of Policies DS1 and DS3 of the Core Strategy or the SPD.

Conclusion

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

John Dowsett

INSPECTOR