



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 August 2021 by A Coombes

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/D/21/3278354

Site Address Coniscliffe, Beckspool Road, Frenchay BS16 1NU

- 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 Louisa McCann against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
 - The application Ref P21/01247/F, dated 5 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 7 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is a rear loft conversion for additional living accommodation with increase in ridge height and introduction of 3no pitched roof dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

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 Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the area; and
 - the living conditions of nearby occupiers, with regard to overlooking.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is a two-storey detached house located on Beckspool Road, adjacent to the Grade II listed Riverwood House and within the Frenchay Conservation Area (FCA). The dwelling is white rendered with a shallow pitched roof and a pitched roof gable on the front elevation. The proposal seeks to raise the ridge height of the existing roof and introduce 3no pitched-roof rear dormers, along with some internal alterations.

Character and Appearance

5. Although the dormer size has been reduced from a previous application, the three proposed dormer windows would occupy a significant portion of the roof. The existing first-floor windows on the host property are minimal in size particularly at first floor level. By contrast, the addition of three large dormer windows would appear incongruous and overly dominant. Although some aspects of the design meet the dimension requirements in the South

Gloucestershire Council Householder Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, adopted 2021 (SPD), the installation of three large dormers would appear excessive and subsequently harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling. On the site visit it was observed that the adjacent Riverwood House has three dormer windows. However, these are much smaller in relation to the host dwelling and respect its design.

6. Although the Council did not find any harm would arise to the FCA or the setting of the listed building in terms of the proposed raised ridge height, this does not minimise the harm that would arise from the dormer windows. Due to the site being elevated from nearby dwellings, and the development being at roof level, the excessive dormers would be highly visible from nearby properties. As the appeal property is located within the FCA the harm that would arise to its character and appearance would result in a failure to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the FCA.
7. For the reasons given above, the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. It would not accord with Policy CS1 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Core Strategy, adopted 2013 and Policies PSP1 and PSP38 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Policies, Sites and Places Plan (PSPP), adopted 2017. Collectively, these Policies ensure that development is of high-quality design and respectful of the host dwelling and local area.

Living Conditions

8. The rear elevation of Coniscliffe faces towards properties on Riverwood Road at an oblique angle, and there is an existing degree of overlooking due to its elevated siting. The introduction of three dormer windows would increase opportunities for outlook from habitable rooms at roof-level. However, given the offset siting, the appeal property and the neighbouring dwellings do not face directly back-to-back.
9. The SPD recommends a separation distance of 28m for three-storey back-to-back properties. The closest measurement from the dormer to the nearest neighbouring property would be just below this. However, the SPD advises that where houses face each other at an angle the separation distances may be reduced. Taking the distance and oblique angle into account the development would not result in unacceptable overlooking. On the site visit it was observed that there is soft landscaping obstructing the view from the appeal site to properties on Riverwood Road. Even if the landscaping were reduced or removed in the future, separation distances would be such that undue overlooking would not occur.
10. For the reasons outlined above, the development would not be detrimental to the living conditions of nearby occupants with regard to overlooking. It would accord with Policies PSP8 and PSP38 of the PSPP, which together require that development does not prejudice the amenity of nearby residents or result in an unacceptable loss of privacy from overlooking. Furthermore, the development would not contravene the separation distances in the SPD and it would comply with the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to secure a high standard of amenity.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. Although the development would not have a detrimental impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties, this does not outweigh the harm that has been found to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and FCA. The proposal would not accord with the Development Plan when it is considered as a whole. For the reasons given above, I recommend the appeal should be dismissed.

A Coombes

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

K Taylor

INSPECTOR