

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 November 2021 by Emma Grierson BSc (Hons) MSc MRPTI

Decision by B J Sims BSc (Hons) CEng MICR MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/21/3279435

24 Belvedere Gardens, St Albans AL2 3EN

- 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 Saibur Choudhury against the decision of St Albans City Council.
 - The application Ref 5/21/1312, dated 8 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 29 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is a dormer loft conversion for one additional bedroom with en-suite shower and toilet.
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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.

Preliminary Matters

3. The Government published on 20 July 2021 a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework. Accordingly, and in light of the reference made to the previous iteration of the Framework within the submitted evidence, the parties have been provided with a further opportunity to make submissions in respect of the revised publication. Any comments which have been received have been addressed within this decision.

Main Issue

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

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal property is a two-storey end of terrace dwelling with an adjoining single storey garage block. It is located within a cul-de-sac of relatively modern residential properties. The proposal would convert the loft space into habitable accommodation with two dormer windows on the front elevation and one larger dormer window on the rear elevation.
6. The two dormers on the front elevation would be modestly sized and set well back from the ridge, eaves and sides of the roof. However, due to their location, they would be highly visible within the public realm., the dormers

would be highly prominent additions to the property due to their location on the front elevation.

7. There are similar examples of front dormers in the surrounding area, including at 346 Watford Road as highlighted by the appellant. However, front dormers are not commonplace within this cul-de-sac and the proposal would be an unusual addition to the streetscene. The incongruity of the proposed front dormers along with their prominent location would create a dominant addition to the property and terrace, to the detriment of its character and appearance and that of the wider street scene.
8. The proposed rear dormer is much larger than the proposed front dormers but it is less visible from the public realm, although it would be more visible from the surrounding properties. A rear dormer of this size is a common feature within a residential setting and it is noted that this size is required to provide sufficient internal space. It is also noted that the proposal has been set in from the ridge, eaves and sides and has a sloping roof to reduce its mass.
9. However, the proposed rear dormer features a Juliette balcony. This feature would create a top-heavy appearance to the rear of the dwelling, with much larger fenestration than both the first floor and the ground floor. It would also be out of character with the original and modest design of the host dwelling and other properties in the surrounding area.
10. For the reasons above I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area and would be contrary to Policies 69 and 72 of the St Albans District Local Plan Review (1994). These policies require extensions to dwellings to have a high standard of design which relates to the domestic scale, character and appearance of the street.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole, and I recommend that the appeal be dismissed.

Emma Grierson

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.

B J Sims

INSPECTOR