
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 December 2021

by Rebecca McAndrew BA Hons, PG Dip Urban Design, MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25TH January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/P1940/D/21/3285041

21 Rousebarn Lane, Croxley Green WD3 3RL

- 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 Martin Austin against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/1798/FUL, dated 16 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 22 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is a front extension and dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and area.

Reasons

3. The proposed dormer extension would project forward of the main body of the host dwelling. This excessive depth, in conjunction with the width of the proposed dormer, would result in an overly bulky structure which would not sit comfortably within the context of the existing dwelling. The Council does not object to the scale of the proposed ground floor extension when considered in isolation. However, the combined mass of the proposed dormer and ground floor extension would give rise to an unduly prominent and incongruous development which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and area.
4. I note that the proposed dormer would be set below the ridge of the existing dwelling roof and set in from its eaves. However, setting the dormer in from the eaves of the proposed ground floor extension would give rise to an awkward and contrived relationship between these two elements of the appeal proposal. In addition, the two small windows proposed within the dormer would be at odds with the existing fenestration of the house, which includes windows with a horizontal emphasis. These discordant design details would be at odds with the character and appearance of the host dwelling.
5. On my site visit I observed that Rousebarn Lane and nearby Links Way benefit from relatively varied streetscenes. This includes a number of gables which

appear to be original design features. Many homes have also been extended, some of which include dormer extensions, including the nearby properties cited by the appellant. However, these all sit more comfortably within the context of the host properties than the appeal proposal would.

6. I have also considered the details of a number of house extensions in the wider District submitted by the appellant in support of his proposal. Whilst these schemes also proposed dormers to the front elevation of dwellings, they differ from the appeal proposal as the dormers appear to be smaller in scale, do not dominate the roof plane within which they would sit and respect the character and appearance of the existing dwellings. On this basis, I have attached limited weight to these examples in considering the appeal. In any event, each proposal must be considered on its own merits.
7. In conclusion, the appeal proposal would be at odds with, and harmful to, the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the area. The scheme would therefore be contrary to Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Three Rivers District Council, Local Development Framework, Core Strategy (2011), Policy DM1 and Appendix 2 of the Three Rivers District Council, Local Plan, Development Management Policies Local Development Document (2013) and the provisions of the Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan Referendum Version (2018) which, taken together, seek to secure a good standard of design which responds to the context of the host dwelling and area.

Other matters

8. I have considered a number of points raised by the appellant in support of the appeal. He comments that the scheme would create a new main entrance for the appeal property which would be an improvement on the current arrangement. I also note that the scheme would improve the quality of living accommodation, which would be beneficial to the occupants' wellbeing. However, neither of these matters would not outweigh the harm I have described to the character and appearance of the dwelling and area.
9. The appellant advises he would be willing to amend the scheme to include render as the finish of the dormer, instead of the proposed tiles. However, the harm I have identified lies in the scale, mass and design of the proposal, rather than external materials. Therefore, this would not sufficiently mitigate the adverse impact that I have identified.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Rebecca McAndrew

INSPECTOR