



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2022

by Lewis Condé BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Wednesday 2 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/21/3286804

45 Somerset Terrace, Bedminster, Bristol BS3 4LJ

- 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 Ms Jane Porter against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 21/03963/H, dated 8 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 24 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Renovation with New Mansard Roof'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue raised by this appeal is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling is a mid-row terrace property. It is located within a long block of dwellings that, notwithstanding their colour finishes, share a general uniformity in architectural style and appearance. When viewed from Somerset Terrace, the unity of the terrace block is largely shaped by its simple detailing, along with a front parapet that mostly runs at a continuous height. These features add consistency and rhythm to the group of buildings, with the parapet giving the appearance that the dwellings are each of a flat roof design and of the approximate same height.
4. The proposed mansard roof would introduce an additional built form that would be sited behind, but rise above, the property's front parapet wall. I note that the appellant has provided a diagram to demonstrate that the proposed mansard roof would not be visible to pedestrians at street level opposite the site. However, the diagram provided illustrates only one specific location within the street scene. From my own observations, the development would clearly be visible from wider views along Somerset Terrace.
5. The development would not respect the roofline or uniformity of the host property or wider terrace. Instead, it would result in a stepped roofline that would bear no relation to the silhouette or heights of the remainder of the terrace. Consequently, I find its appearance would upset the current rhythm of the terrace, as well as erode the strong parapet line, to the detriment of the unity and integrity of the terrace fronts. I therefore find that the proposals would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

6. The proposal would also compromise the existing butterfly roof form. However, I am less concerned by this impact than the overall appearance and visibility of the proposed mansard roof. This is because the existing butterfly roof form is largely hidden from public vantage points. It cannot be seen from the front due to the existing parapet wall, while the surrounding built development and topography severely limit public views of the butterfly roof form to the rear.
7. I recognise that there have been a variety of alterations to the roof forms of properties in the surrounding area, some of which have been highlighted by the appellant. From my observations these were not directly comparable in nature to the appeal proposals, while I am not aware of the specific circumstances of those developments. Additionally, the existence of other roof extensions in the locality does not justify the harm that I have identified with the current appeal scheme. Likewise, support for the scheme from third parties, or the lack of objections, again does not justify the harm identified.
8. Various examples of mansard roof developments completed within Bristol, by the appellant's architect, have also been cited to support the appeal. However, the examples provided are set some distance away from the appeal site and sit within markedly different contexts. In any event, I must consider the appeal scheme on its own merits.
9. The appellant has also stated that the scheme's design is less intrusive than a 'permitted' rear dormer. No indication of an alternative form of design that would be pursued by the appellant under permitted development rights (PDR) has been outlined. I acknowledge that a rear dormer, depending on its scale and design, may result in a greater impact on the butterfly roof form than the appeal proposal. My primary concern with the appeal scheme, however, has not been in relation to its impacts on the butterfly roof, but the appearance of the proposed mansard roof and its relationship with the overall roofline of the host property and wider terrace. Therefore, I am not convinced that a rear dormer pursued via PDR, would result in a similar level of harm to the character of the host property, or surrounding area, as the current appeal proposal.
10. Finally, various benefits associated with the incorporation of a mansard roof design have also been indicated by the appellant. These include sustainability credentials, the roof's waterproof characteristics and ability to retain architectural details on the host property. However, I am not persuaded that a more sympathetic form of design could not provide similar benefits, or that the stated benefits would outweigh the harm identified in this instance.
11. Overall, I find that the appeal proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area. As such, the proposed development is contrary to Policy BCS21 of the adopted Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy (2011) and Policies DM26 and DM30 of the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan (2014). Together these policies seek to ensure development is well designed and responds appropriately to local character and distinctiveness.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, having regard to the development plan, and all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR