



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2022

by J D Westbrook BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17TH October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/C3105/D/22/3290832

1 Cranesbill Drive, BICESTER, OX26 3WG

- 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 Gavin Wright against the decision of Cherwell District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/02346/F, dated 6 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 27 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with rooflights to the front roofslope and a dormer extension to the rear roofslope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed rear dormer extension on the character and appearance of the area around Cranesbill Drive and Germander Way.

Reasons

3. The appeal property (No 1) is a detached house on a corner plot at the junction of Cranesbill Drive with Germander Way. It is a two-storey, brick-built property with a single-storey rear extension. The proposed development would involve works for a loft conversion that would include the construction of a rear dormer that would occupy the full width and height of the rear roofslope.
4. Policy ESD 15 of the Cherwell Local Plan (LP) indicates that new development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. Policy C28 of the Cherwell District Plan (DP) indicates that control will be exercised over all new development, including extensions, to ensure that the standards of layout, design and external appearance are sympathetic to the character of the context of that development. Policy C30 of the DP indicates that design control will be exercised to ensure that any proposal to extend an existing dwelling is compatible with the scale of the existing dwelling, its curtilage and the character of the street scene.
5. The Council contends that the proposed rear dormer by virtue of its design, massing and use of materials would unduly affect the appearance of the existing building and would be an incongruous feature in the surrounding built environment, harmful to the character and appearance the street scene.

6. The appellant contends that the loft conversion with rear roof dormer would only be slightly visible from the street and, due to the position of the house, that it would be shielded by the roof of the neighbouring house. Furthermore, he notes the existence of two loft conversions with dormer windows on the same residential estate that are similar to the proposal at No 1.
7. No 1 is located in a prominent position at the junction of Cranesbill Drive and Germander Way. Its wide, south-facing front elevation faces Cranesbill Way while its narrower western 'side' elevation faces Germander Way. The proposed dormer would occupy the full width and height of the north-facing rear roofslope. As such, it would be a prominent feature in the street-scene of Germander Way, readily visible from the road junction and also when approaching from the north-easterly and, to a lesser extent, the westerly directions. It would also be visible when approaching from the south along Cranesbill Drive itself, although to a much more limited extent.
8. The western 'side' elevation is narrow with a relatively high pitched roof, and this would result in the proposed dormer appearing tall and somewhat top-heavy in the context of both the host property and the wider street-scene. Its apparent verticality, coupled with the prominence of the side dormer cheek at the extreme western end of the roof, would result in it having a dominant and somewhat incongruous appearance, uncharacteristic of the immediate surrounding area.
9. The appellant refers to other rear dormer extensions to houses within the wider surrounding area. I note these examples, but they are very uncommon features in the area as a whole and are, in any case, in less prominent situations and appear as less overly-dominating in the context of the host properties.
10. In conclusion, I find that the proposed rear dormer at No 1 would be unsympathetic to the character of the context of the property and the wider street scene. On this basis it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area around Cranesbill Drive and Germander Way, and would conflict with Policy ESD 15 of the LP and Policies C28 and C30 of the DP. Accordingly, I dismiss this appeal.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR

