

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2023

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/22/3308764

3 Woodland Way, Bristol, BS15 1QL

- 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 Sheila Jefferis against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/03138/H, dated 23 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 1 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with a rear/side dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion with a rear/side dormer at 3 Woodland Way, Bristol, BS15 1QL in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 22/03138/H, dated 23 June 2022, subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule.

Preliminary matter

2. The description of the proposed development in the application form refers to a small front dormer. However, no such dormer is shown on the submitted plans. I have therefore utilised the description of the proposal seen on the Council's decision notice.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling standing on the fringes of what appears to be a large inter-war housing estate. The pair was initially designed with catslide roofs to the sides. However, as the Council explains, planning permission was granted in the late 1980's for significant extensions to the appeal property. The resultant implementation of the permission meant that the property's appearance was substantially modified, and the previous handed symmetry of the pair was irretrievably lost.
5. The loft conversion proposed would involve the creation of a rectangular box-like structure occupying almost all of the roof's rear sloping plane. As the Council says, it would involve a significant volume increase, and I note that the Council's SPD¹ discourages extensions of this type. However, the content of

¹ Supplementary Planning Document Number 2 – A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions

the SPD is meant as guidance, other factors are also pertinent to the assessment.

6. Not least is that the roof extension would be barely discernible in the public realm. In this regard most of the proposed extension affects the rear elevation alone. Whilst the Council says that it could be seen by nearby residents, I noted that no dwelling is sited close or directly behind the appeal property, and gardens in this part of the estate are relatively spacious in comparison with those of modern estate development. The loft conversion would not therefore in my view appear intrusive or displeasing to the eye to residents at the rear.
7. The side of the proposed structure would be seen from vantage points around the nearby busy road junction, but to my mind, the altered roof profile would not be perceived as excessively sized or dominating, particularly given the modifications to the appearance of the property already undertaken.
8. The examples provided by the appellant of other schemes of alteration and modification carried out to other properties in the area have been noted. Whilst these do not, in themselves, justify the grant of planning permission in this case, they indicate to me that many properties in the area have been extended or modified in a broadly similar manner to that proposed and that these now contribute to forming local character.
9. Accordingly, and since the property has already been substantially modified with the Council's consent, I conclude that the proposal would not materially harm the character and appearance of the host property or its surroundings. Thus, whilst the development may not strictly conform to all the design provisions and requirements of policies BCS21 of the Bristol Local Plan, Core Strategy; and policies DM26, DM27 and DM30 of the Bristol Local Plan Site Allocations and Development Management Policies, I am satisfied that the material considerations in this case, as identified, indicate to me that a departure from those provisions is justified.

Conditions

10. In the interests of visual amenity, I shall impose the Council's suggested condition in respect of external materials.
11. It is also necessary, in the interests of certainty, that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

Other matters

12. All other matters referred to in the representations have been taken into consideration, including the references to the Framework², but no other matter raised is of such strength or significance as to outweigh the considerations that led me to my conclusions.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR

² The National Planning Policy Framework

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1). The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2). The development hereby permitted shall be completed in accordance with the following approved plans: Ref: *Existing sheet 1; Existing sheet 2 and Proposed Plans 1*.
- 3). The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.