



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2023

by J Moore BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 FEBRUARY 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/R4408/D/22/3309659

3 Colster Close, Gawber, Barnsley S75 2LR

- 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 Mark Brazier against the decision of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2022/0782, dated 22 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 6 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The description of development in my heading above is taken from the planning application form. In section E of the appeal form, it is stated that the description of development has not changed. However, a different wording has been entered. Neither of the main parties has provided confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the planning application form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The host property is a two-storey detached house in a residential area. It is an 'L' shaped dwelling with the side elevation situated at a lower height and set back from the principal elevation of the main part of the property. Due to the local topography of the area, the host property occupies an elevated position. While the wider residential area comprises a mix of property forms, with varying finishes to elevations, the immediate area is characterised by single storey bungalows. These factors combine to result in the host property appearing as a prominent property within its immediate context.
5. The proposed ridge height would be almost level with the main roof, falling well short of the Council's minimum set-back requirement of 0.5m as set out in the Barnsley Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document *House Extensions and Other Domestic Alterations* 2019 (SPD). Therefore, the proposed development would not appear subordinate to the main house.

6. The proposal would result in an increased height to the side elevation and an altered roof profile. This would create further bulk and massing to the side elevation, which would further accentuate the prominent and dominant position of the host property within the street scene and in relation to the prevailing property form of bungalows.
7. The proposed rear flat roofed dormer would be of a horizontal emphasis, and it would project from the roofscape to a significant depth and height to a point where its outer face would align with that of the rear elevation. It would occupy almost the full width of the rear of the side elevation and give the appearance of a three-storey property.
8. The rear elevation of the host property faces a field, and as such the proposal would not be directly within public view. However, it would be within public view from along Wharfedale Road. At my visit, I saw a substantial gap in the built frontage between the two-storey property at No.49 Wharfedale Close and the single storey bungalow at No.51, which occupies the corner plot to Colster Close. While a hedge fronts this gap to the road, the gap at the middle to upper level is open. The proposed rear dormer's scale, together with the increased bulk and mass of the side elevation would be clearly seen at this point, along with the altered roof pitch to the side elevation. The proposed roofscape would appear as overly dominant in relation to the prevailing lower roofscape along and at the corner of Colster Close. It would appear discordant in the context of the prevailing character of single storey dwellings.
9. The appellant drew my attention to photographs of two-storey detached properties within the wider area, without reference to any address or further details to enable me to compare them with the proposal before me. However, these appeared to demonstrate different contexts to that before me in terms of the development pattern, and more subordinate extensions or more modest rear dormers.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would conflict with Policy D1 of the Barnsley Local Plan 2019 which seeks to ensure, among other things, that development is of a high quality and respects local character and distinctiveness. It also conflicts with the SPD, which sets out design principles to maintain the character of an area and the street scene. The proposal would also conflict with paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to ensure high quality development that is sympathetic to local character. Furthermore, paragraph 134 requires that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes.

Other Matters

11. The appellant refers to a previous scheme dismissed at appeal¹. I accept that the proposal before me has been modified in response to the dismissal. I am further directed to a supporting comment from a neighbour and the absence of any objections. These matters do not form a reason to allow an unacceptable proposal.

¹ Appeal Ref: APP/R4408/D/22/3292715

12. The appellant draws my attention to the direction of national planning policy in supporting the extension and alteration of existing dwellings to meet homeowner's requirements. While changes to the scope of permitted development rights may support this claim, such rights are not unfettered, and the proposal before me is not advanced in such terms.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given, I conclude that the development conflicts with the development plan, read as a whole. No material considerations have been shown to carry sufficient weight to warrant a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

J Moore

INSPECTOR