

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 March 2023

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/P1045/D/22/3313584

2 Ashtree Close, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3SJ

- 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 Simon Clifford against the decision of Derbyshire Dales District Council.
 - The application Ref 22/01133/FUL, dated 30 September 2022, was refused by notice dated 25 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is a dormer loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of the proposed development set out above is taken from the application form. The Council's description on its decision notice is slightly more detailed in referring to "installation of five dormer windows – two on the front and three on the back."

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two storey detached dwelling located in a prominent position towards the end of a cul-de-sac. The dwelling is set close to the pavement behind a rail fence and narrow area of planting and has a driveway and garage to the side and garden to the rear.
 5. The appeal property is located on a modern housing estate, characterised in this area by the presence of largely detached two storey dwellings with small frontages to the street, separate garages at the end of short driveways and small gardens to the rear.
 6. During my site visit, I observed the housing estate to be relatively densely developed, such that the front elevations of dwellings appear prominently. I also noted that the common use of materials and limited range of house-types results in a very strong sense of uniformity.
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7. Further to the above, I noted during my site visit that, in the area around the appeal property, the roofscape appears very simple – with no incursions into the roof line from dormer windows. This adds significantly to the area’s sense of uniformity.
8. The proposed development would introduce dormer windows to the front and rear slopes of the appeal property’s roof. The two proposed dormers to the front would appear out of character with the dwelling’s surroundings and would severely disrupt the area’s identified sense of uniformity.
9. The harm arising from this would be exacerbated as a result of the prominent position of the dwelling, towards the end of a cul-de-sac, whereby the incongruous appearance of the proposed front dormers would be widely visible in their surroundings.
10. Further to the above, I find that the introduction of three dormers to the rear of the dwelling would result in the roof of the dwelling appearing unduly cluttered. This would appear in stark contrast to the simple, unbroken form of the roofscape in this area.
11. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the development would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and to Local Plan¹ Policies PD1, PD2 and HC10, which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Other Matters

12. The Council’s officer’s report refers to harm to the setting of an unlisted but historic farmstead. However, the presence of a large, prominent, modern and densely developed housing estate to two sides of the farmstead already has a significant impact on its setting. The addition of dormers to one of the dwellings on the estate would not result in such additional harm to the setting of this historic farmstead as to, in itself, be so significant as justify dismissal of this appeal.
13. However, I have found above that the proposal would result in significant harm the character and appearance of the area and hence the decision below.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR

¹ Reference: Derbyshire Dales Local Plan (2017).