
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 July 2023

by Michael J Muston BA(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th July 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/D/23/3321051

10 Bell View, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL4 0SQ

- 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 and Mrs R Beattie against the decision of St Albans City and District Council.
 - The application Ref 5/22/2897, dated 19 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 22 March 2023.
 - The development proposed is the raising of existing ridge and rear eaves to facilitate a loft conversion with rear dormer, and insertion of three rooflights to front roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a mid-terraced house in a residential area comprising two storey dwellings, including terraced and detached properties. No 10 is set further forward than its neighbours on either side, with the result that the ridge of its roof is also set further forward. The proposal involves raising the height of the ridge, slightly increasing the pitch of the front element of the roof and erecting a flat-roofed dormer window in the resulting raised rear roof slope.
4. The rear elevations above ground floor level of Nos 9 and 10 are prominent within the street scene when approaching the appeal site along Bell View from the west. Flat roofed dormer windows are not currently a noticeable feature of the estate, when viewed from the street. The appellants have drawn my attention to an existing large dormer window on the rear elevation of No 7 Bell View, which I was able to see on my site visit. This dormer window is primarily visible from the car park to the north of the terrace containing the appeal site. It is prominent from this car park, but not so from Bell View itself, from where only glimpses of its side elevation are possible.
5. I consider that the proposed dormer window would appear unduly dominant within the street scene when seen from Bell View in front of Nos 6,7 and 8, and would harm the character of the estate. I do not consider that the existence of the dormer window at No 7, probably erected under permitted development

rights, provides justification for development that would harm the character and appearance of the area.

6. The appellants have also cited the existence of a dormer window in the front elevation of No 8. However, this is a small dormer with a pitched roof, which appears to be part of the original dwelling and is in keeping with the overall character of the estate, in way that the appeal proposal is not.
7. The Council is also concerned about the cumulative impact of similar roof extensions and dormer windows resulting in greater harm to the character and appearance of the area. However, if each of these prospective proposals were acceptable in their own right, there would be no harm in permitting a number of them. Each case must be considered on its own merits and, for the avoidance of doubt, it is the harm that would be caused by the appeal proposal alone that I consider would be unacceptable, rather than any cumulative impact.
8. I agree with the Council that, whilst the alterations to the roof height and pitch are not in themselves unacceptable, the addition of the proposed dormer window in a position that would be prominent within the street scene is. I accordingly conclude that the development would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policies 69 and 72 of the St Albans District Local Plan Review 1994. These policies seek, amongst other things, development that takes into account the scale and character of its surroundings.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Michael J Muston

INSPECTOR