

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 January 2024

by P Eggleton BSc(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 February 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/D/23/3334952

9 Sheldrake Close, Coventry CV3 2SL

- 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 M Wass against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref PL/2023/0001762/HHA, dated 10 August 2023, was refused by notice dated 13 October 2023
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with dormer to rear, Velux to front and internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The council's concerns relate to the rear dormer. This would be a large box style dormer that would dominate the rear roof slope and would fail to reflect the size and detailing of the windows below it. It would be out of keeping with the design of the house and would represent poor design. Although there would be some screening by trees and the property is set away from Skipworth Road, beyond its neighbour, it would nevertheless be evident in a number of views from that road and Claybrookes Lane.
 4. It would represent poor design and given that it would be visible from public vantage points, it would detract from the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with the design aspirations of policy DE1 of the Coventry City Council Local Plan 2016 which requires that developments respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of an area. The *National Planning Policy Framework* 2023 is clear that development that is not well designed should be refused.
 5. The proposal would conflict with one of the main principles of the Supplementary Planning Document: Householder Design Guide 2023 which is that extensions will usually be expected to respect the form, scale, architectural style, and materials of the original building. Paragraph 4.19 advises that dormers should not dominate the roof slope or existing building
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and should be the same size or preferably smaller than the windows below and occupy no more than half the width or depth of the roof slope. Principle 6 advises that dormer window extensions on rear facing roof slopes should be of a proportionate scale and subservient to the main roof and should complement the architectural style of the host property. The proposal is clearly at odds with this guidance.

6. The guidance does appear to offer conflicting advice with Figure 7 showing a dormer in red, of greater proportions than described above that does dominate a roof. Its purpose is to set position parameters for the distance dormers should be set from the edges of the roof and these are met by this proposal. At the same time, the other Figure 7 images advocate small window sized dormers and discourage wide box style dormers. Whilst the advice is somewhat conflicted, the guidance overall does not support the size of dormer within the current proposal.
7. Reference has been made to other similar developments in the area. Generally, there are very few such additions that are prominent or even evident, particularly from through roads. The council refers to a refused application and dismissed appeal at 18 Kings Park Drive. Of the dormers referred to by the appellant, the two in Camville and the one in Middlefield are not as publicly prominent, particularly from a through road. In any event, it is not clear that they benefited from or needed planning permission. The roof structure at 9 Hargrave Close is a prominent addition but the council advise that it was not the subject of a planning application but was considered to be lawful in 2017. It is not therefore evident that the council has acted inconsistently in its approach to such structures. As this proposal needs planning permission, it must be considered on its own merits. The other examples do not suggest that this proposal would do anything other than detract from the character and appearance of the area.
8. I have had regard to the benefits that would result from both the construction of the dormer and the use of the new accommodation. I also note the lack of objection from neighbouring residents. Whilst these are matters that weigh in favour of allowing alterations to the property, they are not sufficient to outweigh my concerns. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

Peter Eggleton

INSPECTOR