



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2024

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14.02.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/N4205/D/23/3332561

9 Lichfield Close, Farnworth, Bolton BL4 0NH

- 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 U Ishaq against the decision of Bolton Council.
 - The application 16517/23, dated 31 July 2023, was refused by notice dated 25 September 2023.
 - The development proposed is proposed dormer and garage conversion to front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed dormer on the character and appearance of the host bungalow and local area.

Reasons

3. No.9 Lichfield Close (No.9) is a semi-detached bungalow, with rear dormer, located on the north side of Lichfield Close, a residential cul-de-sac. It is proposed to construct a dormer to the front roofslope of No.9 to accommodate 2no. additional bedrooms at first floor.
4. The guidance in the Council's *Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions (2012)* (SPD) is that, in design terms, the scale of a proposed dormer should always be a subordinate feature within the roof plane and windows should line up with the windows of the existing building below. Further, they should not normally occupy more than one quarter of the roof plane which faces the highway or which is otherwise prominent in the wider streetscene.
5. The proposed dormer would project above the ridgeline of the existing roof of No.9, continuing the existing flat roof dormer observed to the rear. Whilst it would be set-up from the eaves of the roof and in from its sides, the dormer would nonetheless extend much of the width of the bungalow occupying well over one quarter of the roof plane and all but consuming the existing roof. Because of its scale and the low eaves of its host, the proposed dormer would appear unduly 'top heavy' and, rather than appearing subordinate, would appear an unsympathetic and incongruous addition. Further, the proposed windows of the dormer would be set right under the fascia of the flat roof and

would not align with the windows below, further unbalancing the composition of No.9. There would, therefore, be a clear conflict with the SPD guidance.

6. I observed on my site visit that the row of bungalows on the north side of Lichfield Close are uniform in their style and appearance, characterised by a deep plan form with shallow pitched roof and low eaves height. The proposed dormer would be unduly prominent within this streetscene, with the large cheeks very visible when travelling in either direction along Lichfield Close. It would result in a disproportionate addition that would be out of scale with the neighbouring row of bungalows, and would unbalance the symmetry with its semi-detached pair.
7. I acknowledge that there are front dormers to those dwellings on the south side of Lichfield Close, but these are quite different in character and appearance to the bungalows on the north side. They have a much steeper pitch to the roof, higher eaves and were designed as chalet bungalows, so with front dormers set well off the ridgeline of the roof, and this pattern of planned development is characteristic of both Lichfield Close and Colchester Drive. I do not find that these properties lend any support to the proposal now before me, which would be viewed principally within the context of the row of bungalows it forms part.
8. I therefore conclude on the main issue that the proposed dormer would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host bungalow and local area. Consequently, the proposal conflicts with the principles of good design in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework and policies CG3 and RA2 of Bolton's Core Strategy (2011) because it fails to be sympathetic to, or conserve, local distinctiveness or have regard to overall built character.

Conclusion

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

R. Jones

INSPECTOR