



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 May 2024

by Sarah Colebourne MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4625/D/24/3338043

100 Monastery Drive, Olton, Solihull, B91 1DP

- 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 Valerie Barlow against the decision of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref PL/2023/01704/MINFHO, dated 10 August 2023, was refused by notice dated 9 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is the reduction of dormer width to reinstate the roof profile and change of material from render to tiles.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the reduction of dormer width to reinstate the roof profile and change of material from render to tiles at 100 Monastery Drive, Olton, Solihull, B91 1DP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref PL/2023/01704/MINFHO, dated 10 August 2023, subject to the following conditions:-
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 553-6 Rev ZE and 553-4 Rev ZE.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the dormer hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing main roof of the building.
 - 3) The amendments to the dormer window hereby permitted shall be carried out within 3 months of this decision.

Reasons

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the street scene. The appeal dwelling is the first house on the eastern side of this long, suburban road of mostly detached two storey houses and bungalows. Most of the dwellings in this section of the road have been built in the post-war period and have a modern rather than traditional character.
3. The appeal dwelling has been previously extended and remodelled and has a contemporary appearance with a white rendered exterior and a dark grey roof. Permission was granted under ref PL/2021/00163/MINFHO for two storey front and rear extensions in 2021. Following that, another application ref PL/2021/02961/MINFHO sought permission for various extensions and alterations to the existing property, including the retention of a dormer window

to the rear. That was refused in its entirety on the grounds of the harm caused by the rear dormer to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the street scene. A subsequent appeal was in the main allowed and a split decision was issued but the retention of the dormer window was dismissed due to its height, scale and design. The current proposal now seeks to retain the unauthorised dormer window but in an amended form that includes changes to its size, position within the roof plane, palette of materials and appearance.

4. I agree with the Council's Planning Officer that whilst the Inspector for that appeal in their decision expressed concerns relating to the height, scale and design of the dormer, they did not state any objection to it in principle. I noted at my visit that from the rear garden of the appeal site there is a very clear view of another flat roof dormer of a similar width at 45 Grange Road and whilst I am unaware of the planning status of that dormer, it sits comfortably within the roof slope and is not unduly dominant.
5. Whilst the height of the dormer would remain unchanged under this proposal, the significant reduction proposed in width to approximately half that of the overall width of the dwelling would make it proportionate in scale to the dwelling. The outside edge of the dormer window would be set in from the gable end of the property by 0.6m. Together with the change of materials from the current white render to dark grey matching roof tiles, this would ensure that it would sit comfortably within the roof slope and it would be seen as a separate structure and not as another floor. That would overcome the previous Inspector's concern that *'being constructed to the outer wall it has the appearance of another floor rather than an extension into the loft space'*.
6. Although the dormer would be seen in private views from the rear of some of the surrounding properties, those to the rear on Greswolde Road are partially screened by mature planting within the appeal site and their own gardens which together with the distance in excess of 21m would mean that the proposal would not be unduly dominant. Those properties on Grange Road that adjoin the side boundary of the appeal site would have a clearer view of the dormer but given their generous gardens and the distance of more than 21m it would not be overly dominant when seen from there either. To the south of the appeal site, the windows and patios of the adjoining property and others face directly east and the dormer would be outside a line of 45° taken from there and therefore visually acceptable.
7. The very small gap between the appeal dwelling and its adjoining neighbour at 98 Monastery Drive, together with the substantial set in from the southern gable end, would mean that the dormer would not be seen in public views from the street scene south of the appeal site. From the junction of Grange Road and Monastery Drive and from gaps between dwellings on the former, it would still be seen but would be acceptable due to its siting away from the northern gable end, the change in materials and the distance.
8. I am satisfied, therefore, that the proposed changes to the existing unauthorised dormer would address the concerns of the previous Inspector and would make it acceptable within its context. The proposal would not result in significant harm to the character or appearance of the dwelling or the street scene and would, therefore, accord with development plan policy 15 of the Solihull Local Plan that requires that development proposals achieve good

quality design and that their scale, massing and materials respect the surrounding environment.

Other matters

9. The Council has not raised any objection to the proposal in terms of its effect on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and from what I have seen and for the reasons given above, I am satisfied that it would be acceptable in that regard.

Conditions

10. A condition is necessary requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, in order to provide certainty. Conditions requiring matching external materials of the dormer to the existing main roof and that the proposed changes to the existing dormer are carried out within 3 months of this decision are necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposed development accords with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that. The appeal should be allowed.

Sarah Colebourne

Inspector