
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 July 2024

by P Eggleton BSc(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/D/24/3343858

4 Trinity Street, Agbrigg, Wakefield WF1 5BS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Sughra Ashraf against the decision of Wakefield Council.
 - The application reference is 23/02133/FUL.
 - The development proposed is front and rear dormers.
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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 property forms a mid-terrace house in a terrace of four. All four properties have been altered at the front with the eaves having been removed and the front wall extended to almost the full height of the original main ridge. This has resulted in a unified feature across the entire terrace which has been clad in contrasting grey panelling. To the rear, three of the properties have had similar works, with the end property retaining a historic smaller dormer which is set back from the eaves. The works, although substantially carried out, are not complete. The application and appeal relate only to one property. My understanding is that the similar works, to the other properties, do not have consent and prior to these works, only the retained smaller dormer was in place.
 4. The appellant advises that the four houses are owned and occupied by the same family and the works have been designed to suit the needs of that family. The combining of the houses does not form part of the application or appeal and as such, only the works associated with the dormer structures, for the single dwelling, have been considered.
 5. Although there are numerous more modern interventions in the vicinity and the sports stadium is a dominant feature, the area is characterised by brick built, traditional terraces with simple, pitched, tiled roofs. Although there are properties with dormer roof extensions, these are not generally prominent,
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generally being to the rear. There are however some frontage dormers including a property opposite. The dormers are not however so prevalent that the character of the area has materially changed.

6. The works carried out so far have destroyed the original character of the dwelling. None of its original roof form has been retained. The front and rear full width, full height dormers effectively result in a near flat roof above a new second floor, faced in contrasting materials. The new roof structure is a prominent and entirely discordant feature. The materials used ensure that it is extremely prominent, emphasising its particularly poor form and appearance.
7. The window detailing also ensures that the structure appears as an alien feature that has no regard for the detailing of the house below. The eaves could be replaced to break up the appearance of the frontage and provide some separation from the original brickwork; and finishing the structure would help to reduce its impact. However, on its own and in combination with the works to each side, the additions to the front and rear represent extremely poor design that detracts from the character and appearance of the area.
8. The works conflict with policies SP1, SP23(1b), LP56(c) and LP57(d) of the Wakefield District Local Plan 2036 (2024) as the design shortcomings would not result in high quality and sustainable development; would detract from local distinctiveness; and would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area.
9. The Wakefield District Residential Design Guide: Supplementary Planning Document 2018 provides clear guidance with regard to dormers. It sets out that front dormer windows on unbroken terraced roof slopes will not usually be acceptable. Dormers should reflect the style and materiality of the existing house and re-use existing materials from the roof where possible. It sets out that dormers should be detailed to reflect the roof and gutter details of the main roof; should not take up more than one third of the roof area at the front of the house; should be set down and in from the edges of the roof; and be positioned well in relation to windows on lower levels. The proposal is entirely at odds with these design aspirations. The National Planning Policy Framework 2023 is clear that development that is not well designed should be refused.
10. The council has raised concerns with regard to parking. The property has no parking at present and the council consider that the additional two bedrooms would increase parking demand. Although there does appear to be parking stress, no evidence in this regard has been provided by either party. Given my findings with regard to the design and scale of the proposed roof structure, this is not a matter on which my decision would turn.
11. Although the appeal statement hints at the requirements of the family that currently occupy these dwellings, it is not clear what the needs of the family are. Whilst it is self-evident that the works result in larger and improved accommodation for future occupiers, I am not satisfied that there are any matters sufficient to outweigh my concerns. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

Peter Eggleton

INSPECTOR