



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 September 2024

by **P D Sedgwick BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/24/3346680

40 Runswick Road, Brislington, Bristol City, Bristol, BS4 3HY

- 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 Mr and Mrs Richard Mackriell against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/02358/H.
 - The development proposed is Construction of dormer window to front elevation to Runswick Road.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. At the time of my site visit, I saw that the development of the dormer window was complete. I also note that the application has been submitted retrospectively. I have dealt with the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is the end house in a terrace of three houses. It shares the same design as other houses in this section of Runswick Road, between Nos 36 and 68. One of the key components that contributes to their character and appearance is their 2 storey front projecting bays which have gabled pitched roofs which extend from halfway down the main roof plane. This lends a uniformity and rhythm to the roofscape which makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the street scene, as noted by a previous Inspector in an appeal decision¹ relating to the appeal property.
5. Other houses within the group have rooflights but none have front dormer windows and I note that the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions' (2005) (SPD) advises that for dormer

¹ Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/21/3274746

windows to be acceptable they should only be located on the side and rear roof pitches. The pitched roof dormer sits above the projecting bay roof, joining the main roof at ridge height. Although to some extent it is hidden from view when approaching the house from the south, it is visible from the north and front where it appears out of character with other houses and interrupts the rhythm of the roofscape that I have identified as an important element of the street scene. The difference in height and angle of the pitched roof from that of the front projection adds to the dormer's incongruous appearance.

6. Overall, I conclude that the development harms both the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area and thus conflicts with Policy BCS21 of the Core Strategy (2011), Policies DM26, DM27 and DM30 of the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2014) and the SPD which require high quality design that contributes positively to an area's character and responds appropriately to buildings' skylines and roofscapes.

Other Matters

7. The appellant has provided examples of dormers elsewhere within Bristol and along Runswick Road. In most examples the dormers are set down from the main roof ridge and have roof pitches that match that of other gabled sections of roof and are less incongruous than the appeal development. No 29, immediately opposite the appeal property, is a large corner house that has a different design to others within the street and is not therefore one of a group of unaltered houses such as the host property, and thus the impact of its dormer window is not comparable to the appeal development. In any case, I have come to my own view regarding the development rather than relying on the approach the Council may have taken elsewhere.
8. The appellant has suggested that the dormer is less visually intrusive than permitted development such as rooflights. However, those rooflights that I saw close to the appeal site were less conspicuous than the appeal development. In any case, no alternative scheme has been provided to me demonstrating that it would be less harmful than the development and as such I accord any potential fall-back position limited weight.
9. I note the appellant's concerns over the time it took to determine the application and a lack of dialogue with the Council during the application process. However, procedural issues such as this must remain a matter between the main parties.

Conclusion

10. I have considered all other matters raised in support of the appeal, including the absence of public representations. However, for the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

P D Sedgwick

INSPECTOR