



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 October 2024

by Rebecca McAndrew, BA Hons, MSc, PG Dip Urban Design, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3115/D/24/3345867

60 Westfield Road, Benson, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 6NL

- 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 V Kempster against the decision of South Oxfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is P23/S3973/HH.
 - The development proposed is a front dormer roof extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. Taken together, Policies DES1, DES2 and H20 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011-2035 (2020) (LP), Policy NP7 of the Benson Parish Neighbourhood Plan (2022) (NP) and Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the framework') seek to secure high quality design which respects the host dwelling and enhances the local area.
4. The South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of the White Horse District Council Joint Design Guide Supplementary Planning Guidance (2022) (SPG) recommends that dormer windows should sit well below the ridge line and that 'Single, large flat roofed, box dormers must be avoided' (paragraphs 5.52 and 5.53).
5. The appellant's home sits in a prominent position close to the entrance to Westfield Road from the B4009. This part of Westfield Road is characterised by a mixture of modest detached and semi-detached bungalows which have unaltered front roof planes.
6. The proposal would introduce an overly large dormer roof extension to the front elevation of the appellant's home. It would span almost the full width of the existing roof plane and would not be set down below the ridge line. As such, the structure would occupy a large proportion of the roof plane and would unacceptably dominate the host property. It would be at odds with, and unduly harm, the character and appearance of the dwelling, imbalance this pair

of semi-detached bungalows and appear overly prominent within the street scene.

7. I recognise that the current scheme has been submitted in an attempt to overcome the reasons for refusal of a previous planning application. The proposed dormer roof extension has been reduced in width and depth from the previous scheme and would now include a very shallow pitch roof and a recessed section between the two windows. However, these amendments do little to reduce the overall bulk and mass of the proposed dormer roof extension. As such, the proposal would fail to be high quality design which respects the host dwelling and enhances the local area.
8. In conclusion, the proposed dormer roof extension would unduly harm the character and appearance of the appeal site and street scene. It would therefore fail to meet the requirements of LP Policies DES1, DES2 and H20, NP Policy NP7, the principles of the SPG and Paragraph 130 of the framework.

Other Matters

9. I have considered a number of matters raised by the appellant in support of the proposal. I note that the existing dwelling suffers from damp and mould. However, I am satisfied that addressing this problem is not dependent on the construction of the proposed dormer roof extension. I therefore attach limited weight to this in considering the appeal.
10. I also recognise the appellant's aspiration to undertake works to the property to secure a family home. However, this would not outweigh the harm that I have identified to the character and appearance of the dwelling and area.
11. I have considered several examples of dormer roof extensions in the area cited by the appellant. I acknowledge that the dormer extensions to the front of Nos 58 and 60 Blacklands Road are similar in appearance and scale to the appeal proposal. However, the site circumstances of those examples appear to vary from the appeal proposal as, given that they are adjoining semi-detached properties, the dormers do not imbalance them. Also, they are set away from the entrance to the residential area from the B4009.
12. The other roof extensions referred to include a range of flat roof, gable and hipped dormers. These are mostly smaller than the appeal proposal and generally set down from the existing ridge height. These examples sit more comfortably in the context of the host properties than the appeal scheme would.
13. I have very limited information before me regarding the planning history of the dormers referred to, but their site circumstances all appear to differ from the appeal proposal. Also, each proposal must be considered on its own merit. Consequently, I attach limited weight to these examples in making my decision.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, and having taken all the matters raised into account, I conclude the appeal should be refused.

Rebecca McAndrew

INSPECTOR