



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 October 2024

by K Mansell BA (Hons) MPhil TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/D/24/3348168

6/8 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 Ref is 23/02044/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as 'dormer extension'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. On my site visit I saw that the construction of the dormer extension, comprising front and rear dormers, had commenced. I also observed that what has presently been built differs somewhat from that indicated on the plans, not least in terms of the fenestration pattern to the rear elevation, the roof profile, as well as the way the dormer extensions have been constructed directly from the eaves. Accordingly, whilst taking note of what has been built, for the avoidance of doubt, I have determined this appeal based on the plans that have been submitted.
3. The appellant has advised that the appeal properties at Nos 6 and 8 Trinity Street have previously been converted into one house. For the purposes of this appeal, Nos 6 and 8 are therefore referred to in the singular as a dwelling or property.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site at 6 and 8 Trinity Street respectively comprise the middle and end properties of a small red brick two-storey Victorian terrace, along with Nos 2 and 4. It is similar to most of the other properties on the street in terms of scale, materials, height, form, and roof pitch. During my site visit, I saw that the terraced properties on Trinity Street predominantly have a regular rhythm of chimneys, an otherwise continuous roof plain, and, with the occasional exception, no dormer windows. As a result, the houses have a traditional and reasonably uniform character visible from the highway. The appeal proposal would introduce a continuous flat roof dormer extension to its front and rear elevations.

6. The Council's Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document: Part 2 (2018) (RDG SPD) provides specific advice on designing dormer windows. Amongst other matters, it advises that rear flat roof dormer windows should be set in from the sides. In this case, the rear dormer would occupy the full extent of the roof plane across both Nos 6 and 8. It would also be constructed in grey UPVC cladding. Whilst this material would be distinctive, I am not persuaded that it would be innovative, and it would visibly contrast with the dwelling's original brickwork. The combined effect would be a bulky and visually obtrusive addition to the rear elevation that would be unsympathetic to the host property.
7. The RDG SPD similarly advises that dormers to the front should be set in from the sides of the roof and not take up more than one third of the roof area. However, in this case, the dormer would extend across the entire front roof plane of Nos 6 and 8. It would consequently add significant bulk and massing to the front elevation and dominate the original roof. It would be neither subordinate or sympathetic to the scale and form of the original building and therefore appear as a disproportionate and overbearing extension to the host dwelling that would significantly alter its character and appearance.
8. The dormer extensions would also be prominent from the surrounding area. Even if Trinity Street is not a through route for vehicles, the front dormer would be visible to neighbouring occupiers. Additionally, both front and rear dormers would be evident to pedestrians, including those that I observed on my site visit using the path adjacent to No 8 that connects to Oakenshaw Street to the rear. As a result of the scale and design of the appeal scheme, as well as their construction in a contrasting material, they would consequently be a highly visible and incongruous addition that would be to the detriment of the wider street scene.
9. I recognise that there are instances of dormer windows along Trinity Street to both the front and rear, including to Nos 2, 4, 5, 73 and 75. I have nothing before me to demonstrate whether or not they benefit from planning permission. Nor can I be certain as to the detailed considerations that applied in those cases. Furthermore, whilst the nearby football stadium, including the grey clad hospitality suites, represents a large and reasonably imposing feature within the street scene, it is not a domestic property such that it is not comparable to a dormer extension. Accordingly, these examples have not altered my overall decision.
10. For these reasons, I find that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with Policies LP56 and LP57 of the Wakefield District Local Plan 2036 (2024). These policies seek, amongst other matters, to promote high quality design that makes a positive contribution to the surroundings and to ensure that residential extensions specifically respect the character and scale of the host dwelling. It would further conflict with advice on designing dormer extensions within the RDG SPD and general guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework, which promotes the importance of good design. In its reason for refusal, the Council has also cited the Street Design Guide (SDG) without making reference to any specific section. From my observations, this guide relates to the design of the highway in the broadest sense. As such, I do not find it relevant to the determining issues within this case.

Other Matters

11. I appreciate the situation that led to the original construction of the appeal scheme. I am also sympathetic to the accommodation needs of the appellant's extended family. I recognise that the dormer extensions would provide additional bedrooms and play/rest space to cater for the different family relationships. However, such personal circumstances do not, in my view, outweigh the harm that I have identified previously.
12. I acknowledge that the appeal scheme received support from the community, including local Councillors. However, these are not matters that would affect the harm that I have identified above and accordingly, they do not alter my findings.

Conclusion

13. The appeal proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole, and there are no material considerations that would indicate a decision otherwise would be appropriate. For the reasons given above, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Mansell

INSPECTOR