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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 November 2024

**by David Reed BSc DipTP DMS MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government**

**Decision date: 6<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/D3830/D/24/3353287**  
**93 Valebridge Road, Burgess Hill, RH15 0RR**

- 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 Mrs Fiby George against the decision of Mid Sussex District Council.
  - The application Ref DM/24/1758, dated 18 July 2024, was refused by notice dated 10 September 2024.
  - The development proposed is two front dormers.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and permission is granted for two front dormers at 93 Valebridge Road, Burgess Hill RH15 0RR, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DM/24/1758, dated 18 July 2024, subject to the following condition:

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Retrospective application of front facing dormers: Existing Layout, Elevations Existing, Elevations Proposed & Proposed Layout, Location Plan, Block Plan.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the dormers on the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene.

## Reasons

3. The proposal is for retrospective permission for two dormers on the front facing roof slope of No 93, a chalet bungalow on the western side of Valebridge Road, a long straight road lined on both sides by a wide variety of bungalows and houses set back behind front gardens. The bungalow, previously pyramidal roofed, has recently been remodelled with a loft conversion including two front dormers, but the latter do not comply with the approved plans<sup>1</sup>. The current application seeks permission for the dormers as built.
4. The dormers as built are no wider but somewhat taller and deeper than shown on the approved plans and this gives them an elongated appearance on the roof slope. In addition, the only limited set back from the front elevation eaves increases their relative bulk and prominence in the street scene compared to the approved design. However, the dormers do not breach the ridgeline nor

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<sup>1</sup> Planning permission Ref. DM/23/2793

eavesline of the property, are not excessively wide and allow a large proportion of the roof slope to remain visible. In these respects the dormers comply with the Council's design guide. The height and bulk of the dormers are slightly out of scale with the proportions of the dwelling and its roof but not so excessively as to warrant refusal.

5. Many of the properties in the vicinity have dormers on their roof slopes and these display much variety. Whilst most are smaller than those on No 93, some also having hipped roofs, they display a variety of designs and are sited on a wide range of roof and dwelling types. These include double and single dormers on semi-detached bungalows (eg Nos 89, 83, 67), wider single and double dormers on large detached bungalows (eg Nos 84 & 88) and multiple side facing dormers on a large bungalow (No 80). Most comparable to No 93 are the four elongated dormers on the large, detached chalet bungalow Green Hedges on the corner of Theobalds Road, although this property is at right angles to Valebridge Road and not seen in views along that road.
6. This well-established residential area displays a great variety of dwelling types that have been extended and altered incrementally over the years with an inconsistent approach to dormers. The result is a distinct lack of uniformity, indeed the complexity of building forms is now a characteristic of the area. In this context, whilst the dormers on No 93 do have different proportions to most in the vicinity and would appear slightly more prominent, they are not unduly discordant or out of place given the eclectic nature of the area. Their impact on the appearance of the host property, whilst slightly idiosyncratic, is similarly unobjectionable given the prevalence of unique properties nearby.
7. In addition, unlike the approved dormers, the two front facing dormers do not quite align with the ground floor windows below, being set slightly closer together. This gives the front elevation a slightly 'cross-eyed' appearance from the other side of the road and conflicts with the Council's design guide that the position of dormers should respond to existing windows. However, this slight oddity is only apparent on close observation and is only likely to be spotted by a small number of passers-by, if any.

## **Conclusion**

8. For these reasons the dormers do not unduly affect the character and appearance of the host property or the street scene and comply with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2018. This requires alterations and extensions to existing buildings to be well designed, to reflect the distinctive character of the area and to address the character and scale of surrounding buildings.
9. As the dormers have already been built, only one condition is necessary, to define the approved plans in the interests of certainty.
10. The dormers comprise an acceptable design that complies with the relevant policy of the development plan having regard to the Council's design guide. The appeal should therefore be allowed.

*David Reed*

INSPECTOR