
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 July 2014

by **David Fitzsimon MRTPI**

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

Decision date: 9 July 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/D/14/2219598

5 The Crescent, Dunsop Bridge, Lancs BB7 3BA

- 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 Mr Gil Hughes against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 3/2014/0124, dated 10 January 2014, was refused by notice dated 25 March 2014.
 - The development proposed is an extension to side of dwelling, conservatory to rear and 2 no. rooflights.
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Procedural Matter

1. In reaching my decision, I have taken into account the Planning Practice Guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 6 March 2014.

Decision

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposed two storey extension on the character and appearance of the street scene and the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, along with the effect of the proposed conservatory on the privacy of neighbours.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal relates to a semi-detached property. It sits within a crescent containing three similar pairs of semi-detached houses along with a pair of timber clad semi-detached dormer bungalows. The pairs of dwellings are set spaciouly apart and this is a noticeable element which contributes positively to the overall character and appearance of The Crescent, which sits within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
 5. The proposal seeks to replace a modest single storey structure at the side of the appeal dwelling which accommodates a utility with a much larger two storey
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extension spanning its full depth and sitting flush with the main front elevation. The adjacent dwelling, No. 4 The Crescent, has a similar two storey extension to its side. As a result, the gap between the two houses, particularly at first floor level, would be dramatically reduced if the proposed extension was built. Although the extension would be finished in appropriate external materials and detailing, the effect would harmfully degrade the overall spacious arrangement of the dwellings within The Crescent and detract from its setting within the AONB.

6. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed two storey side extension would harm the spacious character and appearance of the street scene and its setting within the AONB. In such terms, it conflicts with saved policies G1, ENV1 and H10 of the adopted Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan (LP) and policies DMG1, EN2 and DMH5 of the Council's emerging Core Strategy (CS) which are broadly consistent in this regard, along with the aims of the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance titled '*Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings*' (SPG).

Privacy

7. The proposal includes a conservatory which would sit directly at the back of the two storey extension, projecting into the rear garden of the appeal property. The submitted plans show that it would have clear glazed sides above a dwarf wall and the Council considers that this would result in undue overlooking of the neighbouring gardens. The existing large shed of No. 4 The Crescent which sits along the common boundary would obscure views into the rear garden of this property whilst a tall hedge along the boundary with No. 6 would minimise views into this garden. In any event, the fitting of obscured glazing to the side panels of the conservatory or additional boundary screening would prevent any overlooking into these gardens, and the appellant has indicated that a condition to either effect would be satisfactory.
8. On this basis, I am satisfied that the conservatory need not lead to an unacceptable loss of privacy for neighbours and therefore need not conflict with saved policies G1 and H10 of the LP, policies DMG1 and DMH5 of the CS and the SPG in this respect.

Other considerations

9. As I have explained, No. 4 The Crescent has a similar extension to that which is the subject of this appeal. Whilst I can appreciate the appellant's frustration in this regard, a reasonable gap is currently retained between the properties and this would not be the case if this extension was duplicated. The appellant also refers to the two storey extension at No. 8 The Crescent, but this has been added to the open side of the house, which does not abut another dwelling. It is therefore not directly comparable. Whilst I note the presence of some rows of terraced properties within Dunsop Bridge, they have a different setting. In any event, I have considered the appeal proposal on its individual merits and against the specific context within which it would sit.
10. Finally, the appellant explains that the extension is required because he and his wife work from home and the family require more space in general, yet they cannot afford a larger property within the village. I sympathise with this

position and I note the family's contribution to village life, but it is problem faced by many families and it does not justify a harmful form of development.

Overall Conclusions

11. Although I find that the conservatory need not unduly compromise the privacy of neighbours, the proposed two storey extension would harm the character and appearance of the street scene and its setting within the AONB.
12. The arguments advanced by the appellant in favour of the proposal do not outweigh the harm identified and therefore the appeal does not succeed.

David Fitzsimon

INSPECTOR