
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 August 2016

by Nigel Harrison BA (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 30 August 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/D/16/3153583

22 St Peters Close, Clayton-le-Dale, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 9HH

- 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 P Chesterton against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 3/2016/0178 dated 12 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is a lounge, kitchen and bathroom extension (including room in roof space and side dormer) and detached 2-car garage.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a lounge, kitchen and bathroom extension (including room in roof space and side dormer) and detached 2-car garage at 22 St Peters Close, Clayton-le-Dale, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 9HH in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: 3/2016/0178 dated 12 February 2016, subject to the following conditions.
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Building Regulations Plan/Proposed Plan (unnumbered); Garage Details (unnumbered) received by the Council on 22 March 2016; and Proposed Site Plan (unnumbered) received by the Council on 22 March 2016.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Background and Main Issue

2. Planning permission has previously been granted for a side and rear extension identical in scale to that now proposed¹, although as built it differs from the approved plans in several respects. 1) The addition of a pitched roof dormer on the side-facing roof slope. This is 4.1m wide and in white UPVC. 2) The addition of two rooflights on the front elevation and one on the west elevation, a French window on the west elevation; and a Juliet balcony on the rear elevation. 3) A detached double garage to the rear. This too is substantially complete.
3. The Council has raised no objections to the garage and the additional roof lights, French window and Juliet balcony. It also has no overriding objections to the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbours. Based on my

¹ Ref: 3/2012/0658

own observations I find no reason to disagree, and consider the one main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed dormer window on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached bungalow on a corner plot. This section of St Peters Close comprises similar semi-detached hipped roof bungalows following a fairly uniform building line, although there are semi-detached dwellings at either end of the street. The area has a spacious open character, although to my mind it exhibits no strong prevailing character or especially local distinctiveness.
5. The *National Planning Policy Framework* requires local planning authorities to encourage high quality design. However, it also says policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes, should avoid unnecessary prescription of detail, and should concentrate on guiding the development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the area generally. Amongst other considerations, Policy DMG1 of the *Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008-2028* (CS) requires development to be of a high standard of design which considers the building in context, including the relationship to its surroundings. CS Policy DMH5 requires extensions to comply with Policy DMG1 and any relevant designations within which the site is located.
6. The Council says the dormer would be seen as a bulky and incongruous addition that would disrupt the unified pattern of hipped roofs and would unacceptably alter the roof of the host dwelling. Overall it says it would be visually incongruous and harmful to the character of the streetscene and area.
7. However, in the context of the surrounding area I consider it would not significantly undermine the architectural integrity of the host dwelling, and would respect the character of the area to which it relates. Although the dormer would unbalance the symmetry of the pair of houses at roof level, I do not consider this factor to be particularly harmful. The dormer is also set slightly below the main ridge and well above the eaves level, and this mitigating factor lessens its visual impact to a degree. Although I noticed no similar side or rear dormer extensions in close proximity, I consider this factor alone is insufficient to render the scheme unacceptable.
8. The Council says a precedent would be set for similar extensions of this type which would further compromise the appearance of the area. However, each application and appeal has to be assessed on its own merits, and given my conclusion regarding the effect of the proposal I do not consider that a harmful precedent would be set. Overall, I conclude that the proposed dormer window would harmonise with the design of the host dwelling and respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such, I find no conflict with CS Policies DMH5 and DMG1.
9. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council in the light of the advice in the *Government's Planning practice Guidance*. As the development is substantially complete, a time condition relating to the commencement of development is not necessary. However, a condition requiring matching materials is needed in the interests of the appearance of the area, and a condition to secure compliance with the submitted plans is needed for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

10. Therefore, for the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Nigel Harrison

INSPECTOR