

Statement of Case on behalf of Mr Thomas Howson



Appeal By:

Mr Thomas Howson against refusal of planning permission by Ribble Valley Borough Council for a 'proposed dormer to front and replacement front porch' at 20 Wellbrow Drive, Longridge, PR3 3TB.

Planning Inspectorate ref: Not known.

Ribble Valley Borough Council Planning Ref: 03/2021/0969.

Content:

1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	The Appeal Site and Surroundings	4
3.0	The Appeal Proposal	4
4.0	Relevant Planning History	5
5.0	Policy Context	5
6.0	Assessment of the Appeal Proposal	6
7.0	Conclusion	11

Appendix 1 Photos of existing front dormers within the locality.

Appendix 2 1 Springs Road front dormer approval (ref: 03-2007-0988).

Appendix 3 3 Springs Road front dormer approval (ref: 03-2006-0466).

Appendix 4 7 Wheatley Drive front porch and rear dormer extension approval (ref: 03-2014-0134).

Appendix 5 1 Bowland Close side garage and front dormer extension approval (03-2004-0629).

Appendix 6 2 Bowland Close front dormer extension approval (ref: 03-2020-0045).

Appendix 7 12 Bowland Close front dormer extension approval (ref: 03-2018-0242).

Appendix 8 Lynne, Green Lane Road side garage extension approval (ref: 03-2006-0303).

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Appeal Planning Statement (APS) represents the case of Mr Thomas Howson, herein after referred to as the appellant, against refusal of:

‘proposed dormer to front and replacement front porch’

by Ribble Valley Borough Council Planning Authority, herein after referred to as the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

1.2 As well as this APS, the appeal submission comprises the following documents:

- Planning Application form.
- Location Plan.
- Existing part ground floor plan drawing reference 21-1221-1
- Existing part first floor/ loft plan drawing reference 21-1221-2
- Proposed part ground floor plan drawing reference 21-1221-3.
- Proposed part first floor/ loft plan drawing reference 21-1221-4.
- Proposed roof plan drawing reference 21-1221-5.
- Existing & proposed front (north west facing) elevations drawing reference 21-1221-6.
- Existing & proposed side (south west facing) elevations drawing reference 21-1221-7.
- Existing & proposed side (north east facing) elevations drawing reference 21-1221-8.
- Proposed Site plan.

1.3 The planning application was submitted by the appellant on 23rd September 2021 and registered by the LPA on 6th October 2021.

1.4 The appeal proposal was subsequently refused by the LPA on 9th November 2021 for the following reason:

The proposed dormer is incongruous and conspicuous and has a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area because of its size, extent (across both property bays), location (close to ridge) and horizontal emphasis (contrary to the general design emphasis of the property). This is contrary to Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

2.0 The Appeal Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The appeal proposal relates to a modest semi-detached true bungalow which has a front facing north westerly aspect to Wellbrow Drive.
- 2.2 The appeal property has a rectangular footprint situated on a small linear plot. The dwelling has front and rear garden ground and drive way access from Wellbrow Drive that extends along the southern boundary of the appeal site. The property is constructed of brown brick set beneath a grey tiled roof, having a gabled pitched roof and chimney located on the front roof plane and a flat roof porch to the front elevation. A dormer exists to the rear roof plane. A low level brick boundary wall defines the front garden from the public footpath.
- 2.3 Other properties in the locality are of similar age and construction material, with a mix of single and 2 storey properties immediately adjacent and within the wider locality. Importantly, with regards to the appeal proposal, there are dwellings adjacent that have dormers located on their front roof planes. Existing front dormers within the locality are of no consistent design, having a variance of size, construction material and position on the roof plane.

3.0 The Appeal Proposal

- 3.1 The appeal proposal relates to the provision of a cat slide dormer to the front roof plane of the bungalow. The dormer is set back from the front elevation of the property to align with the chimney breast located on the shared boundary and set in from both side elevations of the roof plane. The dormer will be constructed of plain tile cladding to match the existing roof of the dwelling, with grey upvc windows.
- 3.2 A single storey pitched roof porch also formed part of the refused planning application, being proposed to the front elevation of the dwelling and constructed of brown brick to match the existing property with grey upvc windows and door. This element of works sought to replace an existing single storey flat roof porch.

4.0 Relevant Planning History

- 4.1 There are two planning applications relevant to the appeal proposal:

3/2017/0815 – new dormers to front and rear. Alterations to window and door openings to side and rear. Refused on 12th October 2017 for the following reason:

The proposal, by virtue of the design, scale, size and massing of the front dormer, would represent an incongruous and unsympathetic addition to the host dwelling and would unbalance the appearance of the pair of semi-detached properties to the detriment of the character and appearance of the properties and the street scene. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies DMG1 and DMH5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

3/2016/0629 – New dormers to front and rear. Alterations to window and door openings to side and rear. Refused on 11th November 2016 for the following reason:

The proposal, by reason of the design, scale, height and massing of the front dormer, would represent an incongruous and unsympathetic addition to the host dwelling and would unbalance the appearance of the pair of semi-detached properties to the detriment of the character and appearance of the properties and the street scene. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies DMG1 and DMH5 of the draft Core Strategy.

5.0 Policy Context

- 5.1 The statutory development plan for Ribble Valley Borough Council comprises the 'Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley (December 2014)'.
- 5.2 The appeal site is located within the urban area of Longridge and has no other specific allocation within the development plan. The following policy has been quoted by the LPA in the refusal reason and is therefore considered of relevance to the appeal assessment:

'Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley (December 2014) (CS):

Key Statement Policy DMG1 – General Considerations.

6.0 Assessment of the Appeal Proposal

- 6.1 The decision notice refers to a single reason for refusal, implicit to the design of the front dormer only. On this basis it is considered that the LPA has no objection to other elements of the proposal including front porch, or any technical matters of concern, including the effect on residential amenity and highway safety.
- 6.2 The reason for refusal relates to design of the extension, which the LPA considers would be incongruous and conspicuous, having a harmful impact on the character of the area due to its size, extent (across both property bays), location (close to ridge) and horizontal emphasis. Key Statement Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy (CS) is cited as the determining policy by the decision maker.
- 6.3 Policy DMG1 of the CS states that all new development must:
1. be of a high standard of building design,
 2. be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and materials.
 3. consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings. Particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and relationship to surroundings.

Policy DMG1 is a general design policy and is not specific to any particular development type.

- 6.4 The appellant strongly refutes the refusal reasoning given by the LPA and contends that the appeal proposal harmonises with the host dwelling and would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
- 6.5 As referred to above, there are a number of bungalows within the locality that have dormer extensions of various size and differing materiality, such dormers occupying both front and rear roof planes. Indeed, bungalows adjacent on Wellbrow Drive have small dormers that have a front facing aspect to the road. Larger dormers that occupy the majority width of the

front roof plane are evident on Springs Road, Wheatley Drive and Bowland Close. In addition, a property named 'Lynne' on Green Lane has been extended in a similar fashion as the appeal proposal through provision of cat slide dormer to the full width of the original front roof plane.



Appendix 1 provides photo examples of front dormer extensions within the locality, Appendices 2-8 provides further detail to evidence the authorised nature of those front dormer extensions.

- 6.6 The existing dormers are of mixed appearance, with a variety of size and construction material including white upvc and wood being prevalent. Use of white upvc contrasts with the darker coloured roof tile, acting to draw the eye and consequently acting to increase prominence of these dormers within the street. One commonality of design is that the majority of front dormers do not dominate and occupy a portion proportion of the roof plane, being set back and set in from the front and side elevations of the dwelling, ensuring that a large proportion of the original roof tile is exposed to external vantage points.
- 6.7 The presence of front dormers within the locality forms a strong precedence in support of the appeal proposal and establishes a front dormer extension to be acceptable in principle. The variance of design in the locality also affords support for the appeal proposal, though the appellant contends that design is acceptable in any event, as outlined in the proceeding paragraphs.

6.8 It is considered that the LPA has two main concerns relative to the appeal proposal, namely impact of the extension on the dwelling and impact of the extension on the visual quality of the street scene borne from the siting of the dormer on the front roof plane.

6.9 Impact on the Dwelling

The appeal extension represents a dormer design that has evolved through the refusal of two previous planning applications and represents a subservient addition to the dwelling. Indeed, the dormer has been designed so that its cat slide roof is set below the ridge of the main dwelling, its cheeks are set in from each side of the roof plane and the dormer face has a substantial set back from the front elevation of the dwelling set back from the alignment of the centrally located chimney stack. This design ensures that the dormer does not dominate the roof slope, with a large proportion of the original roof being retained and visible when viewed from the street.

6.10 The dormer will be clad in tile to match the roof of the main dwelling. This will ensure that the appeal proposal respects the materiality of the existing dwelling, helping to reduce visibility of the extension by eliminating the detrimental impact that more contrasting materials, such as white upvc, have on the street scene.


6.11 In addition, windows within the dormer have been carefully located to bring an element of symmetry to the front elevation of the dwelling.

6.12 It is contended that these design features culminate in a front dormer extension that would be subservient to and harmonises with the host property.

6.13 The Council explicitly refer to the dormer design being of '*horizontal emphasis*' and that this is '*contrary to the general design emphasis of the property*' in their reason for refusal. Paragraph 35 (b) of the Development Management Procedure Order states that the local planning authority must state clearly and precisely their reasons for the refusal. The appellant contends that this element of the refusal reason, especially reference to '*general design emphasis of the property*', is ambiguous and open interpretation, and therefore does not accord with Paragraph 35(b).

- 6.14 Notwithstanding, it is assumed that this element of the reason for refusal relates to the horizontal emphasis of the dormer that is formed by its width across the front roof plane, with the implication that this width is at odds with a vertically proportioned dwelling. The appellant contends that the existing dwelling is NOT a property of vertical emphasis, with its width, bungalow form and fenestration design resulting in a more horizontally proportioned property. Contrary to the LPA's assessment, the appellant seeks to extend a horizontally proportioned dwelling and the horizontal emphasis dormer would therefore harmonise with the general design ethos of the property.
- 6.15 Character and Appearance of the Area
The second element of the LPAs refusal reason relates to the extension having '*a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area*'.
- 6.16 The appeal proposal is located on the front roof plane on the property and by virtue of this, will be visible within the street scene. Notwithstanding, just because the extension is visible does not automatically make the extension appear incongruous or conspicuous within the street scene and site specific considerations should have been applied by the LPA in their planning assessment.
- 6.17 In the circumstances of the appeal proposal, as outlined in the proceeding paragraphs, the appellant contends that the extension would not appear incongruous or conspicuous in the street scene.
- 6.18 The appeal property is not located on a primary route into Longridge, instead it is sited on a minor road within the residential area. The dwelling is set back from Wellbrow Drive behind a front garden space and is screened from view, on approach from the south west along Wellbrow Drive, behind 2 storey properties that are stepped forward of the build line – as per street scene image below.



 indicates location of appeal site.  indicates location and direction of image.

6.19 The dwelling and appeal proposal are not therefore considered to be located within a prominent position in the street when approached from the southwest. Bearing in mind this lack of visibility, it must therefore follow that the front dormer would not appear particularly incongruous or conspicuous in the streetscene when viewed externally from the southwest.

6.20 The appeal dwelling would, comparably, be more visible in the street scene when approached from the northeast on Wellbrow Drive. This is due to the consistent build line of dwellings and relatively open nature of front garden spaces to neighbouring dwellings – as per street scene image below.



 indicates location of appeal site.  indicates location and direction of image.

- 6.21 Notwithstanding, the appeal proposal has been purposefully designed so that it is set back from the front elevation of the dwelling, set back from the chimney breast that breaks the front roof plane. Materiality of the dormer will also blend in with the existing roof, minimising any contrast of colour. This design acts to reduce visibility of the dormer on approach from the north east, diluting its presence within the street scene to an extent that it would not appear incongruous or conspicuous.
- 6.22 For the above reasons the appellant contends that there are mitigating circumstances which, when combined, act to reduce the presence of and minimise the reported dominant impact that the front dormer may have on the host dwelling and street scene. The appeal proposal is sympathetic to the host dwelling and neighbouring properties, it will not have a detrimental impact on the street scene and therefore represents a high standard of design.
- 6.23 Contrary to the LPA's assessment, the appeal proposal would not therefore have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policy DMG1.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 In conclusion, contrary to the LPA's decision notice, for the reasons outlined above the appellant contends that the appeal proposal is subordinate to the host dwelling and would not have a dominant impact on the street scene. The appeal proposal would not therefore appear as incongruous or conspicuous, nor would it have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area, and thereby is in accordance with Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley (December 2014).
- 7.2 For the reasons outlined above, the Planning Inspector is respectfully urged to uphold the appeal.

Appendix 1 – existing front dormers.



Aerial image of photo locations.



45 and 47 Wellbrow Drive – original dormers.



1 and 3 Springs Road – extended dormers, refer to Appendix 2 and 3 for drawings and decision notice.



3 and 5 Tootle Road – original dormers.



5 and 7 Wheatley Drive – LPA website evidences front dormer to number 7 as existing on approved drawings (Appendix 4).



2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 Wheatley Drive – no evidence on LPA website of front dormers or extensions thereof.



1 Bowland Close – no evidence on LPA website of authorised front dormer to main dwelling. Refer to Appendix 5 for details of side extension (garage and front dormer) which refer to authorised front dormer.



2 Bowland Close – refer to Appendix 6 for approved drawings and approval notice.



10 and 12 Bowland Close – refer to Appendix 7 for front dormer extension approval at 12 Bowland Close.



Lynne, Green Lane - no evidence on LPA website of authorised front dormer to main dwelling. Refer to Appendix 8 for details of side extension (garage and front dormer) which refer to authorised front dormer.

Appendix 2:

1 Springs Road - front dormer approval (ref: 03-2007-0988).

Please refer to the attached information.

Information provided:

- Approval notice.
- Approved front and rear elevation drawings (no drawing numbers referenced).

Appendix 3:

3 Springs Road - front dormer approval (ref: 03-2006-0466)

Please refer to the attached information.

Information provided:

- Approval notice.
- Delegated report.

Note - there are no drawings available on the Councils planning portal, but the Officers delegated report provides detail of size of dormer approved.

Appendix 4:

7 Wheatley Drive - front porch and rear dormer extension approval (ref: 03-2014-0134).

Please refer to the attached information.

Information provided:

- Approval notice.
- Existing elevation and floor plan drawings (no drawing numbers referenced).
- Proposed elevation and floor plan drawings (no drawing numbers referenced).

Appendix 5:

1 Bowland Close - side garage and front dormer extension approval (03-2004-0629)

Please refer to the attached information.

Information provided:

- Approval notice.
- Delegated report.

note – there are no drawings available on the Councils planning portal, but the Officers delegated report refers to dormer bungalow.

Appendix 6:

2 Bowland Close - front dormer extension approval (ref: 03-2020-0045).

Please refer to the attached information.

Information provided:

- Approval notice.
- Proposed elevation drawings (no drawing numbers referenced).

note – the planning application and submitted drawings refer to 2 Bowland Close, but the approval notice references 32 Bowland Close. This is assumed to be an administrative error on the decision notice.

Appendix 7:

12 Bowland Close - front dormer extension approval (ref: 03-2018-0242).

Please refer to the attached information.

Information provided:

- Approval notice.
- Proposed elevation and floor plan drawings (drawing no: A2731/PL03).

Appendix 8:

Lynne, Green Lane - side garage extension approval (ref: 03-2006-0303).

Please refer to the attached information.

Information provided:

- Approval notice.
- Delegated report.

note – there are no drawings available on the Councils planning portal, but the Officers delegated report refers to dormer bungalow.