The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 September 2020

by D Hartley BA (Hons) MTP MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/B3438/D/3258026
10 Beverley Crescent, Forsbrook, Stoke-on-Trent ST11 9DQ

- 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 Gordon Adams against the decision of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
- The application Ref SMD/2020/0191, dated 6 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 2 June 2020.
- The development proposed is described as a front dormer addition.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Procedural Matter

3. Reference has been made to an Emerging Local Plan. The evidence is such that this development plan has not yet been adopted. I therefore afford it and its policies limited weight as a material planning consideration.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached bungalow falling within an established housing estate. It is proposed to erect a pitched roof dormer to the front roof slope of the property to form a bathroom. Whilst there is one exception in Beverley Crescent (i.e. No 32 which includes a front roof dormer), there is a prevailing uniformity of design, including unbroken roof slopes, amongst the semi-detached bungalows which are positioned alongside the long stretch of this part of Beverley Crescent. Across the road, the properties are two storey but they are all similar in design and again the unbroken roof slopes add positively and distinctively to the character and appearance of the area.

5. In this case, the appeal property is in a prominent position being close to and visible from the junction with Stratford Close. The appeal property is set well down from Beverley Crescent such that its roof, and that of neighbouring bungalows, are essentially at eye level. The roofs of the bungalows are therefore prominent and conspicuous in the street-scene.

6. Whilst the proposed dormer would be proportionate in scale to the host property, it would nonetheless unacceptably interrupt the general consistency of mainly unbroken roof slopes in Beverley Crescent. Hence, I find that it would look materially out of place in the street-scene and that it would not therefore constitute good design. I recognise that there is another front roof dormer at No 32 Hillside Avenue, but that is not within the same street-scene context as the appeal dwelling. Neither the existence of the front dormer at No 32 Beverley Crescent, nor that at No 32 Hillside Avenue, alters my conclusion that the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the immediate area.

7. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not accord with the design and sustainability requirements of policies SS1, SS1a, SS6a and DC1 of the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2014; the Council's Design Guide SPD 2018, and Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

8. In reaching the above conclusion, I acknowledge that there have been no objections from members of the public. However, that in itself does not justify allowing what I consider to be harmful development. The appellant has commented that permitted development rights have been relaxed in terms of householder development. Whilst that is the case for certain types of development, there is no suggestion that this proposal does not require planning permission. None of the other matters raised alter or outweigh my conclusion on the main issue.

Conclusion

9. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D Hartley

INSPECTOR