2021/0690 Householder Application

Applicant: Mr Shaun & Mrs Emma Jameson

Proposal: Raising of roof height and installation of rear dormer extension

Location: 8 Timothy Wood Avenue, Birdwell, Barnsley, S70 5RT

Site History

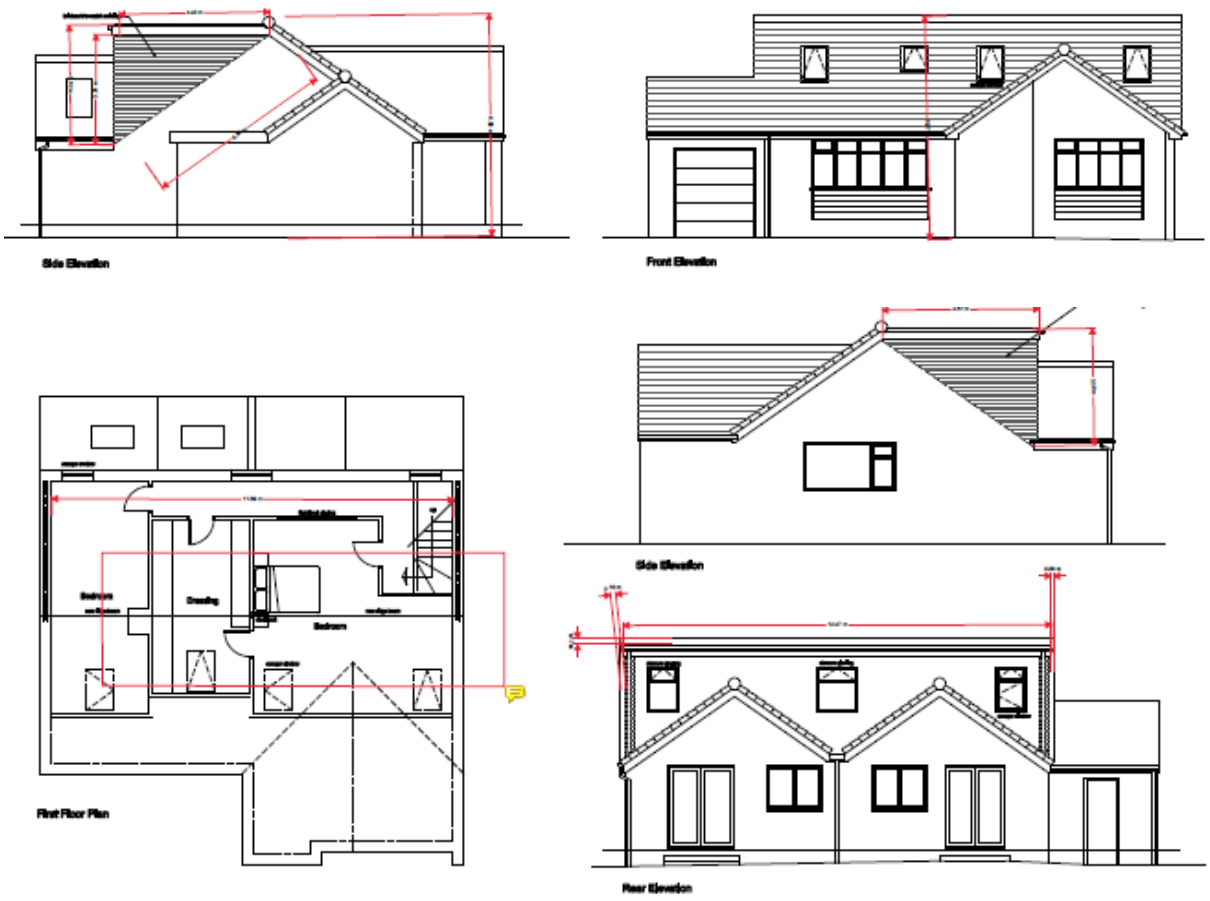
2014/0908 - Erection of single storey rear and side extensions to dwelling – Approve with Conditions

Site Location & Description

The applicant's property is a detached bungalow set with its rear elevation facing north-west with a single storey rear extension composed of interlocking dual-pitch rooves with French doors below. The rear boundary is set diagonally relative to the rear boundary shared with opposing neighbours on Winster Close with the boundary shared with 17 Winster Close being a minimum of 4.4m away whereas the boundary with 18 Winster Close further west is 7.7m distant. The existing ridge height of the main roof is 6m above ground level.

Proposed Development

The applicant is seeking approval for the erection of an amended design for a rear flat-roof dormer. The original proposal sought a first floor store above the ground floor rear extension, however this was resisted by the LPA due to the proximity of the introduction of first floor habitable room windows relative to the rear boundary beneath the 10m minimum distance required by the SPD House Extensions. The subsequent design is more akin to a rear dormer extension within the confines of the original roofslope. The dormer is to be flat-roofed and has the following dimensions: Height – 3.4m – Depth - 4.6m and Width – 12.5m, internally this equates to approximate increase in the volume of the roofspace by 85 cubic metres. The raising of the main roof ridge height remains unchanged at a proposed increase above ground level from 6m to 6.6m to enable sufficient internal space for the creation of a new habitable first floor level. Three windows will be provisioned in the dormer, two of which serve circulation space and the other serving a bedroom. On the forward roof slope, four rooflights shall be installed to provide natural light into the two bedrooms and dressing room.



Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the local plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The Council has also adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, which are other material considerations.

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In respect of this application, relevant policies include:

Section 12: Achieving well designed places - The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

Within section 12, paragraph 130 is the most relevant which indicates that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Local Plan

The new Local Plan was adopted at the full Council meeting held 3th January 2019 after it was found to be sound by the appointed Planning Inspector following the examination process. This means that it now takes on full weight for decision making process in planning law terms as the development plan for the Borough, superseding the remaining saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (adopted in the year 2000) and the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011). In reference to this application, the following policies are relevant:

Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development – sets out principles when considering development proposals.

Policy GD1: General Development

Policy D1: High quality design and place making

SPD: House extensions and Other Domestic Alterations

Supplementary Planning Document - House Extensions sets out the design principles that specifically apply to the consideration of planning applications for house extensions, roof alterations, outbuildings & other domestic alterations. The general principles are that proposals should:

1. be of a scale and design which harmonises with the existing building
2. not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties
3. maintain the character of the street scene and
4. not interfere with highway safety.

The following section of the SPD is particularly relevant to this application:

Privacy

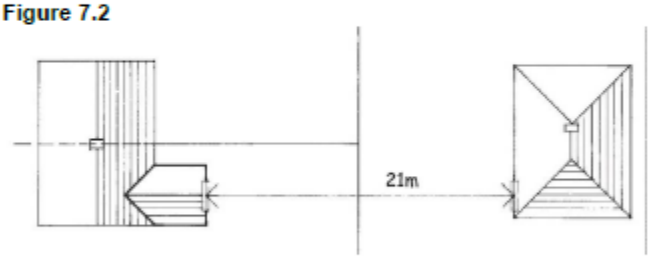
7.2 Extensions should be designed so that they do not result in significant overlooking of habitable room windows to nearby houses or private gardens. Privacy problems might be overcome by using a combination of obscure glazing, high level windows, screen fencing or rooflights, but are better avoided altogether.

7.3 Figure 7.1 illustrates a situation which is unacceptable, and Planning Permission and Building Regulations approval are unlikely to be given for an extension such as this, where the window opening to a habitable room in the side elevation directly overlooks the neighbour's rear window and garden.

7.4 A boundary fence may act as an effective screen to a single storey extension and could reduce overlooking from a side window.

7.5 As a general guide, windows to habitable rooms on an extended property should not be less than 21 metres from any other properties with habitable room windows, to ensure reasonable privacy to you and your neighbours. Figure 7.2 demonstrates.

Figure 7.2



Habitable rooms should be taken to include: lounge/living room, dining room, kitchen, bedroom and study. A distance of 12 metres should be maintained to a blank gable wall and a distance of 10m should normally be provided between rear-facing windows in the first floor (and above) and the rear boundary.

Figure 8.15

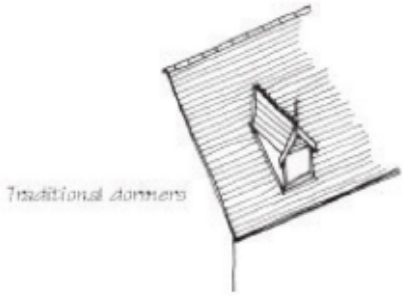


Figure 8.16

8.34 Flat roof dormers which tend to be larger and have horizontal emphasis can be seen in more recent housing developments. These have proved to be more expensive to maintain and prone to failure (Figure 8.16). Flat roof dormers are considered aesthetically inferior and are not normally acceptable.

8.35 Consequently, pitched roof dormers are generally considered more appropriate for both aesthetic and practical reasons.

Location

8.36 To assess whether a dormer on the front or principle elevation will be appropriate, the roofs of the surrounding buildings should be examined. Unless the street is characterised by dormers on the frontage, or these are a feature of the area/street/terrace, dormer windows should be located on the rear or secondary elevations.

8.38 So as not to dominate existing roof lines and retain its original form, dormers should be set within the roof plane (see Figure 8.17) and not be built off an external wall. The guidelines below should therefore be followed:-

- The dormer should sit within the roof plane and the top of the dormer should usually be below the ridge (A)
- Dormers and roof lights should be set back from the eaves (B) and gable by at least 0.5m (C)
- They should be at least 0.5m away from the party walls with adjacent properties. (D)

8.39 Where there are existing dormers in the same roof plane, for instance in a terrace, new dormers should line up horizontally.

8.40 It is also important that dormers and roof lights reflect the pattern of existing window openings. They should be positioned to line through vertically with the window openings below.

Representations

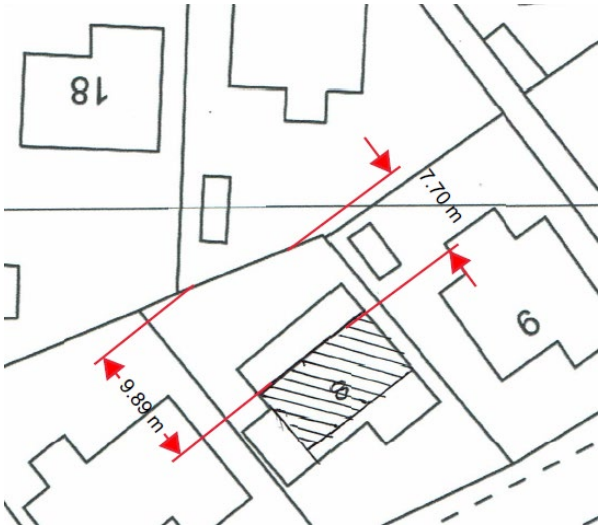
Neighbour notification letters were sent out to surrounding properties; no comments were received.

Assessment

Principle of development

The site falls within urban fabric which has no specific land allocation, however the site and surrounding area is made up principally of housing. Extensions to residential properties are considered acceptable where they do not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of surrounding residents, visual amenity and on highway safety.

Residential Amenity



The proposed rear dormer closely conforms with permitted development rights other than in respect of its cubic increase of the internal roof space which is 35cu.m above the 50cu.m threshold set out in the GPDO. There are to be three windows within the rear dormer, with the two that serve the new internal hallway being obscure-glazed to prevent overlooking into the garden of 17 Winster Close. The obscure-glazed windows will be conditioned to be complied with as a part of a decision on this application. The westernmost window serving the smaller of the two new bedrooms is to be transparently glazed though this is offset by the diagonal boundary providing 9.9m of separation to the boundary directly opposite. This is 0.1m below the minimum requirement in the SPD, however the areas of curtilage on the opposite side of the boundary which the window faces thatwithin Nos 17 and 18's rear curtilage include the provision of detached outbuildings that consequently offset any privacy loss that would otherwise be incurred in a more open area. The 21m separation distance is also met between the habitable first floor window and those present upon the rear elevation of 18 Winster Avenue.

Overshadowing and overbearance of the increased roof height is unlikely to be significant for adjacent properties at 6 and 10 Timothy Wood Avenue as these dwellinghouses are within the common building line and detached with driveways off-setting the moderate increase in roof height by 0.6m. Some overshadowing of No.6 may occur from the projection of the rear dormer in a southern location relative to the curtilage of that neighbouring property. Nevertheless the harm incurred will fall mainly over a driveway area and an outbuilding thereby minimising the harm incurred in respect of residential amenity.

To conclude, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Local Plan Policy GD1 – General Development with regard to Residential Amenity.

Visual Amenity

The dormer is not set in sufficiently from the side elevations to conform with the guidance requirements and the eaves are no longer visible given the presence of the rear ground floor extension. Nevertheless it is not considered that this warrants a refusal in this instance as it is understood that the guidance relates predominantly to dormers upon the principle roof slope, not rear dormers. The dormer sits below the new ridge formed by the new roof and should not be visible within the street scene. Likewise the applicants property sits more or less in line with No.10 Timothy Wood Avenue despite the diagonal nature of the street, this relationship will

screen the dormer's western side elevation. Similarly No.6 Timothy Wood Avenue sits slightly forward relative to No.8 and will provide a similar level of screening. Notably 17 Winster Close has been extended with an almost identical flat-roof dormer extension which faces the applicant's property so there is precedent for similar extensions within the broader streetscene.

The most noticeable impact to the streetscene will be the increase in roof height however, at 0.6m, this is viewed as a nominal increase that will largely be absorbed by the topography of the area which sees a slight increase in height between ridges for Nos 10 and 12 Timothy Wood Avenue relative to No.8. and the same can be seen replicated on the opposite side of the street. The roof form of the dwelling will largely remain the same despite the increase in roof height and it is consequently interpreted that the character of the streetscene will largely remain unaltered. The proposal is consequently determined to be in accordance with LP Policy D1 – High Quality Design and Placemaking.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to be acceptable and is consequently recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Recommendation

Approve with conditions.