Expiry 2/02/07

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0478/06 Recommendation - Refuse

Site: 36 Whitelot Way Southwick West Sussex BN42 4YF

Proposal: Front dormer

The Application

The application site is located on the eastern side of Whitelot Way. The site contains the southern part of a semi detached three level dwelling with a small side extension, a garage/storage building at the rear and a rear garden area. The roof space was converted to additional living space in 2006 with a dormer window constructed on the rear elevation and velux windows installed in the front elevation.

The applicant proposes to expand the existing rooms in the roof by constructing a dormer window on the front elevation of the building. The proposed dormer has a width of 3.9 metres, a flat roof, is set relatively high in the roof space and contains two windows.

The site has previously been subject to two planning applications relating to the construction of dormer windows, being SW/38/05 for front and rear dormers and SW/87/05 for a rear dormer only. The initial application was refused on the grounds that the front dormers were out of keeping with the character with and incongruous within the street scene. The plan was amended so that the application was for a rear dormer only and was subsequently approved under the latter application.

The character of the street scene can be described as very uniform. The street is made up of pairs of semi detached dwellings with full gable ends and set back the same distance from the road. The street descends down a hill in a southerly direction and the public view is one of a row of unspoilt roof lines stepping down the hill.

Consultations and Representations

Third Parties

Two representations objecting to the proposal have been received from the residents of the two properties immediately opposite the application site, 33 and 35 Whitelot Way. These objections were both on the grounds that the proposal would be out of keeping with the character and design of the other dwellings in the street and that their properties would be overlooked by the front dormer due to the street being very narrow.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adur District Local Plan: AG1, AH7
Development Control Standard No. 3 "Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings"
West Sussex Structure Plan: DEV1

Planning Assessment

The Appearance
The two small hipped roof front dormers proposed as part of the original application were considered to be acceptable in terms their size. The current application is for a single flat roofed dormer which is also considered to be generally acceptable in terms of its size in relation to this roof space.

A front dormer will however have a significant effect on the character of the street scene. As noted above, the street scene contains an unspoilt line of highly visible roofs. Permitting even one front dormer will impose an out of place feature on the street scene which will spoil this existing character and will likely result in an influx of other applications which would be difficult to refuse. It is noted that this was the primary reason that the application SW/38/05 was refused. In the intervening period, there have been no significant changes to the character of the street or to Local Plan policy which would warrant permitting a front dormer in this case.

Effects on Neighbours
The two objectors both noted that the road was ~~reasonably~~ relatively narrow and as a result the dormer would cause overlooking and reduce privacy to the front of their properties. The distance between the application dwelling and the dwellings opposite is approximately 19 metres. While this does not meet the usual 22 metre separation standard between windows considered acceptable to prevent significant overlooking, it is not considered that this front dormer window would give rise to any additional overlooking than that already caused by the existing windows on the front elevation.

Recommendation

REFUSE on ground that :-

B5ER (amended)
The proposed dormer is unacceptable in that it does not relate sympathetically to the design of the existing building and it would be out of keeping with and detrimental to the character and appearance of the ~~area~~ streetscene and make it difficult, if permitted, for the Local Planning Authority to prevent similar additions to other dwellings, the cumulative impact of which would detract seriously from the visual amenity of the area. It would therefore conflict with the policies of the West Sussex Structure Plan (CH1, DEV1) and the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH7).

Case Officer: .....

Date: 26/01/07

29/1