

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/19/0292

Site Address: Park Lodge Bungalow
Queens Road
Twynyrodyn
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 0ES

Development: Dormer conversion comprising an increase in roof ridge height with front and side dormers, introduction of Juliette balcony and construction of a front conservatory

Case Officer: Caroline Pulley

Site Visit: 15th November 2019

Application Expiry Date: 7th January 2020

Consultation reply date expired: 10th December 2019

APPLICATION SITE

The application site relates to a split level property situated within the Thomastown Conservation Area. The property is located in an elevated position to the east of Bryntirion Villas, a pair of semi-detached dwellings. It is located within an area which is mostly defined by large detached Victorian villas surrounded by large gardens. Directly to the south of the site and on the opposite side of a stepped footpath is a Grade II listed property called 'The Rectory'. To the east and also on the other side of the road is Springfield House, which is also Grade II Listed. To the rear of the site are the grounds of a pair of locally listed dwellings, Park Lodge and Dan Y Bryn.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks planning permission to raise the roof height and provide dormer roof extensions to the front and side (west) elevations of the property. Permission is also sought for the construction of a front conservatory. The proposal would involve raising the ridge of the bungalow's main roof by 1.1m in height. As a result, the eastern roofline of the property would be increased from 5.15m to 6.25m in height. The western elevation would rise from 7.8m to 8.9m in height. The roofline of the rear annexe would also be increased by 0.75m in height. No changes are proposed to the existing fenestration arrangement. However, two dormer windows are proposed, one within the front (south facing) roof plane and another within the side (west facing) elevation of the new roof. The front dormer would project 3.7m from the roof plane and would measure 3.8m wide by 3m in height. It would contain a single window serving a proposed bathroom. The side dormer would be of the same measurements and design. However, it would contain a Juliet balcony serving the bedroom proposed in the roofspace.

The proposed conservatory would be located on the lower ground level and directly below a bay window. It would measure 3.3m wide, 2.5m in depth and 3.3m in height and would be constructed from white uPVC. Access to the conservatory would be via the existing kitchen located on the ground floor of the property.

PLANNING HISTORY

P/00/0355	-	Erection of a detached garage Approved – 29 th September 2000
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CONSULTATION

Planning Division's Conservation Officer:	Raises an objection to the scheme.
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PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to the adjoining properties and a site notice was displayed within the vicinity of the site.

No letters of representation were received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 10 (December 2018) sets out the land use policies of the Welsh Government. The most relevant sections are:

Paragraphs 3.3 – 3.16 set out the principles of good design in new development proposals, which should take into account its relationship to its surrounding context.

Paragraph 6.1.10 advises that for any development proposal which affects the setting of a listed building, or its setting, 'the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.

Paragraph 6.1.14 states 'There should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas or their settings'.

Paragraph 6.1.15 advises that there is a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission for developments which damage the character or appearance of a conservation area or its setting to an unacceptable level.

The policies in PPW are supported by Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The most relevant TANs to this application are as follows:-

TAN 12 - Design advises that the Assembly Government is strongly committed to achieving the delivery of good design in the built and natural environment, which is fit for purpose and delivers environmental sustainability, economic development, and social inclusion at every scale throughout Wales.

Local Policy

Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan (LDP) 2006-2021:

Policy BW4 – Settlement boundaries/location constraints

Policy BW5 – Natural Heritage

Policy BW7 – Sustainable design and placemaking

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Note No. 6 – A Design Guide for Householder Development

It is noted in the SPG that *'the character of some areas may also be recognised for their historical and architectural importance, such as in conservation areas, and may be more sensitive to the design of any extension or alteration of your property'*.

It also advises *'...any extension or alteration to your property should be sympathetic to its surroundings in terms of its scale, siting and appearance, to ensure it complements neighbouring properties and the wider street scene...'*

'...the size, shape and siting of an extension to your house must be of an appropriate height and form that is in keeping and subservient to the existing building and its setting...'

More specifically with regard to roof alterations and loft conversions, it states that *'....Unsympathetic alterations can adversely affect the character, proportions and appearance of the dwelling within the street scene.'* Therefore, *'careful consideration should be given to the siting and design of the dormer window to ensure that it is a sympathetic addition to the dwelling, having particular regard to its size, the roof style, fenestration and material finishes.'* It also states that dormer windows will not normally be permitted to the front of a dwelling unless they are a prevailing feature. Where in principle a dormer extension is considered acceptable, it advises that they should be *'...small, incorporating a pitched roof that reflects the style of the dwelling and be discreetly located either to the side or rear of the dwelling. Flat roof dormer windows will often appear too bulky, out of proportion and can make the dwelling appear top-heavy'*.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

As detailed earlier, the proposal seeks to provide first floor accommodation by raising the roof height and erecting dormer windows to the side and front roof planes of the property. The application also proposes the erection of a front conservatory. The primary issue in the consideration of this application relates to whether the scheme preserves or enhances the character of the Thomastown Conservation Area. Also to be considered is the impact of the proposed development on visual and residential amenity, having regard to Policy BW7 of the LDP. The application is also assessed with regard to the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance document entitled 'A Design Guide for Householder Development'.

In respect of the character and appearance of the dwelling, the property is a relatively modest-sized building set at a higher level to the road. In contrast to other dwellings within the immediate area, it has been built on a sloping ground level and as a result, the dwelling appears as a bungalow when viewed from the front whereas the western

elevation is built up to form a two-storey elevation. The boundary enclosing the front garden of the property falls in line with the topography of the adjoining footpath which falls steeply in an east to west direction. As such, the ground floor front elevation of the property is quite visible above the front boundary wall, particularly when viewed from the highway to the east. Due to its elevation but low ridge height, the dwelling is considered to form a prominent component of the street scene.

The proposal seeks to provide additional first floor accommodation over the front section of the existing house, with the provision of front and side dormers. To accommodate this, the proposal is to increase the height of the main roof by 1.1m. The roof of the rear two storey projection would also be increased by 0.75m. The additional height of the roof combined with the large front and side dormers would make the dwelling appear top-heavy and overly dominant. Whilst matching materials are to be used, the scale and design of the proposed roof alterations result in large and unsympathetic additions to the dwelling. The Council's Conservation Officer has in particular raised concern that the proposed dormers are so in large in size, that they alter the symmetry and proportion of the existing building and remove its simple vernacular style. Additionally, the use of contrasting render on the external walls of the dormers would accentuate their mass, which again visually alters the building on its western elevation to the point of appearing top-heavy and at odds with the original dwelling. This is contrary to the guidance set out in the Council's SPG, which states that dormer windows should be discreetly located and should be small, incorporating a pitched roof that reflects the style of the dwelling.

The conservatory would extend across a large part of the property, and it would project forward of its front elevation. Its appearance and siting would fail to respect the form and symmetry of the existing property and would represent a prominent and insensitive addition, which would dominate the existing dwelling. When viewed in the context of the wider street scene, its design and position would appear at odds with the otherwise simple form and modest appearance of the dwelling. This is also contrary to the advice provided in the Council's SPG which states *'front extensions often conflict with existing building lines, can detract from the appearance of the house and appear unduly prominent or overbearing in relation to neighbouring properties.'*

Consequently, the proposal would have a significant harmful impact on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the Thomastown Conservation Area. For these reasons, it would conflict with Policies BW6 and BW7 of the LDP which state that the development proposals will be supported only where they preserve or enhance the character and setting of listed buildings and conservation areas and are appropriate to the local context in terms of siting, design, scale, form and appearance.

The proposed development has been considered with regard to its impact upon the amenities of nearby occupiers. In this respect, it is acknowledged that the property is positioned at a significantly higher level to the semi-detached dwellings to the west and there are a number of existing windows in the side of the property which already overlook the rear of numbers 1 & 2 Bryntirion Villas. Whilst acknowledging that the proposal seeks to raise the height of the property and provide a dormer window with a Juliet balcony to the elevation which would face 1 & 2 Bryntirion Villas, the overlooking would be no greater than the impact currently experienced as a result of the positioning of the existing windows. Additionally, it is noted that the property is set in from the side boundary and there is a lane separating the application property from the rear boundaries of 1 and 2 Bryntirion Villas. Given the separation distances and the change in level, the proposal would not give rise to an adverse level of overshadowing or overbearing impact. The front

dormer and conservatory would face onto the rear/side garden area of a detached property called 'The Rectory'. Whilst appreciating that some overlooking may be experienced by this property as a result of the front dormer extension, as the property is elevated, it is expected that a degree of overlooking would already take place from the existing front bay windows. Moreover, it is noted that no letters of objection have been received as a result of the publicity exercise that has been undertaken with neighbouring properties.

Taking all these matters into account, this proposal would not have an adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. As such, in this respect it would comply with the relevant criteria of Policy BW7.

To conclude, the front conservatory, increased roof height and front and side dormer would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, contrary to Policy BW7 of the LDP. The proposal would also fail to preserve or enhance the character of the Thomastown Conservation Area. As such, the proposal is also considered to be contrary to Policy BW6 of the LDP.

The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

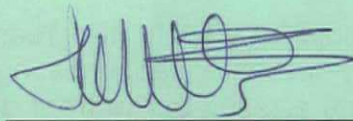
Accordingly the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE REFUSED subject to the following REASONS

REASONS:

1. The proposed dormers and roof alterations by virtue of their design, scale, siting and mass would result in an unsympathetic and disproportionate form of development that would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the existing property and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Thomastown Conservation Area. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies BW6 and BW7 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.
2. The proposed conservatory by virtue of its siting and design would result in a prominent and insensitive addition which would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the existing property and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Thomastown Conservation Area. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies BW6 and BW7 of the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

23/12/19.